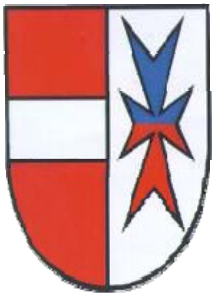
Between Triumph and Disaster

The History of the 46th New York Infantry

1861 to 1865

Ernest Mettendorf



Coat of arms of the
City of Mettendorf
County of Bitburg
Germany

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Chapter 1
Preface

The droves of tourists who come to Gettysburg and Antietam every year admire the monuments of a violent conflict that never should have taken place. Most visitors are well informed and go where a great-great-grandfather fought or perhaps even died. The research on such battlefields has become an American family hobby. A whole generation is interested in the warriors who were involved in these bloody battles. Frequently, such inquiries lead to a German ancestor of the family, who started his immigrant life as a soldier. The German-American journalist, Wilhelm Kaufmann, has concluded that 216,000 soldiers of the Union Army had been German immigrants. Most of them were volunteers. The historians have forgotten about them. Civil War enthusiasts have recreated many of their regiments and organize reenactments of battles and parades in the original uniforms of that time. If it is done correctly, they march much more slowly and more quietly than today's American army. General Friedrich Wilhelm von Steuben's regulations, the ones he wrote in Valley Forge, were still being followed.

The story told here is of one of these German regiments. It first appeared as a serialized account of 18 episodes in the German-American press, first from July 28th until November 29, 2001 in the Chicago newspaper *Eintracht*, and from September 1st to December 29, 2001 in the *New Yorker Staatszeitung*, then finally from February 9th to June 15, 2002 in the *North American Wochenpost*. The approval of the readers was particularly enlightening. This was not only expressed in letters and phone calls, but also with practical suggestions and submitted materials. This little book is an extended version and presents many additional episodes and adventures. None of the soldiers mentioned in the book were born in America. But they risked their lives and health for the survival of the United States. There were many such German regiments; ten from New York, six each from Ohio and Missouri, five from Pennsylvania, four from Wisconsin, and three from Illinois. Some of these veterans wrote letters about their war experiences during the time of their service, but the story of the "46ers" is read here for the first time.

There have been brief references in books that are long out of print and in forgotten newspapers. The members of the regiment themselves left virtually nothing behind, even though they had at least two professional writers in their ranks. Lt. Colonel Germain Metternich wrote for the *German-American Press*, and Lieutenant Ludwig (Louis) Hennighausen wrote down the entire history of the Germans in Baltimore and in the State of Maryland. He wrote only a few sentences about his military service. In the second year of the war, Lt. Colonel Metternich came to his death on Tybee Island. Henninghausen became a lawyer in Baltimore after the war. What we know about the history and the founders of this regiment comes from him. It was contained in a speech he delivered on April 12, 1886 in Washington at a meeting of the veterans organizations. Had it not been written down by a newspaper correspondent, this information would also have been lost. It was a happy coincidence that General Grant's future private secretary, Captain Horace

Porter, crossed the paths of the regiment on Tybee Island. He also mentioned his former comrades in the letters he wrote to his mother in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

The books of the regiment are still at the National Archives in Washington and give us the information about campaigns, transfers, and relocations. On the eighty pages of the "Order Book" we find the directions and orders of the day, all written in German in the old Sütterli-handwriting after the German manner. The listing of names includes the civilian occupations of the soldiers. This shows us how well the German immigrants had prepared themselves for the American reality. They were bakers, tailors, hat makers, saddlemakers, glaziers, cabinetmakers, lithographers, printers, brewers, wheelwrights, coopers, and pharmacists, butchers, plumbers, masons, millers, mechanics, barbers, waiters, paper hangers, and shoemakers. The list of personnel of the *5th Company* gave birth places. Here we read, for example: Lieutenant Wilhelm Rettig, Aschersleben, province Sachsen; Captain Viktor Praxmarer, Innsbruck, Tirol; Lieutenant Ferdinand Sehrt, Friedberg, Schlesien; Karl Baier, Bernburg, province Sachsen; Johann Lautenschläger, Hagstadt, Württemberg; Johann Heupel, Landau; Adam Mayer, Lengsfeld; Karl Karsten, Nordheim, Hanover; Friedrich Heller, Limburg. Between the yellowed pages is a list of issued equipment and clothing pieces. Accurately listed were rifles, belts, ammunition, cartridges, bags, shirts, shoes, and bread bags.

More information about the regiment was found in the 128 books of the official Army Records. Private letters written to their families, by individual soldiers, tell us of personal experiences and adventures during these campaigns. Most of the photographs are from the *U.S. Army Military History Institute* in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. Former Consul General, Dr. Cornel Metternich, kindly provided a picture of his great-great granduncle, Lt. Col. Germain Metternich, and information about his life in Germany.

For most of the entire four years of war the regiment belonged to the *Ninth Army Corps*, an elite force that was mostly under the command of General Ambrose Burnside. It also was called the "traveling corps" because it never stayed long at the same place. The corps was always where it was particularly rough and dangerous. "Our place in history remained spotless from the first to the last day of the war," wrote the Rev. Augustus Woodbury, the historian of the *Ninth Army Corps*. "There has not been a single incident detrimental to our honor."

The first chapters of this booklet tell us about the *8th Battalion* of the *Washington Militia*, the German lifeguards of President Lincoln. Joseph Gerhardt, a prominent participant of the Baden uprising of 1848, was one of the lieutenants of the President's bodyguards. When the *9th Battalion* was disbanded after its three months of service, he went to New York City and put together, along with Rudolph Rosa and Germain Metternich, the *46th New York Infantry*. All three, Gerhardt, Rosa, and Metternich were active members of the Turner movement. Other members and supporters of this Turner Athletic Club followed them. Joseph Gerhardt brought Germans from Baltimore and Washington. Rudolph Rosa brought his friends from Brooklyn. These first volunteers were, without exception, German immigrants. The Turner Gymnastic clubs played an important role in the daily life of German-Americans. The gym was a meeting place and center of the German district. There was a large library, a German school, and halls for large and small events.

Another organization in the public interest was the Turner Fire Department. In the 19th century the volunteer fire department of the city of Baltimore consisted primarily of gangsters and criminals who offered very little help indeed. At house fires they robbed

and abused the victims. This is quite accurately depicted in the motion picture *Ragtime*. The Baltimore sports club organized their own fire brigade, which worked against these corrupt firemen, mainly for the benefit of the general population. The Turners not only operated sports and gymnastics halls, but also showed considerable interest in the politics of the day. Old Father Jahn, the founder of the Turner movement, called such discussions "intellectual gymnastics." They dealt particularly with the issue of slavery. Many of the Turners studied the U.S. Constitution and knew that the noble words about freedom and justice did not fit the slavery of the South. In 1855 the Turners, during the convention in Buffalo, spoke out openly against the slavery in the South. As Wendell Phillips, a prominent opponent of slavery, held his speeches in Boston and Cincinnati, the Turners protected him from his enemies. At later events they also provided security for general and politician, John Frémont.

When the Civil War broke out it was not fought to free the slaves as most people assume. Only during the course of the war did it become clear that slavery must be completely banned. For the politically informed Turners, and the vast majority of German-Americans, this conflict left no doubt on which side they stood with their sympathies. As President Lincoln, on April 15, 1861, called for the formation of a volunteer army of 75,000 men, the Germans provided proportionally more soldiers than the members of all other ethnic groups, including the native born Americans. This selfless commitment to their newly adopted country was not appreciated everywhere. Many of the traditional leaders suspected in the emerging German regiments a danger to their own interests. For years the secret *Know-Nothings* movement wanted to restrict the rights of immigrants. A Massachusetts law said that new arrivals were not allowed to apply for citizenship until two years after their naturalization. Similar provisions were planned in other states. The large numbers of informed immigrants were soon regarded as an unwelcome influence for the distinguished German-American politicians. Activists such as Carl Schurz, Gustav Koerner, and Friedrich Kapp demanded that with the steadily growing numbers of German volunteers, there should also be a proportional number of German officers and generals. Their enemies had a way of reducing these numbers. Wherever the traditional leaders were called to swear in new recruits, they intentionally wrote down the names incorrectly. This literally led to a partial "anglicization" of this force. Present day descendants of Civil War soldiers mention quite often that their ancestor had changed his German name. Yes perhaps, but very likely someone had done it for him.

Chapter 2
Foundation of the 46th New York Regiment

March 4, 1861, was a dark and cool day in Washington. Gathered in front of the Willard Hotel near the capitol, 25,000 citizens witnessed Abraham Lincoln's inauguration. It was expected that this new president would prevent the secession of the South. He was met with undisguised disapproval from other inhabitants of the capitol. Several times he had been threatened publicly. Everywhere around him he had enemies. Nobody wished him anything good. Soldiers were securing his surroundings and the cavalry stood ready for possible emergencies.

"But the most honorable task of the day had been assigned to our Turner volunteers," Baltimore lawyer Louis P. Henninghausen later recalled. "We formed the personal bodyguards of the President." Not only that, at Lincoln's arrival in Washington, Colonel Charles Stone, the security officer of the government, occupied the railroad station with the Turners. The regular militia force of the city proved to be unreliable. Some of their officers were Southern sympathizers. "Lincoln himself had chosen the German volunteers for his personal protection at the inauguration. They were not even approved yet as regular militia soldiers," wrote the Sunday newspaper in Washington. "This German battalion consisted of three companies. One of them guarded the place where the president was sworn in and gave his inaugural speech. Members of all three companies, under the command of Ernst Loeffler, Joseph Gerhardt, and Vladimir Krzyzanowski marched alongside and behind the carriage when the new president was driven down Pennsylvania Avenue to the White House. Others secured the procession from the rooftops and windows of the capitol building."

The Civil War did not officially begin until a month later with the attack on Fort Sumter. "But in reality the state of war had already existed for four months. The Forts Moultrie and Pinkney and the customs office in Charleston were already occupied by the South," recalled Henninghausen. "By then the Turners had joined forces to defend the capitol. The companies first consisted exclusively of Germans. Most of them were Turners. Initially they belonged to a very small minority but soon the loyal population of Washington stood at their side. In April they were officially sworn in and made up *A Company* of the *8th Battalion*," recalled Hennighausen. They were only one part of the hastily assembled force to secure the capitol.

Louis Kettler was a tailor by profession and had just turned 21 when he marched next to President Lincoln's carriage as it drove down Pennsylvania Avenue. "We were subsequently awarded the job of protecting the public buildings and securing the access roads and bridges outside the city," he related to the *Sunday Star*, the Washington Sunday newspaper. "Finally, on April 11, 1861, our 325 men were included in the active service. Then we watched a sector of about eighteen miles in the city. Washington was cut off during this time from all connections with the rest of the country. I, myself, was among the group who had to protect the Treasury Department. During these seven dark days, as we called this period, the President visited us during the night and brought us a tray of sandwiches. He wore his familiar beaver hat. To this day I distinctly remember this imposing personality."

In neighboring Maryland it was quite a different story. The population was still divided as to whether the common people should be loyal to the United States or the disassociated South. When the soldiers of the *6th Massachusetts Regiment* arrived in Baltimore on April 19, en-route to Washington by train, they were met by a group of Southern sympathizers with truncheons, stones, and revolvers. The soldiers fired back and injured a number of the rioters. Four troops died and 36 were wounded. The demonstrators burned down the rail station and in their anger pushed the locomotives into the river. Next they went to the Turner’s gymnastics club, where the flag of the United States was still flying. On all the other public buildings the flags had been taken down and replaced with the colors of Maryland. The crowd demanded the removal of the Stars and Stripes from this building. The Turners refused. A spokesman for the association announced that

it never would fly a rebel flag. The next day the mob returned and stormed the building. The facility was demolished and the sports equipment landed in the street.

The next victim of the rioters was the *Baltimore Wecker*, the German-language daily, where *The Turner's Gazette* was printed. They smashed the presses and abused the staff. The previous day the paper published a call for recruitment of volunteers for the Union Army, signed by Alexander von Schimmelpfennig, commander of the *74th Pennsylvania Regiment*. The bullies still were not satisfied with all their destruction. They pursued some of the gymnasts to their homes. William Rapp, editor of *The Turner's Gazette*, wrote to his father in Germany: "At the street corners there were some of the most dangerous culprits hanging out. They are still looking for me. I finally found refuge in Pringsheim's Brewery, where I was hidden in a safe place. The next morning, at 3 o'clock, I left my shelter and went to the rail station to leave town on the first train. But the rail service had long since been discontinued. Now I had no other choice but to walk on foot along the tracks." Obviously the railroad companies favored the Southern Rebels. To avoid further troop reinforcements for Washington, they closed or destroyed all the railway bridges and tracks leading to Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Harrisburg.

"Many of the Baltimore Turners went to Washington and joined *B Company* of the *8th Battalion*," recalled Louis Henninghausen. "Immediately after our arrival on April 24th, we were sent to the rail line between Washington and Annapolis. Our orders were to secure the tracks for the arriving troops. With a locomotive and a tender we drove slowly to the turnoff to Annapolis. We met our first regiments from New York and Massachusetts." They repaired the tracks and bridges that had been destroyed by the saboteurs. In Washington the following day the whistle of the locomotive announced the arrival of the *7th New York Infantry*. Soon after more infantry arrived. By mid-May there were 10,000 soldiers in the capitol.

At this time the United States had a very small regular army of about 16,000 men. These troops were primarily stationed in the West as a protection against the rebellious Indians. Four hundred of the 1,108 active officers had already departed to the Southern States. The government, therefore, relied primarily on the militia of each of the states. Throughout the country the newspapers reported that the capitol was completely unprotected and could be captured at any moment by the Rebel Army. Carl Schurz had read this in a Wisconsin newspaper. He set out immediately to his party colleague, Abraham Lincoln, in the White House. He made it to Perryville, Maryland. From here passengers had to use the steamer to Annapolis, because Baltimore was still in the hands of the traitors. From Annapolis, Schurz rode in a train full of soldiers. He noticed that the local population had little sympathy for the troops. "Afterwards I was told that our soldiers were insulted when they arrived." Schurz wrote in his memoirs: "The local population of Washington, for the most part, sympathized with the South."

After more loyal troops arrived in the capitol it was time to create order in Baltimore. On May 12th, President Lincoln sent some regiments to take over the city administration. The Pinkerton Detectives had infiltrated the rioters, so it was quite easy to arrest the ringleaders. At the *Baltimore Wecker* the presses had been repaired. On May 20th the paper was publishing again. "Our German Turner Companies in Washington are almost the only reliable troops there," reported the newspaper. "It is no wonder that they are given the most important tasks. The regular garrison comprises of no more than a thousand men and their officers have proved to be unreliable and indifferent. Some are secret help-

ers of the South. The Turners, therefore, guard the railway line so that further reinforcements can be brought in. In addition, they still find time to supply the capitol with fresh meat. Cattle had to be seized because the farmers are no longer willing to bring their products to Washington."

When Lincoln looked from his window at the White House he saw on the other side of the Potomac, in Virginia, the flags and tents of the Rebels. The enemy's army was very close. He intended to drive them away. "During this first foray into Virginia on May 23rd, when Alexandria was taken, we were the advance party," recalled Louis Kettler. "Later, when Washington was sufficiently secured by the newly arrived troops, we moved with General Stone along the Potomac to Harper's Ferry. Our battalion was stationed in Great Falls to protect the large water plant that supplied the capitol. During this period there were repeated skirmishes with the enemy. One of these battles lasted several hours and ended with the death of two Turners, Johann Ricks and Martin Ohl. In addition, seven of our opponents died." Just three days later the battalion was discharged. The three months period of service had expired. Generals and staff officers, in smart uniforms, were now the new lords of the capitol.

The Turners were no longer needed in Washington. Together with their company commander, Captain Joseph Gerhardt, some of them went to New York City where Colonel Rudolph Rosa had just founded the new *Frémont Regiment*. Hired recruits were already quartered in the Humboldt Hall at 55 Forsyth Street. Rosa was a former German officer and engineer who had participated in the 1848 democratic uprising. On July 23, 1861, Governor Morgan gave him permission to organize his regiment. The Republican Party was actively involved in recruiting. Their namesake, John Frémont had been the first presidential candidate of the party. General Frémont, accompanied by geologist Dr. Justus Adelberg, came to the Astor House where the officers held a gala reception.

The first five companies were complete in a few days. The gymnasts, with their followers from Washington and Baltimore, were the core of this regiment. Other volunteers came from Brooklyn, Albany, and New York City. The soldiers signed up for three years and like all American volunteers they had the right to choose their own officers and NCOs. The chosen company commanders were George Travers, Julius Parcus, Franz Muehlbauer, Richard Riegel, and Philipp Schwickart. After that recruitment went a bit slower. Six other German regiments already had been formed in this city. By early September they had organized five more companies; their leaders were John Henkel, Carl Paulsackel, Carl Schleher, Peter Warmkessel, and Louis Henninghausen.

Germain Metternich was elected lieutenant colonel. He was an accomplished veteran of the Baden uprising. Since his arrival in America he had been a freelancer for the German press. He became known in New York because of a play he had written about the birth of Friedrich Schiller, celebrating the poet's one hundredth birthday. Two years earlier it was performed at the Cooper Institute in New York.

Joseph Gerhardt, a company commander in Washington and sometimes the brigade leader, was elected major. Dr. Henry Hoevet, a native of Hanover, was appointed regimental surgeon with Dr. Otto Schenck as his assistant. Four weeks after the completion of Rudolph Rosa's regiment, Captain Vladimir Krzyzanowski, another officer of the Washington militia came to New York and formed the *58th New York Infantry*. Members of his regiment were mostly of Polish descent.

As the day of departure from New York drew near, friends and relatives of the *Frémont Regiment* organized a picnic in Conrad's Park on the East River. Newspapers reported that the German citizens from Yorkville appeared in droves to take part at this farewell party. During the day the families enjoyed the carousel rides and swings and in the evening numerous bands played to which everybody sang or danced.

Colonel Rosa's *Frémont Regiment* was the first garrison in Camp Hempstead on Long Island, where the military training took place. "Report for foot drill on the parade ground," the daily orders read. Colonel Rosa ordered that Prussian drill instructions were to be used. Corporals and sergeants were selected from among those who had experience from their German military service. The recruits should be taught proper military behavior. Because they had permission to speak German in the regiment, they were also trained by German rules. In the wide space there was soon a brisk sound. With military zeal the small groups marched back and forth. "Stillgestanden!" "Rechts um!" "Laufschritt, ... Marsch marsch!" "Rechts schwenk marsch!" So it went throughout the day. When a group tired, an order came promptly: "Around the parade ground in pig's gallop, march, march!"

Some of the soldiers soon regretted that they had chosen these instructors as supervisors. But now there was nothing they could change. Colonel Rosa was smoking his pipe and walked slowly over the parade grounds. Once here and another time there, he stopped and gave practical advice. The good work went on for a few more weeks. Nevertheless, the regiment's recruitment was not yet complete. In the beginning of September, Rosa's regiment was assigned to General Thomas W. Sherman's expeditionary forces. So far, Colonel Rosa had only 675 men. There were supposed to be a thousand of them. The last three companies were greatly understaffed. Two of them did not even have a captain as a company commander: the *8th Company* had First Lieutenant Schleher, the *10th Company* First Lieutenant Henninghausen.

Chapter 3
The 50th Pennsylvania Regiment
The Journey to Port Royal

On September 14, 1861, the soldiers left Camp Hempstead. Everything was ready for the journey. Colonel Rosa announced that the State of New York had officially accepted the regiment into the Federal Army. The *Frémont Regiment* thus became the *46th New York Infantry*. On the same day they embarked at Bay Park for the transfer to Port Elizabeth, New Jersey and then on to Annapolis. The "46ers" were quartered together with the *50th Pennsylvania Regiment* in the buildings of the Naval Academy. Wilhelm Kaufmann mentioned that the *50th Pennsylvania* "consisted almost entirely of Pennsylvania Germans." The *Companies A, C,* and one-half of *I* had been recruited in Schuylkill County. *Companies B , E,* and a part of *H* had been recruited in Berks County. *Company D* came from Susquehanna, *F* from Lancaster, and *G* and *K* from Bradford. Part of *Company H* was from Chester and one-half of *Company I* from Luzerne.

Almost all of the soldiers were native-born sons of German settlers. They belonged to the descendants of the Palatinate and Alsatian immigrants who had arrived in the first half of the 18th century. In most of the companies several members of the same

family served. *Company A*, for example, had four soldiers with the name Stutzman, six were called Wolf, eight Zimmermann, and three Hauenstein, three Faust and six Boyer. In *Company C* six were called Christ, five Schwenck, four Knarr, four Koch, and three Oswald. The common name Boyer (Beyer) in Berks County goes back to the founding fathers. Captain P. Boyer had been an officer in George Washington's German bodyguards. The regimental commander was Colonel Benjamin C. Christ from Minersville in Schuylkill County. He was a veteran of the Mexican War. The New Yorkers found it quite bizarre that someone was called Christ but this family name is widespread among the Pennsylvania Germans. Colonel Christ's regiment had arrived a little late in Annapolis. His men noticed immediately that there was nothing to eat. "Our provisions had not yet arrived, and everything we had in our bread bags had long since been eaten up," recalled Lieutenant Crater, the historian of the regiment. "The comrades of *46th New York Regiment* shared with us their own rations. From this selfless courtesy a close bond developed between the two regiments, which lasted until the end of our four-year service."

For the next three weeks, the two regiments were kept busy with the usual military routine: training, drill and inspections. On October 8th the first forwarded group of recruits arrived from New York along with some latecomers. Many soldiers spent their free time at the nearby tobacco plantations and learned how to make cigars from the harvested leaves. Here in Annapolis the "46ers" lamented their first death. Twenty-one year old Corporal George Hack drowned while unloading the steamer *Daniel Webster*. A further 149 members of the regiment had secretly deserted. The *46th New York* was by far not the only regiment that lost so many recruits. It was a shameful evil in the whole army that people enlisted, under false names, in order to collect the deposit on the bonus of one hundred dollars and then would disappear. Two of the deserters were contemptible pranksters. One of them called himself Christian Pulverfass (Powderkeg) and the other Johann Feige (Coward). This deposit was only $25 and yet these people risked their reputations for it. Even sergeants and officers were sometimes among the runaways. On October 13, 1861, the regiment enrolled Lieutenant James R. Gould, who had been sent by Governor Morgan. After just two months he was gone. For the regiment it was particularly painful when an officer deserted. Only after the case was clarified could this man be removed from the roster and then replaced. The name of this lieutenant stayed on the muster rolls for three more years.

The division to which the "46ers" now belonged, consisted of the following forces:

First Brigade (Brigadier General Egbert L. Viele):
8th Maine, Colonel Lee Strickland,
3rd New Hampshire, Colonel Enoch Q. Fellows
46th New York, Colonel Rudolph Rosa
48th New York, Colonel James H. Perry

Second Brigade (Brigadier General Isaac I. Stevens):
8th Michigan, Colonel William M. Fenton
79th New York, Lt. Colonel William H. Nobles
50th Pennsylvania, Colonel B.C. Samuel Christ,
100th Pennsylvania, Colonel Daniel Leasure.

Third Brigade (Brigadier General Horatio G. Wright):
6th Connecticut, Colonel John L. Chatfield
7th Connecticut, Colonel Alfred H. Terry
9th Maine, Colonel Rishworth Rich
4th New Hampshire, Colonel Thomas J.Whipple

Artillery and Engineers:
1st New York Engineers, Colonel Edward W. Serrell
3rd Rhode Island Artillery, Colonel Nathaniel W. Brown
3rd U.S. Artillery, Battery E, Captain John Hamilton

On October 17th the journey began to Hampton Roads. The officers were accommodated in the cabins. The troops had to be satisfied with the open deck and hold. They slept, ten men side by side, on rough wooden benches that stood four stories high on most ships. Knapsacks served as pillows. Whoever had thought of this hostel, must have been active in the slave trade, thought one of the passengers. The *Webster* was anchored on Hampton Roads as part of a fleet of 75 vessels. The commanding general was still hoping for better weather.

The troops had to be supplied with food from Fort Monroe, because their own rations had been stowed in the ship's hold. “I could hardly imagine worse planning," noted the angry commander of Fort Monroe, Major General John Wool. "If they delay and wait so long, then the Rebels can figure out exactly what is going to happen.” They knew anyway. To make matters worse, an officer of the fleet had defected to the enemy and took along the orders for the expedition and the signal book.

Finally, on October 29th, the flagship *Wabash* gave the signal for the departure with a cannon shot. To eat, there was "Labskaus," a mixture of tiny boiled potatoes with pork and a little bit of crumbled biscuits. At first it was eaten with great appetite, but that soon changed with the onset of seasickness. While the wind got stronger, the temperature decreased further. All ships had to fight hard against the onslaught of the waves. With steadily worsening weather, the fleet passed the coast of Virginia.

After November 1st, the storm grew into a hurricane and the sea was now a real cauldron. Orientation was no longer possible and experienced sailors declared that they had never experienced such a storm in their lives. The older and weaker ships suffered in this raging sea. While the fleet passed Hatteras, the two masts on the already battered *Winfield Scott,* broke. On board were five companies of the *50th Pennsylvania Regiment*. When they sent the distress signals, the gunboat *Bienville* appeared and tried to take on some of the passengers, but the petulant sea made it almost impossible. In the heavy seas the two ships collided so violently that the *Winfield Scott* sprung a leak. An intervention seemed impossible in this weather. Some of the civilian sailors began to leave the fragile clunker. The captain decided to throw a part of the cargo overboard while the desperate passengers helped at the pumps. "The ship was saved by the same soldiers who had been left to their fate without food and water,” recalled one of the officers. The *Ocean Queen*, with the five remaining companies of the regiment still onboard, had been driven off during the storm, so that they no longer knew where they were. The highest-ranking officer, Colonel Leasure of the *100th Pennsylvania Regiment*, opened his sealed orders. He finally learned the destination: it was the harbor of Port Royal.

The fleet of sixteen warships and transports were driven far apart. The *Webster*, with the *46th New York Regiment*, was amongst them. Two transports sank and others had lost part of their cargo. The steamers, *Osceola* and *Union*, with their loads of cattle, were stranded on the enemy coast. The crews of both ships, and unfortunately some of the soldiers, were taken prisoners by the South. Finally, bright sunshine appeared and the rainstorm stopped. Many of the passengers could tell some gruesome stories. When the orders came on the *Winfield Scott* to throw everything overboard, the lifebuoys were the first to go. Most of these soldiers had never been on a ship and did not know to keep such things. Important equipment, tents, guns, and knapsacks were lost. “After this dangerous and stormy voyage, I congratulate the officers and soldiers of my command for their happy and safe arrival,” wrote General Thomas W. Sherman in his report of the day. By November 4, 1861, the largest fleet to date of the U.S., with a total of 12,000 men on board, was anchored in front of the South Carolina coast.

Early in the morning the armada of warships approached Forts Walker and Beauregard. These strongholds were located at the entrance to the deep-sea port. All sailing ships were in tow by the steamers. While the squadron passed the two forts, heavy naval guns bombarded them constantly. Fort Walker, on Hilton Head Island, was the main bastion for the defense of the harbor. The commander was Colonel Johann Wagener.

His two sons were with him as his gunners. The youngest, Julius Wagener, was only fifteen years old. Colonel Wagener and his crew were citizens of the city of Charleston and were among the relatively few Germans who fought for the Confederacy. “The sea was as smooth as glass and a light wind blew the smoke from the guns in our faces,” he recalled. “Our opponents came to within a quarter of a mile and covered us with a continuous and well aimed fire. I answered as well as I could, but the large distance of the moving targets prevented noticeable success.”

By 2 o’clock in the afternoon nearly all the ammunition of the fort had been spent. Only Captain Harms, Lieutenant Melchers and Sergeant Bischoff were still firing at the fleet and covered the evacuation of the fort. Major Huger had now taken over the command. Colonel Wagener was slightly wounded. “Our entire crew consisted of only 220 men, and they had held for seven hours against the overwhelming firepower of seventeen warships,” he recalled. “When we had to abandon the fort we had hardly any opportunity to take anything with us. Munitions and knapsacks were under mountains of sand. Only the distance of the moving targets made it possible for a few of our people to be able to bring out all their clothes, backpacks, and guns.” Wagener's artillery had fired better than he thought. The *Wabash,* Admiral Dupont's flagship, was hit thirty-four times. Thirty-one sailors were wounded, eight of them fatally.

The unequal struggle ended without a formal surrender. Colonel Wagener belonged to the losers. With his men, he crossed the cotton fields of the island. Rebel gunboats took him and the survivors to Charleston. The transport ships of the Union fleet now could come closer and land the troops. The enemy had fled. The *46th New York* took part in the bloodless capture of the forts and islands. The regiment was stationed on Hilton Head Island, where General Sherman established his headquarters. Captain Franz Mühlbauer, with his company, transported some equipment and ammunition from the steamship *Ocean Express* to the island. For this purpose he used a small ferryboat which ran aground just before the landing site. When the soldiers waded to the island, the hid-

den wreckage in the water hurt some of them. Sergeant Julius Arndt received a very severe wound, which bothered him for the remainder of life.

The regiment remained on Hilton Head Island as a garrison, working until December 8th to repair the shattered fortifications. With Port Royal and the surrounding islands, the Union troops had gained an important staging area, which remained in Union possession until the war ended. While recruiting in New York, the officers had failed to engage a suitable pastor as a chaplain for the regiment. Sergeant Wilhelm Winters of *B Company* was now appointed as the new clergyman, after he had convinced his comrades of his abilities. Before then, Winters had been the "postmaster" of the regiment and was seen every morning at 9 o'clock collecting the letters that were written by the soldiers. Before the outbreak of war he had served the "Free German Missionary Church" as their pastor in Philadelphia. He remained in his position as pastor of the *46th New York* until the end of the war. Other promotions had to be made: First Lieutenant Anton Hinckel became a captain and commanded the *8th Company*. First Lieutenant Theodore Hohle, already promoted during the journey, was put in charge of the *10th Company*, which had been commanded by Lieutenant Henninghausen. As a result of the vacated officer's positions, Solomon Fatzer and Carl August Schloezer were promoted to second lieutenants.

Chapter 4
Landing on Tybee Island

It was the fourth month of the war when the two Union gunboats, *Seneca* and *Pocahontas*, left the Atlantic and entered the mouth of the Savannah River. Immediately, they took the huge Martello Tower on Tybee Island under fire. The *"tower"* was actually a round three-story fortress that had been built in the War of 1812 against England. Several weeks earlier, the barrage from the warships would have been returned, but the Confederacy had evacuated the entire coastal area south of Charleston. Only Fort Pulaski, across from Tybee Island, was still occupied. From here the Rebels protected one of their main supply routes for the blockade-runners.

The next logical step for the Federal Forces was the conquest or destruction of this Rebel stronghold. Captain (later Major General) Quincy A. Gillmore, an engineer officer of the Union Army, landed on November 9, 1861, and noted that Tybee was located only about a mile from Fort Pulaski. In an area of solid ground he found a suitable site for the location of the artillery. First of all, Tybee Island had to be occupied by the Union Infantry. This task was assigned to the *46th New York Regiment* under the command of Colonel Rudolph Rosa.

"In a total strength of 35 officers and 673 men, 16 washerwomen, and camp-followers with 15 horses, we left Hilton Head on board the steamship *Cahaba*," he reported. "Upon arrival we anchored near the lighthouse. Before evening I managed to get about one hundred men on shore. At the same time Captain John S. Missroon, a representative of the fleet, gave me command over the island. From our ships I received enough boats, so that I was able to bring the entire force and our equipment on land by four o'clock in the afternoon of the next day." Three days later, Colonel Rosa announced the first death on the island. Paul Mueller, a 43-year-old private, had died of an overdose of laudanum. This was a tincture of opium, commonly used at this time as a sedative. The lighthouse stood on the northeast side of the island. The Rebels had burned out its interior

before they withdrew. Skilled members of the regiment cleaned up the rooms and made them habitable for the use as a headquarters. In front of the building the long lines of tents stood facing the regimental parade grounds.

After Colonel Rosa had his command post set up, he went with some officers to inspect the island. Just past the Martello Tower across from Fort Pulaski, the group was shot at, but no one was hurt. The fort could be seen directly across on the swampy Cockspur Island. Pentagonal casemates and a deep moat surrounded the eight-meter-high giant structure. The brick walls were two feet thick and behind them stood 140 guns on two floors. The marshy terrain around the fort was crisscrossed with wide channels. Rebel officers had recently visited the island and declared a conquest impossible. The commander of the garrison, Colonel Charles Olmstead, was not worried about his safety. It was a very different view on the opposite side. They were now using the new guns with rifled barrels. In contrast to the smooth-bored tubes, they had spiral grooves which gave the projectile fired a twist. This allowed for more impact and accuracy at longer distances.

The 46th New York arrived during the first days of December 1861. “This regiment was assigned here and participated prominently in the siege operations of the fortress. It was composed entirely of Germans. There was the savor of German cooking in the mess and the sound of German songs in their camp. All the commands were given in German at drill. The various bugle calls such as reveille and taps, were the same as those used in the German army,” recalled Captain Horace Porter, the engineer-officer of the regular army. Not only that, just as in Germany, the soldiers addressed their superiors as “Herr Major” and “Herr General.” The companies were numbered after the German fashion from one to ten. The “Regimental Order Book” was written in German. This practice was continued almost to the end of the war, but the German bugle calls were gradually replaced by the American.

Captain Horace Porter stated in letters to his mother that he was worried about the safety of the relatively small force on this island. “They were surrounded by well hidden enemies,” he wrote. “Colonel Rosa comfortably smoked his pipe and told me that he could, if necessary, defend the island with his regiment against five thousand men.” Porter and the soldiers did not yet know that they would spend almost half a year on the island. Curious, they searched through their little island. “Nobody could be seen and the few existing buildings were dilapidated. A few cattle and some horses were present,” recalled the regimental commander. “I met a Swedish sailor, who owned a modest little cabin. He later appeared in our camp and asked if he could become a member of my regiment.”

The "46ers" spent their first Christmas of the war on Tybee Island. It was a day like any other and there was not even a special dinner. Lieutenant Porter had arrived shortly after the occupation of the island. He had the task of the technical planning for the preparation and proper placement of artillery. He moved into a hut in the camp, which had been built by the departed Rebels. Every day he ate his meals with Colonel Rosa and the officers of the regiment. “A year ago I would never have dreamed of sitting here, eating a Christmas meal of roast pork with biscuits,” he wrote on December 26th to his mother in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. The supply improved somewhat and Captain Porter praised the mild climate in December. He noted that he had already gained three pounds. “It is still so warm that you don’t even need a coat,” he wrote home.

The first task of the "46ers" was to protect the coast. Despite all precautions that had been taken, the second death occurred on December 29th. Two guards went recklessly on to an isthmus, which was just opposite the fort. “Like Robinson Crusoe, they openly defied the enemy,” explained Major General Gillmore. Fort Pulaski answered them with a cannon shot that killed 20 year old Karl Moor. His colleague had to quickly hide.

Three months later, in February of the following year, the fleet landed yet another seven companies of the *7th Connecticut Regiment* under the command of Colonel Alfred H. Terry. Next, a detachment of New York engineers and two companies of artillery arrived. The *46th New York* did not have as friendly a relationship with all the officers and men of the other new arrivals as they had with Captain Horace Porter. The comrades of the *7th Connecticut*, who had almost from the beginning camped right next to them, suddenly departed and built a new camp a mile farther away on a plateau. The Puritan officers from Connecticut complained that the sutler of the "German Regiment” was selling alcohol. They felt that this bad influence could spread to their own people.

On January 2nd, Colonel Rosa ordered that the sutler was only allowed to sell “single” drinks of brandy or other alcoholic beverages from 7-8 in the morning or from 5-7 in the afternoon. This trader was responsible for ensuring that none of his clientele became drunk. Larger amounts of alcohol could not be released, and not at all, to any members of other regiments. Later, the sale of alcohol was completely banned. The camp of the "46ers" was a sprawling tent city that was crisscrossed with wide streets. In front of nearly every tent the soldiers built airy arcades and covered the roofs with palm leaves. “The floors were covered with moss and straw. They became comfortable accommodations,” wrote Captain Porter to his mother.

“One disadvantage is that this place is full of mice. During the night they constantly jump over our heads.” At night of March 8th, a fire started in the arcades. It spread very quickly to the end of the street and destroyed a whole section of tents. The fire caused an explosion of several loaded guns and ammunition. On the orders of Colonel Rosa, all arcades with their dry leaves had to disappear. Later on it became known that Private Henry Zimmermann of *4th Company* had intentionally lit a candle behind the tents in order to start a fire. A court martial of the regiment, chaired by Captain Theodore Hohle and First Lieutenant Heinrich Krause, sentenced Zimmermann to four weeks arrest, drinking water and eating bread. He was to receive hot food only every other day.

First Lieutenant Wilhelm Grotowsky of *6th Company* received a letter from his relatives in New York, telling him that his wife had died, apparently during the birth of their last child. In a letter to Colonel Rosa, he asked for a few weeks leave to look after his five underage children. Rosa and General Sherman approved his request, but at a higher level of command his petition was rejected. In mid-March seventeen new recruits for the regiment arrived. Among them was Ernst Gerhardt, the 21-year old son of Major Joseph Gerhardt. He was already a veteran and had served for three months in his father's company of President Lincoln's bodyguards.

Two months later he was promoted to corporal and in September to second lieutenant. Colonel Rosa had some very bad experiences with recruiters of new enlistees. In December he sent the commander of *3rd Company*, Captain Johann Henkel, with six officers to New York City to hire some recruits. This project was planned to last for six months, but Henkel apparently could not find a single man for his colonel. “Now that Captain Henkel has been gone for three and a half months in New York, I can only de-

scribe the results as highly unsatisfactory," Rosa wrote to the commander of his division. He hinted at Henkel's recall. The lazy recruiter was promptly dismissed from the army.

Meanwhile, the most important task began for the soldiers, the creation of an artillery entrenchment. This could only occur under the cover of darkness. While some of the men where building the eleven positions, others brought the dismantled guns on flat boats to the beach. There was instruction in the use of the guns because the army did not have enough gunners on hand. Captain Quincy A. Gillmore, an engineer officer of the regular army, was appointed brigadier general and took over the technical management of the project. The gun parts had to be transported on makeshift sleds over the slippery and wet ground. "Sometimes they sank into the swampy earth. To free them, we often had to take the heavy load off and afterwards put it back on the sleds," recalled one of the soldiers. "We did this work night after night, often in pouring rain and under the constant fire from the enemy." Another job was to camouflage the positions with bushes, so we could not be seen from the fort. During this hard work it was discovered that the recruitment in New York had been much too generous and optimistic. Before the departure of the regiment in Annapolis, the regimental doctor had complained that many of the volunteers were unfit for service.

Many of the recruits knew quite well that they would not be soldiers for very long. It was the bonus of $25 they were interested in. More than sixty of the volunteers had to be dismissed, not to mention the soldier Ernst Winkler, who was only 16 years old and had lied about his age. To fill this manpower gap more recruitment had to be done. Once again a recruiting commission was sent to New York City, consisting of Captain Peter Warmkessel, First Lieutenant George Hösterreich, and Sergeant Karl Ferber. The best place for recruiting was Castle Garden, the immigration depot where ships from Europe docked. Immigrants came at that time without visas and there was no prior screening by the consulates. No one had to present a certificate for a clean criminal record or a medical certificate of his health. Something like this was done on arrival. The recruiters always found enough interested volunteers and often brought quite a few strange birds back from New York.

Finally, on February 26th, the steamship *USS McAllan* anchored in front of Tybee Island and unloaded supplies for the troops. On board was the long awaited paymaster, Major Ira Schmitt. But what a disappointment he brought for the soldiers. So far they had not been paid any money. Now they were to learn that full pay was not waiting for them. Their pay would begin from the day when the army had officially adopted the regiment in September, 1861. It was especially painful for the officers, who were paid only from the day when their promotions had been confirmed. Rosa had been the colonel from September 16th but in fact, he had begun three months earlier with the recruitment and had built up his regiment. He would get no money for that time. In his complaint to General Sherman he wrote that it was a matter of $424 and he threatened his immediate departure. He still did not get the money. On a more positive side, there had to be promotions to replace a number of departed officers. Dietrich Lassen and Friederich Schieferdecker advanced to sergeant and Albert Metzner was promoted to second lieutenant. On the island it was time to organize the regimental band. When recruiting in New York, the officers had not succeeded in engaging the much desired professional musicians. Some of the "46ers" brought along their own instruments. Exept for the buglers, Christian Bischel was the only true musician they had and he was appointed as bandleader.

Chapter 5
Germans on Both Sides of the Conflict
Patrols with Rowboats

Despite all the watchfulness of the Union forces, the Rebels at Fort Pulaski received regular visits from the nearby city of Savannah. To prevent this the fleet anchored the old wreck, *Montezuma,* at a point of three miles south of the fort in the Lazaretto Creek. The *Montezuma* had been intended as a barrier to keep out steam ships. But when the traffic continued with small boats, Captain Anton Hinckel received orders to occupy the wreck with three guns and two companies of the *46th New York Infantry*. The *Montezuma* was loaded with stones and had originally been intended to be sunk in the river along with 25 other worn-out ships to block the way to Savannah.

Captain Hinckel and his troops spent the next eight weeks on the *Montezuma*. Regular patrols with row boats guarded the entrances and many of the nightly smugglers were caught. One of them was a slave who showed the Federal soldiers many secret connections to the fort, and thus it was possible to catch three more Rebels on the island of Wilmington. On February 28th, during further patrols with two boats, these sentries met a much stronger enemy force of the *13th Georgia Regiment*. A wild shootout followed in which one of the Rebels was killed along with two Union soldiers Johann Müller and Louis Herweg. Corporal Anton Mayer and his entire crew of 18 men were taken prisoner by the Rebels. Some of them had been wounded and Franz Etzold, a soldier, died a week later from his injuries. First Lieutenant Alphons Servière was with the second boat. He and his entire crew had to conceal themselves in the thick underbrush of the island. After two days they managed to return to the *Montezuma*.

"I, myself went with 32 more men of my regiment to the *Montezuma*," reported Colonel Rudolph Rosa. "The next morning I went on a reconnaissance mission to the island. At Oatland Creek where we had left our boats, a small paddle-steamer appeared, but when fired upon he turned around immediately." Captain Gillmore visited the island two weeks later with a whole regiment and came upon a band of 800 Rebels. Again there was a firefight and ten of his men were killed.

The German farmer, Dannenfelser, a resident of Wilmington Island, told Captain Hinckel of a force of Germans stationed at Fort Pulaski. He noted later that it was a full company of the *1st Georgia Regiment* under the command of Captain John H. Stegin. "At that time we were very interested to learn something about the situation over there at the fort," recalled Captain Horace Porter. "One of our men suggested that the regimental band should play German music. When the Germans at Fort Pulaski hear this, they may want to come over to us. The proposal was quickly accepted. And indeed, on a particularly dark night, the first one came rowing across on a tree trunk. We received a lot of very important information from him." Colonel Rosa reported this incident to General Sherman. In his letter to the general he wrote, "The defector from Fort Pulaski was named John Hirth. He immediately became a member of the *46th New York Regiment*."

John Hirth proved to be a good soldier and was later promoted to corporal and afterwards to sergeant. He completed his first enlistment of three years and later re-enlisted. At the end of the war he was one of the last members of the regiment to be discharged. Lieutenant Louis Henninghausen, who became a lawyer after the war, also recalled how

the soldiers were singing German songs on quiet evenings, which were reciprocated by the German Confederates at Pulaski with the same melodies. The commander of the fort thought it was a dangerous game and forbade such singing.

The camp of the *46th New York* stood directly across from the citadel of the enemy. The men could hear their own bugle calls and the trumpets of the enemy. Day after day, they knew exactly when the other side was being awakened or was going to sleep. Likewise, the enemy heard the bugle calls of the "46ers." In early April, just when the artillery positions were almost completed, General Sherman was dismissed and replaced by Major General David Hunter. His deputy, Brigadier General Henry W. Benham, was the new division commander of the three brigades at the Savannah River. It also included the regiments on Tybee Island. On April 9, 1862, construction work was done, and the bombardment of Pulaski could begin. Under the guidance of Captain Karl von Seldeneck, six officers and thirty men of the *46th New York Infantry* were trained as artillerymen. They served in three shifts as gunners at the battery "Sigel". All day long the heavy projectiles rained down on the fort at 15 minutes intervals. The smaller guns shot every two to three minutes. At first light, the next day, the bombardment continued.

Soon wide gaps in the walls appeared, especially from the shots of the rifled guns of the batteries "Sigel" and "McClellen". They ate their way deeper and deeper into the brick colossus. The grenades flew quickly through the gaps in the walls and exploded inside the fortress. Seven of the guns could no longer shoot back. It was only a matter of time before the Rebels would give up or die by the explosions of their own ammunition. Union fire came in smoothly and without hindrance. The walls on the south side were so wide open that the grenades had free access to the powder magazine. The powder would surely explode soon. But it did not go that far. On April 11, 1862, by 2 o'clock, after only one and a half days of artillery fire, Fort Pulaski finally surrendered.

"After we saw the white flag over the fort, a delegation rowed across to accept surrender," reported one of the officers. After completing the formalities, we were flying the "Stars and Stripes" over the fort. The 361 members of the garrison were taken away as prisoners by the steamship *Oriental*. Among them was Colonel Olmstead, the commander of the fort. Eighteen of the wounded Rebels were unconditionally released and set free at the enemy's lines.

General Thomas Sherman, commander of the Union troops, had been dismissed recently. His successor, General Hunter, immediately declared that after the surrender of the fort all slaves in his area would be set free. This lasted for only a few days. President Lincoln canceled the announcement as soon as he heard about it. Only one soldier on either side of the battle had been killed. Additionally, Second Lieutenant Peter Lunkenbein of the *46th New York* was hit by shrapnel and died two weeks later in the hospital. They sent home the wounded enemy troops but neglected an exchange for the eighteen soldiers of the *46th New York Infantry*, who had previously been taken prisoners. As soon as Captain Gillmore appeared at the lighthouse with the document of capitulation, General Benham criticized him for this thoughtless omission. Corporal Wendel Bleckle and the remaining prisoners were released six months later by exchange.

Just as the soldiers had built up the guns, the same men now had to disassemble them. Again, the heavy tubes came on the sleds and were drawn to the transport ships. The same soldiers who, as gunners, destroyed Fort Pulaski, now had to repair it. The *46th New York* sent eight skilled masons for this project: August Arnold, Joseph Dann, Henry

Herzberger, Johann Breitwieser, Johann Lautenschläger, Gallus Fiesel, Eduard Tietz, and Johann Schleuch. Meanwhile, the newly arrived recruits were drilling in front of the lighthouse under the direction of First Lieutenant Carl Marzioch and Sergeant Andreas Seelig.

Chapter 6
Lt. Colonel Metternich's Tragic Death - Attack on Secessionville

Fort Pulaski had capitulated and except for the usual guard duty not much more was left to do on Tybee Island. Such boring pursuits were not very popular with the soldiers, especially when they were surrounded by little more than mud and reeds. On May 12th mainly Irishmen, from the *28th Massachusetts Regiment,* occupied the neighboring camp. Many of the soldiers were drunk. Some of them came over to visit and began a noisy argument. As the corporal of the guard, Franz Bischoff, tried to arrest the disorderly guests, the bayonet of a sentry accidentally injured Lt. Colonel Metternich, who had come rushing to their aid. He died the next morning from this wound. In a subsequent investigation it was found that solely the drunken rioters of the other regiment had caused this accident. Although they were known as fearless fighters, the brigade commander, Colonel Daniel Leasure, described them in a letter to his daughter as “raw Irish.”

Metternich’s death was the third fatality on the island and was not even combat related. Many members of the *46th New York Infantry* learned at the funeral from their chaplain, Dr. Wilhelm Winters, who their Lt. Colonel had been. In his earlier military career he had served as a lieutenant in the *4th Hessian Infantry Regiment* at Offenbach. After his discharge in 1830, he started a short career as a political journalist, where he supported the beginning insurrections and democratic aspirations.

These activities brought him three years' imprisonment in the fortress of Marksburg and subsequent exile in Switzerland. Back in Germany, during the democratic uprising in Baden, he was elected to the position of deputy commander of the Citizens’ Militia in Mainz. After the failure of the revolution, he had to leave Germany. In 1850 he came to New York. In America, Germain Metternich served as a functionary of the German Turner gymnastics movement. In this capacity in Baltimore, in March 1853, he staged the National Festival of gymnastics clubs from New York, Philadelphia, Boston, Cincinnati, and Washington.

Pastor Winters ended his sermon saying, “In later years we will remember, with nostalgia, this little island, where in the shade of a palm tree rests the body of one of our greatest patriots and citizens!” Shortly after the funeral was over, the occupation of Tybee Island came to an end. Several of the officers were given two weeks leave, and others who had rendered outstanding service were promoted. Former Captain Gillmore received his promotion to brigadier general and was later transferred to Kentucky. The commander of the *7th Connecticut Regiment*, Colonel Alfred Terry, moved up to brigadier general.

Major Joseph Gerhardt stepped into the position of the late Lt. Colonel Metternich as deputy regiment commander of the *46th New York Regiment*. Captain Julius Parcus advanced to major. First Lieutenant Carl Schleher took over as captain of *5th Company* and

replaced Captain Philipp Schwickart, who had to resign for health reasons. Private Victor Praxmarer, a former captain in the *7th Infantry Regiment*, was promoted to first lieutenant and took the place of the dismissed Lieutenant Carl Meyer. Sergeants Ferdinand Freileben and August Claussen were appointed second lieutenants.

On May 20th, soldiers received a small allocation of alcohol from a confiscated supply. According to the contemporary opinion of the time, it was supposed to cheer up the troops. Because of the previous bad experiences with this practice, the portion had to be consumed under the supervision of an officer. It was so ordered by the newly promoted Brigadier General Alfred Terry. "The allocation should be drunk immediately on the spot," announced Adolph Tamsen, the adjutant of the *46th New York*. "Soldiers who don't want to drink their share immediately or hold their allotment back to sell it, must return this alcohol immediately."

In the meantime, in front of Fort Pulaski on the Savannah River, the steamer *Cosmopolitan* arrived. It was time for the *7th Connecticut* and part of the *46th New York* to be transported to Jones Island. After a short sea voyage, on May 31st, the troops landed in Seabrook and marched over the causeway that linked Jones Island to James Island. They found accommodations on Grimball's Plantation. Other ships brought the rest of the regiment and the cavalry on June 2nd. Unloading at the makeshift pier was a time consuming maneuver. It was here that Lieutenant Albert Metzner became the victim of an accident. With a broken leg he had to be rushed to the hospital. Later, in November, he was discharged as unfit for service.

General Henry W. Benham commanded the Union troops on the island. His goal was the capture of Charleston, but first he had to overcome the fortifications at Secessionville. Benham's entire force was divided into two divisions of 5000 men each. The *46th New York Regiment* belonged to Brigadier General Isaak I. Steven's *Second Division* which consisted of two brigades. The *8th Michigan*, the *7th Connecticut*, and the *29th Massachusetts* belonged to the *First Brigade*. The "46ers" formed the *Second Brigade* with the *79th New York* and the *100th Pennsylvania* under the command of Colonel Daniel Leasure.

From the day of arrival, while the soldiers of the regiment camped on the island, they served as sentinels and built fortifications. Lt. Colonel Joseph Gerhardt was now commanding the regiment. Colonel Rosa stayed behind on Tybee Island due to illness. On June 9th Gerhardt wrote in his daily orders, "The lack of responsible officers makes it necessary to hold a new election." As a result of the vote, he named Sergeants Wilhelm Osten, Heinrich Ohmes, Johann Kesselmark, and Corporal Otto Haberland to second lieutenants. He did not have a captain commanding every company. Therefore, he assigned First Lieutenant Grotowsky to lead the *6th Company* and First Lieutenant Alphons Servière the *2nd Company*. Shortly thereafter he advanced Servière to captain.

The campground on the island was damp and uncomfortable. Most of the time it was raining and every now and then the men were exposed to the enemy's artillery fire. Because of the soft ground, it took several days to unload equipment and artillery. Several clashes with the Rebels had already taken place. On June 8th, the *46th New York*, together with a company of cavalry, where sent along Legarville Road for reconnaissance. This led to an extended firefight with several casualties. The soldiers killed were Heinrich Depke, Wilhelm Fichtel, and Johann Kilz. Samuel Langner received a fairly serious injury and Lieutenant August Schloezer received a lighter injury. Emil Krieg, Frank Koch,

Jacob Yut, and Johann Meyer were also injured. One of the Rebels had been killed along with seven horses of the enemy's cavalry. It had become apparent that the enemy was well entrenched. General Benham still ordered the attack on the Lamar battery. Behind this was Fort Johnson. Capturing this fort would open up the road to Charleston.

"It was about 2 o'clock in the morning on Monday, June 16th, when an officer went through the tents and woke us up," recalled one of the soldiers. "While we were eating our meager breakfast, the company commander announced that we would attack with unloaded guns and do our work with the bayonets." Someone in the audience murmured and quite a few of the listeners loaded their weapons anyway. Nevertheless, the division moved quite silently along in the following attack. The brigade succeeded in surprising the enemy's pickets. At day break the first few shots sounded. The "46ers" watched as the comrades of *8th Michigan Regiment* stormed the enemy's entrenchment with loud screams. As soon as the Rebels opened up with their artillery fire everybody had to fall back into the protection of the trenches.

In the first wave of the attacks, the Federal troops reached the parapet and came into close combat with the enemy but they could not penetrate the fortress. The *46th New York Regiment* was among the second wave of attackers. Grapeshot from the Confederate artillery rained down on them. As soon as the supply of grapeshot was exhausted, broken glass, nails and chain links followed.

General Benham recognized that he could not advance any farther and ordered a retreat. The whole debacle lasted slightly longer than half an hour and resulted in a total of 525 men killed, wounded, and missing from General Steven's division. The brave *8th Michigan Regiment* alone had lost 185 men, when they tried to enter the fort. In the official reports of the war, this whole slaughter was called "the Battle of Secessionville." Colonel Rosa presented a long list of the dead and wounded of his regiment on the evening of June 16, 1862.

Killed were Second Lieutenant Ferdinand Sehrt, the Corporals Henry Herzberger, Friedrich Klingler, and Ferdinand Hoefle, and also the soldiers John Kennedy, Franz Heinlein, Johann Stolz, Christian Sittinger, and Thomas Higgins. Among the wounded were the Lieutenants Wilhelm Grotowsky and Wilhelm Otten, the Corporals Gottfried Oetterer, George Bölz, Charles Schom, Philip Theyss, Charles Klingler, and the trumpeter Johann Müller, as well as the soldiers Jacob Meinhardt, Friedrich Hoese, Jacob Weber, Michael Walt, Adam Jonas, Berndt Witzmann, Charles Fleischmann, Andreas Schaub, Louis Walter, Henry Schneider, and Simon Loesch. Lieutenant Wilhelm Grotowsky and the soldier Michael Walt died two weeks later of their injuries. Grotowsky's five children were orphaned by his death. Their mother had already died in February.

At roll call, the regiment numbered just 441 men, including officers. The Union suffered large losses in this debacle and the stronghold, Lamar, still remained in Rebel hands. It was alleged that General Benham had acted without proper authority. As a result of this disaster, he was discharged and replaced as division commander by General H. G. Wright. The second brigade commander, Colonel Leasure remarked after the battle, that a second assault on Fort Lamar would have been a sure victory. The Confederates had already expended all their ammunition.

Two years later, shortly before the war ended, Charleston was finally taken. Due to the high losses in the regiments, their commanders received permission to send out recruiting commissions. Colonel Rosa chose Captain Peter Warmkessel, who had already

shown success with a previous recruitment. The other members of the commission were Captain George Travers, the Sergeants Wilhelm Bentsch and Philip Betz, as well as the Corporals Friedrich Zingsem and Ernst Dorr.

The regiment remained on James Island for another two weeks. General Hunter tried to get more troops from Washington for a new expedition against Charleston. When nobody was sent, he ordered the evacuation of the hated island. Finally, on July 4th, the steamer *Cosmopolitan* arrived for the transfer of the troops to Hilton Head. Three days later the entire brigade continued on to Beaufort, a pretty little town on the island of Port Royal. Some of the officers were told here about their promotions, which had already taken place on June 1st. Joseph Gerhardt was commissioned as a lieutenant colonel and Captain Julius Parcus received his promotion to major. First Lieutenant Alphons Servière, the company commander of *2nd Company*, was promoted to captain.

Meanwhile, General Pope's campaign in Virginia had begun. To reinforce Pope, the army transferred seven regiments to Newport News, Virginia on July 12th, including the *46th New York Infantry*. Thirty-eight men of the regiment were still reported as sick. The healthy soldiers numbered just enough to form five companies. Flat boats and dinghies carried luggage and equipment to the ships lying at anchor. The "46ers," together with the *100th Pennsylvania Regiment*, boarded the new steamer *Merrimac*, which made here its maiden voyage. The men were not in the best condition after their long stay on James Island. However, Colonel Rosa said in a letter to his brigade commander, Colonel Leasure, that they had recovered significantly after receiving regular meals.

After the arrival of all the troops at Newport News, the build-up of the *Ninth Army Corps* followed under the command of General Ambrose E. Burnside. There were three divisions totaling 13,000 men, commanded by Brigadier Generals Isaac I. Stevens, Jesse L. Reno, and John G. Parke. The "46ers" again formed with the *100th Pennsylvania* and the *79th New York* the *Second Brigade* in General Stevens' *First Division*. It was the same team with which the regiment had been fighting on James Island. The *100th Pennsylvania Regiment* came from the southwest corner of the state, where Oliver Cromwell's original English revolutionaries had settled. The inhabitants of this region called themselves "Roundheads" and so did the members of the *100th Pennsylvania*.

Colonel Daniel Leasure, the original commander of the regiment, led again the brigade. He was particularly appreciated by the troops. As a physician by profession, he also took care in this capacity, of the welfare of his men. The brigade camped in the new Sibley tents, which provided ample room for sixteen persons. Two weeks were spent organizing and training. On August 2nd the order came to march. They sailed the Potomac upriver to Aquia Creek on the steamer *Atlantic*. They waited here for a day to take the train for the remainder of their journey.

During this time General Stevens noted that the officers of the *46th New York* had supplied themselves with a few crates of wine which they paid for from their own money. They would be able to grab a bottle from time to time as they were less interested in the whiskey, that their colleagues from the other regiments drank. He ordered the entire stock to be confiscated by his "Provost Guards." General Stevens did not listen to their objections and explanations. A troop of the *79th New York Regiment* was ordered to guard these bottles during the night, so that not one bottle would disappear. The following morning, while all the bottles and boxes were still there, the wine was gone. The trains were ready to leave for Falmouth but it was too late to investigate these thefts. The dishonest

guards later said that they had been in charge of just the bottles and crates. Nobody had mentioned the wine.

General Stevens had never been a friend of the “46ers” and was now even less so. (In 1853, Stevens was the commander of an expedition for the exploration of the Northwest.) The guards, who had shown themselves as thieves, belonged to the Scots who, at the beginning of the war dressed in kilts. Now they wore pants like all other soldiers. The regiment was known for such pranks. In August 1861, they staged a mutiny. The “Highlanders,” as they called themselves, wanted to go home. General McClellan seized their flags until they were able to show better behavior. The “46ers” were never again brigaded with the Scots throughout the remainder of the war.

After the short ride from Aquia Creek, the brigade reached Falmouth on the Rappahannock. “The weather here was quite pleasant,” recalled one of the soldiers. “With the knapsack as a pillow, we rolled ourselves into our blankets and slept under the open sky until morning.”

Chapter 7
Transfer to General Pope's Army - The Battle at Groveton.

There were no longer any bridges at Falmouth. The Confederates had destroyed them shortly before their departure. General Christ’s Brigade crossed the Rappahannock over a narrow and dangling bridge, built by the pioneers. On the subsequent march through Fredericksburg, only older men, women and children could be seen. All able-bodied men seemed to be serving in the rebel army. The remaining residents showed their open preference for the enemy.

The Divisions of the *9th Army Corps* built their tents on a hill just past the city. It was the same location, where the great battle of Fredericksburg was going to be fought later in the war. The Regiment rested here for the next ten days. The order to march came for the *1st and 2nd Divisions* on August 12, 1862. General Stevens ordered all nonessential clothing and unnecessary equipment to be left behind at the depot. General Burnside stayed also in Fredericksburg along with the *3rd Division* and took up the garrison duty in the city. General Pope's army was located further south between Culpeper Court House and Gordonville. The 9th Army Corps had orders to occupy Fredericksburg and a line along at the Rappahannock to secure a supply route for the Army.

The engagement, in which the Regiment participated, was know later on in history as "General Pope's Virginia Campaign". The main struggle itself was the “Second Battle of Manassas,” also called "Second Battle at Bull Run." So far was the war in the East of the country not showing results to the satisfaction of President Lincoln. His troops lost in the East, while they won in the West. Lincoln had brought one of the most successful military leaders of the West, General John Pope, to Washington to take over the command of the Union forces in Virginia. He then combined all the troops of the Generals Frémont, Banks and McDowell and put them under Pope’s command. This force became known as "The Army of Virginia". Perhaps General Pope would have been competent to the assigned task, but unfortunately for him he was faced with the two of the smartest and most daring commanders of the South, Robert E. Lee and Thomas J. Stonewall Jackson.

When the divisions of the *9th Corps* arrived in Virginia, they were late in their deployment, but not to their own fault.

Colonel Leasure's Brigade was still in the same division, but consisted only of two regiments, the *46th New York and the 100th Pennsylvania.* They marched through Rappahannock Station and Culpeper and camped near the Raccoon ford of the Rapidan. In a reconnaissance patrol on the west side, the Brigade bumped into a part of J. E. B. Stuart's cavalry. The notorious rebel leader himself was with his Adjutant General in a farmhouse and waiting for a hot lunch, being prepared for them. Stuart was just able to escape through the rear window, but the Adjutant was taken prisoner. While the Brigade remained here for three days, Colonel Leasure visited a nearby country estate belonging to Dr. Stringfellow, a prominent politician of the South. His brother Lawrence was serving as a soldier in the rebel army. Dr. Stringfellow was found to be hospitable and offered Leasure and his companions some refreshments.

"While drinking a glass of buttermilk, we observed certain men in blue skirmishing across the field toward a flock of remarkable long-legged sheep, which they corralled, and white and blue coats mixed up in pairs of blue and white disappearing over the fence and into the woods. One of my staff remarked, that the men in blue were members of the 46th New York Regiment, and part of my command. Dr. Springfellow asked me if I permitted that kind of work, and in answer I could only say that kind was involved in the vote of Virginia in favor of secession, and I was not disposed to interfere with the natural course of events," recalled Colonel Leasure. "It was a melancholy sight to me, who but a short two years before, had been this same man strutting through the corridors of Willard's in the nation's Capitol swinging a huge cane, swelling with marked self-consciousness of his personal importance; and now he was obliged to stand tamely by while his flocks were appropriated by a lot of Yankee Dutchmen."

In 1861 Dr. Stringfellew had been one of the most ardent advocates of secession and war-mongers of the South. Around midnight on August 19th the Rapidan camp was broken off. The Brigade marched along the river to Bennett's Ford, when suddenly the order came to go back the same route in the rear of the Rappahannock. The exhausting march lasted long into the following night. Pretty soon the soldiers started to miss their knapsacks, which they had left behind in Fredericksburg. They did not know that they would never see them again. The planned project was for a few days only, but soon it developed into an endless campaign. On August 23rd at first light of day when the soldiers were preparing their breakfast, a shell struck suddenly nearby. No one was injured, but the sand had come flying up into the pots and spoiled the meal. At the same moment the trumpets called for assembling. Immediately the march continued. Many of the hikes were haphazard, going in this direction and then back to where they just come from. After every hour was a rest of five minutes. But there was no permission given to eat. In passing along the fields, the soldiers picked up corn and chewed green ears.

The trek continued day and night. Artillery and wagons used the road. Soldiers squeezed their way along the side. The men were quite exhausted from this aimless confusion. Even the horses were suffering from the constant lack of food and water. For days and nights they had not been unsaddled or taken off their harnesses. The Federals followed Jackson's troops, but everyone knew that Lee's army was marching somewhere behind them. The exhausted troops were thrown thoughtless back and forth, as it appeared to the soldiers. The rebels contributed purposely to General Pope deception by

staying hidden, but now and then showed themselves. They knew every road and bridge, but the union troops were moving in a strange land.

On August 25 the Brigade had been on their feet throughout the day. At midnight a staff officer came to Colonel Leasure and explained that he had taken the wrong direction. Leasure had followed the local citizen, who was sent to him by the Army. Now where the Brigade Commander was looking for him, he had long disappeared. Historians give us a very negative view of the blustering and boastful General Pope. He felt that his enemies were on the run from him. In reality, they were tiring out his troops and preparing an ambush from the side. Pope thought Stonewall Jackson's 25,000 men at his back were a weak chain of pickets. This left them free to attack the large depot of the Union Army, where the guards were taken by surprise. Major Heros von Borcke, a former Prussian cavalry officer in the service of the Southern States, reported later about this coup:

"The plateau of Manassas presents an area of about three miles square, over which the Yankees had built a town of storehouses, barracks, huts and tents, which was fortified on all sides by continuous redoubts. Here were collected stores and provisions for an army of 100,000 men.

"We had taken the troops guarding the place completely by surprise, capturing the greater part of them and twelve pieces of artillery. The quality of the booty was very great, and the luxuries absolutely incredible. It was exceedingly amusing to see here a ragged fellow regaling himself with a box of pickled oysters or potted lobster; there another cutting into a cheese of enormous size, or emptying a bottle of champagne; while hundreds were engaged in opening the packages of boots and shoes and other clothing, and fitting themselves with articles of apparels to replace their own tattered garments."

Underwear, footwear, corned beef, hams, barrels of flour, whiskey and lager, everything could be used to help the Southerners. They sent the goods on captured railroad cars to their capital. What they could not carry, they burned. Among the spoils was also General Pope's personal baggage, his dress uniform and $350,000 in cash from the office of the paymaster. Even more valuable for the rebels was the diary of the General Staff with copies of the sent and received messages. Two days later, on August 27th, Stonewall Jackson's infantry captured Pope's supply trains at the Orange & Alexandria Railroad, , about a hundred fully loaded wagons. Here too, the rebels destroyed everything that was not to be used. After this they were undetectable for the next two days. The "46ers"were nearby in their camp with the Brigade and saw the smoke rise. They had been on a long and arduous march. Here on an open clover field they cooked their coffee. Just as the darkness came on, they looked to their right and saw the huge fire, which lit up the nightly sky for miles around. Right at daybreak they went back on the march. It was 11 o'clock when they arrived at Manassas and saw the burnt-out buildings. Only then they knew what had happened the night before.

Stonewall Jackson's rebels had retreated into silence. On August 28th they occupied a long wooded ridge north of the Warrenton Turnpike (U.S. 29 & 211). Here they entrenched themselves on the slope of a semi-finished railroad. The other rebel army under Longstreet's leadership was on the way here to be united with Jackson. The hiding game was over. Here in the vicinity of Groveton, they planned their final battle. General Pope still did not know what was going on. His force consisted of 70,000 men and the enemy had only 55,000. On August 28th the 46th New York marched towards Centerville and camped after dark with Leasure's Brigade on the edge of a familiar site. Here had a

year earlier the first Battle of Bull Run taken place. This area was a marshy terrain with ditches, hedgerows and sunken roads running through meadows. Colonel Leasure tied his horse to a post and only then he realized, that it was a horse's leg, a relic of the previous battle.

A few minutes later the brigade car appeared and the two regiments were supplied with ammunition and rations. Only a few hours remained for the soldiers to sleep. At 4 in the morning the Adjutant of the Division awakened them. Immediately after a modest breakfast they were ready to march. Lt. Colonel Gerhardt received orders to accompany a transport train for the quartermaster with six companies of the regiment. For Colonel Rosa remained only four companies of his Regiment. The *100th Pennsylvania Regiment* together with the rest of the brigade had only a total strength of 450 men, who marched now to Groveton. They did not yet know what had happened: The Union troops had finally "found" their opponents. At least that's what General Pope thought. In fact, Stonewall Jackson had himself intentionally presented to his enemies on this afternoon of August 28th. He had attacked them at the Warrenton Turnpike.

It had been the two army corps of McDowell and Sigel, who had ran into the Confederates. They had been on their way to Centerville. McDowell's Division "King" was struck here pretty hard, but continued on the march to Centerville. Franz Sigel's Corps reported the encounter immediately to General Pope and took defensive positions south of the Rebel Army. On the right of his frontline he posted the Division of Carl Schurz. In the middle he placed General Milroy's Brigade with the *West Virginia Regiments 2, 3 and 5 and the German 82nd Ilinois Regiment.* The left wing he reserved for General Schenck's Division.

Chapter 8
Carl Schurz's Division at the Battle of Manassas

The 29th of August 1862 was a bright, hot Summer-day in Virginia. In the small village of Groveton arrived *Fitz-John Porter's 5th and Heinzelmann's third Army Corps*. Franz Sigel's *first Corps* was already in town and fighting the enemy since the early morning hours. General Pope was now ready to put the opposing army "into the bag", as he thought. But such an easy maneuver was no longer possible. Many of his troops were exhausted from the long marches and scattered far apart. General Franz Sigel had followed General Pope's orders and met the enemy by daybreak at 5 o'clock. Carl Schurz commanded the 3rd Division in Sigel's *first Army Corps.* In his memoirs he describes the attack on Stonewall Jackson's positions:

"As the sun rises in a cloudless sky, our troops are ready to attack. Looking around, I see to the right and left a considerable expanse of open ground with some slight elevations and a few scattered houses surrounded by trees, houses already famous from the first battle of Bull Run. In front of me a little tributary of the Bull Run, called Young's Branch; beyond this, some patches of timber, and farther on some patches of forest. General Sigel's Corps, about 9000 men strong, forms the right wing of our army; my Division forms the right wing of Sigel's Corps. I receive the order to advance and attack. Not the slightest sign of the enemy is to be seen. He is supposed to be posted in the woods yonder, but just where and in what strength, nobody knows. All is perfectly still. Neither do I hear anything stirring on my left, where I am to connect with Milroy's Bri-

gade, nor beyond, where Schenck's Division of Sigel's corps stands, nor beyond that, where several divisions of other Corps are supposed to be. However my orders are positive and clear: Advance at sunrise and attack.

"Evidently I am to open the proceedings of the day. My command quickly fords Young's Branch, and on the other side I promptly form it in order of battle, first line deployed, second line, 150 paces behind in column, skirmish line well ahead, flanking party on the right. Right wing, Col. Schimmelpfennig's Brigade, left wing, Col. Krzyzanowsky's, my artillery so placed as to command the edge of the forest before me. I gallop along the front to say a last word to the commanding officers. The troops begin to cheer, but are promptly stopped because we want no noise.

"At a brisk pace the skirmishes pass the detached groups of timber and enter the forest. The line of battle follows at the proper distance. No sign of the enemy. A quarter of an hour elapses. Perfect stillness all around. Are the enemy there at all? But hark! – two musket shots in rapid succession, apparently near the spot where my skirmishers are to join Milroy's. I hear the clear ringing of those two shots now. Then a moment's silence, followed by a desultory rattle of musketry along the line. No more doubt; we have struck the enemy. The rattle is increasing in liveliness and volume, but the enemy's skirmishers seem to be falling back. Seem to be – for we can see very little. The woods are thick, permitting no outlook to the front, nor to the right or left, beyond a few paces. Moreover, they are soon filled with white powder smoke. I am impatient to advance my line of battle with greater energy. But the troops, having marched forward through thick forest with tangled underbrush, the ranks are broken up into irregular little squads.

The company officers, shouting and waving their swords, do their utmost to hold their men together. Still they press on. I cannot see anything except what is immediately around me. The troops are out of my hands. I am with Krzyzanowski's Brigade, and conclude only from the firing. I hear on my right, that Schimmelpfennig's is in its place, hotly engaged. But lo! Here is an aide-de-camp bringing me a message from Schimmelpfennig: 'All right so far, but the devil to pay ahead. Examine the two prisoners I send you'. The prisoners stand before me – stalwart, wild-bearded, weather-beaten, ragged, simple-minded looking men. I examine them separately, and they tell me the same story. Stonewall Jackson confronts us with two divisions, each about 8,000 strong. This agrees with the reports we have received of his strength. Jackson expects Longstreet to join him inside of a few hours.

"Stonewall Jackson, the most dashing rebel General, with at least 15,000 men of the best Confederate infantry, right before me, and I have, at best 3000 muskets. Now the rattling fire of the skirmishers changes into musketry, regular volleys, rapidly following each other. We have evidently struck Jackson's main position. The roar of my immediate front continues. Brave old Milroy, who commands on my left, startled by what he subsequently calls in his report the 'tremendous fire of small arms' on my line, sends me two of his regiments to help me in what he considers my stress. At the same time, General Steinwehr, commanding the second Division of Sigel's Corps, hurries on with one of his Regiments, the twenty-ninth New York, which I can put in reserve. The rebels make another vicious dash against my center and throw it into confusion. But we succeed soon in restoring order, and with a vigorous counter-charge, we regain the ground we had won before.

"It is now about ten o'clock, nearly five hours since we have gone into action. An officer announces to me that General Kearny of the Army of the Potomac has arrived in my rear and is looking for me. I find him in the open just outside of my woods – a strikingly fine, soldierly figure, one-armed, thin face, pointed beard, fiery eyes, his cap somewhat jauntily tipped on the left side of his head, looking much as we might expect a French General to look. He asks me about the state of the action and the position of my command, and requests me to shorten my front a little toward my left, so as to make room for his division on the right. I gladly promise this, and dispatch orders to Schimmelpfennig accordingly.

"Kearny has hardly left me when I hear a tremendous turmoil in the direction of my center, the rebel yell in its most savage form, and one crash of musketry after another. I conclude that the rebels are making another and more furious charge. I order the commander of the artillery to load his pieces with grapeshot, and the twenty-ninth New York, held in reserve, to be ready for action. Not many minutes later, three of my regiments, completely broken, come tumbling out of the woods in utter confusion. A rebel force in hot pursuit, wildly yelling, gains the edge of the forest and is about to invade the open, when the artillery pours into them one discharge after another of grape, and the twenty-ninth New York, volley after volley of musketry. The rebels are stopped, but still hold the edge of the woods. The twenty-ninth advances, firing, and behind it, sword in hand, we rally the broken regiments.The men are quickly rallied and reformed under their colors. Schimmelpfennig's Brigade remained perfectly firm, and Krzyzanowski's left had yielded but little.

"Presently an officer of the corps staff comes at a gallop. He hands me a letter addressed by General Sigel to General Kearny, which I am to read and forward. Sigel requests Kearny to attack at once with his whole strength, as the rebel general, Longstreet, who is to join Jackson, has not yet reached the battlefield, and we have still a chance to beat Jackson alone. This is good sense. Instant action being necessary, I prepare at once for another charge, and hearken eagerly to hear Kearny's guns on my right. But I hear nothing. Probably Sigel's request conflicts with orders Kearny has received from his own superiors. But construing Sigel's request as implying an instruction for myself, I order a general advance of my whole line, and put in every man I have. It is gallantly executed with a hurrah. The enemy yields everywhere. The brave Colonel Klemens Soest of the 29th New York falls at the head of his men, seriously wounded. On my left the fight comes to a stand at an old railway embankment, nearly parallel with my front, which the enemy use as a breastwork, and from behind which they pour a gallant fire. On my right, Schimmelpfennig's Brigade, by a splendid charge, gains possession of this embankment, and goes even beyond it, but is received there with so murderous a cross-fire of artillery and infantry, that it has to fall back; but it holds the embankment firmly in its grip. General Sigel sends me two small mountain howitzers, which I put at once into the fire-line of my left brigade. With the aid of their effective short-range fire, that brigade, too, reaches the embankment and holds it. The enemy repeatedly dashes against it, but is hurled back each time with a bloody head.

"But my hope that on my right the troops come from the Potomac Army under Kearny and Hooker, would attack at the same time, is sorely disappointed. Had their whole force been flung upon Jackson's left in conjunction with my attack in front, we might have seriously crippled Jackson before Longstreet's arrival.

"While on my right all is quiet, I hear on my left, where Milroy, and, beyond him, Schenk's division stands, from time to time heavy firing, which sways forward and backward, from which I can only conclude, that the fight is carried on with varying success. The men have been under fire for eight hours, almost without intermission. They have suffered the loss of a large number of officers and soldiers in killed and wounded. The men still in the ranks have well reached the point of utter exhaustion. Thus the possession of that part of the woods which my division had taken and held, was in good order delivered to the troops that relieved me."
So far the description of the first hours of battle of Manassas by Carl Schurz.

Chapter 9
The Division Stevens Arrives for the Battle
Colonel Rosa Seriously Wounded

It was eleven o'clock in the morning on August 29, 1862, when the main part of the Union Army arrived at Groveton, including Leasure's brigade and the four companies of the *46th New York Infantry*. General Stevens had orders to assign his brigades to support the troops that were already engaged. He sent the *First Brigade* to General Kearny and the *Second* and *Third Brigades* to General Robert Schenck's division of the *First Army Corps*.

General Stevens himself remained with Colonel Leasure and told the soldiers they were to be used as a fighting force. Such a hint meant mainly getting killed or wounded in comparison to when they stayed in the reserves. The bright morning that started out very sunny, had now become somewhat obscured as the two regiments marched together with Lieutenant Benjamin's battery to General Schenck's hard embattled division. The path led them through thick bushes and stony ground until they reached the Warrenton Turnpike.

The road to the west ran through dense shrubbery. After a brief exchange of fire with the pickets of the enemy, the two regiments ran into a column of about two hundred unarmed Union soldiers who had been in captivity with the Rebels. Their guards couldn't find an opportunity to send them to a Rebel prison camp. The unarmed soldiers said they had been on their way to Richmond when they and their guards kept running into Union troops. General Stonewall Jackson had them paroled and released.

So far Franz Sigel's divisions had to bear the brunt of the fighting alone. Since 8 o'clock in the morning, Schenck's division stood behind General Fitz-John Porter's *Fifth Army Corps*. He was unable to reach the front line because Longstreet's Rebels had arrived and then pushed their way in front of him. Fitz-John Porter was not about to intervene in the battle. The Rebels were, in his opinion, too strong for him to attack. General Pope did not believe him and afterwards put the blame on him for the failure. Porter was later dismissed from the army for insubordination. He had always been one of Pope's sharpest critics. The other commanders also showed very little unity. When Franz Sigel requested General Kearny, through his adjutant, to attack simultaneously with him, he replied to the bearer of the message: "Tell your general that I do not want any foreign in-

terference with my command." Without any doubt, it was a commentary regarding the predominantly German regiments commanded by Sigel.

Leasure's brigade marched up the steep slope and came into the fire of the enemy's pickets. It was twelve noon when they reached the lines of General Schenck's division. In front of them stood Hubert Dilger's battery, which had just been pulled out because his munitions had been expended. Lieutenant Benjamin's guns moved on General Steven's orders into the vacated artillery position. Between the gunfire of the two sides the first gray uniformed formation of the enemy approached. "We saw the black smoke and heard the sharp cracks of the Springfields," recalled the brigade commander. "It told us that our men were on guard. The enemy's attack failed. Their second attempt failed as well."

With four additional batteries the artillery was finally able to keep the other side in check. At four o'clock in the afternoon, after the enemy was reinforced, the Union lines became shaky. The blue coats now had to fight Longstreet's army, which had just arrived. Sometimes the noise stopped on both sides when the gunners were cooling their tubes. The soldiers hoped to hear the guns of the *Fifth Army Corps* but on the left side was everything quiet. General Fitz-John Porter still had not attacked.

To the right of the Union position a brigade had been driven back by the enemy. Shortly thereafter, forty blue uniforms were seen behind enemy lines and they were now prisoners of war. They belonged to General Milroy's troops from West Virginia. Meanwhile, it turned 5 o'clock in the afternoon. Longstreet's Rebels had reinforced the enemy. Schenck's division had no other choice but to go back slowly. On the other end of the frontline, Generals Hooker's and Kearny's troops replaced General Schurz's division, which now marched into reserve behind the lines. "The section of the front, which had been taken and held by my division, was handed over in good condition to the troops who relieved us," wrote Carl Schurz in his official report. Twenty-six regiments were now holding the segment that Schurz had taken in the morning and then held with only six regiments.

General Stevens' two brigades belonged to the troops who had just replaced Carl Schurz's division. Colonel Leasure was later ordered to bring his brigade to the other side of the line and support General Kearny's division. Kearny was located 3,200 feet farther to the right and slightly north of the Warrenton Turnpike. The main part of Longstreet's army was entrenched in front of him. When the brigade came under constant gunfire, they were ordered to change their position. The Rebels occupied the railway embankment on the side of the broken front. Most of Leasure's brigade was ordered to drive the enemy from their entrenchment. General Stevens, Colonel Leasure, and Colonel Rosa accompanied the advancing troops. Once the Rebels noticed the attackers, they started to fire with their rifles which was then answered by the combined Union artillery. Enemy bullets hit the brigade commander Leasure and his horse, which he took behind the lines. After an hour of desperate fighting, the ammunition was running low and the two regiments were forced to retreat. The Rebels followed them. The brigade formed quickly again and was reinforced by other troops.

At nightfall the battle was over. The two regiments of the *46th New York* camped for a short time on the field they had just reached. Here they observed in the distance the two flickering lines of fire. It was the flash of gunfire, where their own troops were positioned against Longstreet's Rebels. Colonel Leasure, a surgeon by profession, returned to

the battlefield and looked after the wounded, despite his own injury. At one point he got behind the enemy lines and was nearly taken prisoner. Some of his staff drove back the Rebels with their bayonets and helped their commander on a horse, on which he reached the dressing station. The "46ers" involvement resulted in four dead, including Captain George Hoesterreich. He had been struck at the very moment he had taken the threatened regimental flag. Also killed were Sergeant Joseph Reichert, Johann Breitwieser, and Gottlieb Noak. If the entire regiment had been in action, they would certainly have had greater losses. The other half of the regiment had been assigned to guard a transport train and got away without the slightest scratch.

Colonel Rudolph Rosa, riding at the head of the troops, was also hit. An enemy bullet had torn into his right thigh. His brigade commander, Dr. Leasure, personally provided him with first aid. Colonel Leasure came back to the army after his recovery. In the meantime, Lt. Colonel David Leckey led the brigade. Colonel Rudolph Rosa was replaced by Lt. Colonel Joseph Gerhardt. The leadership of the "Roundheads" went to Captain John Cornelius.

For the night, the brigade marched to their assigned campsite along the road to Manassas The Battle of Groveton was over, but it was only the prelude of what was going to come.

Chapter 10
As a Rear Guard in Chantilly
Back toWashington

At nightfall, on August 29, 1862, the engagement at Groveton was over, but it actually had been the beginning of the main battle of Manassas. Jackson's Rebels had departed and regrouped with Lee's troops for another attack. As soon as General Pope became aware of Jackson's disappearance, he thought his enemies had fled. Prematurely, as it turned out, he telegraphed Washington and announced his great victory. When he arrived the next morning in pursuit of his enemies, they approached him instead and attacked from the flank, causing the entire Union Army to falter. The great battle of Manassas had begun, where the *46th New York* played a much lesser roll than the day bevore.

The entire brigade was deployed to secure the artillery and had no losses at all. They were ordered on the evening of August 30th to depart from the battlefield. General Pope had decided to return to Washington, but the army could not retreat completely unmolested. Whenever they crossed a forest or a canyon the Rebels attacked the columns, "like a swarm of angry bees," recalled an officer of the division. The Union troops crossed Bull Run Creek at Centreville. Immediately after the town they met the enemy on the road to Warrenton. At the subsequent encounter two soldiers, Johann Tiedemann and Friedrich Wagner, of the *46th Regiment* were killed.

The next morning the column moved farther north. "Yesterday we had no dinner and today there is not even a chance for a breakfast," remarked one of the marchers. After his success in Manassas, General Jackson followed the retreating army. He came along Little River Turnpike and approached Pope's army from the side. On September 1st, he made his last attempt to block his opponent's march to Washington at Chantilly. Fortunately this was realized early and the worst could be avoided. In anticipation of the enemy, the brigade was assigned to a position at the Little River Turnpike. At Reid House

the division swung laterally through a corn field and then into an orchard. The vanguard noticed a thin line of gray uniformed Rebels, who were on their way to the same roadway where Pope's Army marched. Soon they heard gunfire, a confirmation that the gray troops were aware of their blue adversaries. The brigade charged forward through the apple trees and fired at the enemy soldiers, who were now running. In between fights the New Yorkers shook the trees and filled their empty bread bags with the loot. In the adjoining woods gathered the opponents for another encounter. General Stevens noted the numerical superiority of the enemy.

He sent his aide, Lieutenant Belcher, to the marching army at Warrenton Pike and asked for help against Stonewall Jacksons Rebels. Lieutenant Belcher was riding from division to division, but had no success finding support. Finally, he met General Kearny who was glad to help and dispatched Birney's brigade. Kearny himself came along. His forces went to the Reid House and then through an open field, then marched in the direction where they heard the gunfire. The regiments of Stevens' division, including the "46ers," had just formed a battle formation of three lines and were driving back the enemy. They stormed over a cornfield and jumped over a fence at the back. The Rebels were hiding in the grove behind the fence and met the Union troops with devastating fire.

When the attack came to a standstill, General Stevens jumped from his horse and grabbed the flag of the *79th New York Infantry*. Previously, he had been their commanding officer. He stormed ahead of the troops and a few seconds later was killed by an enemy bullet. "General Stevens died at the moment our victory was secured," recalled an officer of the regiment. The command of the division went to Colonel Benjamin Christ of the *50th Pennsylvania Regiment*. The battle lasted only for a few minutes, but the enemy fell back in complete disorder. A terrible storm began at that time and the rain soaked the departing warriors of both armies. General Kearny rode alone through the dark forest. He was looking for his troops, but instead he ran into a detachment of Rebels. He realized his mistake too late and when they attempted to take him prisoner, he tried to escape and was shot. Historians call these skirmishes the "Battle of Chantilly." After nightfall the *46th New York* was part of a Federal force of 4,000 men, who covered the retreat of the army and saved it from further harassment. Together, with the "Roundheads" (the members of the *100th Pennsylvania Regiment*), they supported the artillery at the Reid House. The gunners now bombarded the distant enemy lines where they saw the flashing tubes of the Rebel artillery.

Afterwards the two regiments remained for awhile on the battlefield. The campfires gave them an opportunity to dry their clothes and equipment. Their departure started after 2 o'clock in the morning. Most of the time they marched across the fields and streams that were filled to the brim from the rainy weather. When they finally reached the road, it was packed with artillery and baggage wagons and the troops on foot had to squeeze themselves along the sides. Late in the afternoon the *46th New York* reached Alexandria, where they pitched camp. The army arrived in Washington on September 4th and camped at Meridian Hill. During General Pope's Virginia Campaign were 15,000 Union soldiers killed in addition to 9,000 Rebels. "We knew now that General Pope was not a very intelligent military leader. Our opponents performed far better than we did ourselves," concluded the historian of the *79th New York Regiment*. Immediately after arriving in the capitol, Pope was relieved and replaced by General McClellan.

After all these disappointments and hardships for the *46th New York Infantry*, there was still more bad news waiting. Captain Anton Hinckel had been badly injured while recruiting new members for the regiment. He had gone to New York City with Sergeant Philip Betz and Corporal Frederick Zingsem. When Hinckel was driving his wagon with the new soldiers to the army medical examination, one of the horses shied and hit him. Hinckel severely fractured his right leg and had to be hospitalized. After he spent eight months in the hospital, he was dismissed from the army as unfit for service. On September 20th, Captain Theodor Hohle replaced Anton Hinckel as the recruiting officer. Hohle had previously been on convalescent leave in New York City. The severe losses in Virginia made a regrouping of the *Ninth Corps* necessary. The *45th Pennsylvania* was attached as a third regiment to the *Second Brigade*. The commander of that regiment, Colonel Thomas Welsh, replaced the injured brigade commander, Colonel Daniel Leasure. General Orlando Willcox stepped into the command of the division and replaced the fallen General Stevens.

On September 5th, while the defeated army rested for several days, the Rebel leader, General Lee, crossed the Potomac. Two days later, on September 7th, he reached Maryland and stood forty miles north of Washington. All these reports initially shocked the people of the North. It was not so much the disappointment over the failure of their own troops but now they expected the Rebel Army to march into Baltimore, Philadelphia, or Washington. Stonewall Jackson, with an army of 25,000 men, captured the large supply-depot at Harper's Ferry and its garrison of 10,000 men. Equipped with the captured guns, he moved to Maryland and joined up with General Lee's Army at Sharpsburg. General McClellan sent out a part of the Army of the Potomac, including the *46th New York*, to stop the Rebels.

The Union troops were anxious to enter Maryland and leave a better impression than the marauding Rebels. Lt. Colonel Gerhardt declared in his order of the day, on September 8th, while the regiment camped in Leesboro: "The purposeless firing of guns, absence from the camp, and drunkenness is strictly prohibited. For the stealing in the fields, especially corn and potatoes, which belong to citizens of the country, there are drastic disciplinary punishments."

The march of the division went through Newmarket and Frederick. After crossing the Monocacy River the *46th New York* camped in Middletown. The regiment consisted of only 369 soldiers and 23 officers. The wounded regimental commander, Colonel Rosa, was still in New York on convalescent leave. The regiment's next contact with the enemy came on September 14th after General Lee's troops had occupied the three passes that lead through the mountains to Sharpsburg. The brigade was ordered to support a different division of the Union under the command of General Jacob Cox. Cox's division was engaged in clearing the Rebels out of one of these mountain passageways, called Shriver's Gap. With the brigade, the regiment attacked along the right side of Cox's division. The *45th Pennsylvania Regiment* stormed up a steep embankment with Gerhardt's troops. Located on the left was the new *17th Michigan Regiment,* which received its first contact with the enemy. The enemy retreated but rallied again behind a series of stone walls. Eventually, they were driven out from their protected defenses.

Colonel Gerhardt wrote the following note in his official report: "Our regiment used the existing covers which explains our slight losses. After almost all the ammunition had been spent, the *9th New Hampshire Regiment* came as relief. Unfortunately, these

fellows began to fire even before they reached our position and needlessly endangered the lives of my men. We were able to avoid the worst in that we immediately threw ourselves to the ground. After some time we went forward again. Along with the *9th New Hampshire Regiment*, we pursued the fleeing enemy."

The troops from New Hampshire were an inexperienced new regiment and were under fire for the first time. This explained their amateurish action. During the bloodiest fights in a cornfield landed a shell near the 46th New York. The explosion killed the soldiers Jacob Brütsch and Carl Voigt. Wounded were Major Julius Parcus and the following men from his company: Emil Hecker, Anton Ullrich, and Wilhelm Hamberg. Parcus became disabled from his injuries and had to resign from his command. The brigade captured a total of 150 prisoners during this short confrontation, many of whom were wounded. At nightfall the enemy was in disarray and disappeared in the direction of Sharpsburg. The Union brigades collected more than a thousand rifles, which were left behind by the fleeing enemy. During the night the victors were sleeping next to the battlefield, until they were relieved by the arrival of other troops. Once they had buried their dead, the brigade moved on to Sharpsburg. The important mountain pass was now safe for the passage of other troops.

Chapter 11
The Battle of Antietam
The Road to Fredericksburg

On September 14, 1862, the Rebel Army was driven from the passages of the South Mountains. By engaging the Union forces long enough, they had gained time to give Stonewall Jackson's forces an opportunity to unite with General Lee's troops at Sharpsburg. At nightfall the Rebels reached their goal and disappeared. At Sharpsburg they calmly prepared for the impending engagement.

The *Ninth Army Corps* and the *46th New York Infantry* continued their march toward the expected confrontation. They marched from early morning until nightfall. The soldiers had only a few hours of sleep and just after midnight they continued their march until dawn the next day. The regiment took quarters at Geeting's Farm in Porterstown. About ten miles west of Sharpsburg, the hostile force of 55,000 enemy fighters waited for them. The Union troops, with more than 87,000 soldiers, were still at an advantage. As expected, the bloody battle of Antietam began in the morning. In anticipation of the attack, the Rebels had taken up positions on the other side of the Antietam River north of Sharpsburg.

Even though they were numerically weaker, they were entrenched in a very secure location behind this little river. The Federal forces would have to storm their position through an open firing range. The *Ninth Corps* was located on the left flank before the Rohrbach Bridge and received the order to attack. After they were bloodily repulsed in two attempts, the *51st New York* and the *51st Pennsylvania Regiments* succeeded in capturing the important bridge. The *46th New York* had stayed behind with the divisions in reserve, but now took part in the fighting. As a path opened, they immediately went forward on the Rohrersville Road.

"After crossing the bridge at 2 p.m., the regiment was ordered to ascend the hills on the left of the road," recalled Lt. Colonel Gerhardt. "A short distance beyond the

bridge over the Antietam, we suddenly came under a galling fire of shot and shell thrown from a battery on a very commanding position from a hill to our right. Officers and men of my command have shown bravery and coolness in this engagement, which could not have been surpassed by any other troops. *The 46th New York Volunteers* were one of the very first to advance. They marched in line of battle over the crest of several hills, receiving the enemy's fire without flinching. At the first rail-fence we halted, having a line of skirmishers of the *9th New York Volunteers* in front of us."

From the hills just beyond the bridge, General Wilcox's division marched on a sunken road, which followed along a small creek to Sharpsburg. On the left, Welsh's brigade followed in battle line. Colonel Christ's three regiments followed on the right. The *100th Pennsylvania Regiment* preceded as pickets. The "46ers" marched in the middle of the brigade. The *45th Pennsylvania Regiment* followed to the right and the new *8th Michigan was* on the left. They walked half a mile over uneven ground toward Sharpsburg. Everywhere behind the fences and bushes the enemy waited ready to fire on the attackers.

"We now marched up and down hills constantly exposed to a murderous fire of shot, shell, and musketry. We passed several regiments, who were laying on the ground and remained inactive. Our regiment was soon in front of all of them and in the most advanced position. Here the men engaged the enemy for several hours and fell back only when a superior number of the enemy attempted to outflank us. In retreating, the regiment was the last to leave a stone fence, behind which a stand was made. The regiment sustained proportionally small losses during this occasion. The only explanation for this is, that our men knew how to avail themselves of every little covering on their way. They were in an advanced position at the time the battle and in the direct path of the enemy's bullets, but were spared because the Rebels fired too high. Both officers and men have demonstrated equal bravery during the last two engagements. I have no occasion to particularize personal merit," recalled Joseph Gerhardt. At this point the regiment numbered only 262 men and 16 officers.

The enemy reinforcements mentioned by Joseph Gerhardt, were the Confederate forces of General A. P. Hill. They had arrived late in the afternoon. Hill's artillery used the guns and horses he had captured at Harper's Ferry. Not only that, many of these Rebels were dressed in the "blue" of the North. They wore the uniforms they had stolen from the Union Depot and were now confusing the Union troops. After the heavy guns of the North had gotten into position, they finally succeeded in throwing back the enemy forces. Towards the evening, the "46ers" arrived with the brigade in Sharpsburg and occupied the first rows of houses. They succeeded in capturing the known Rebel officer Twiggs and some of his followers. The fierce hand to hand fighting reached an intensity never seen before. With the onset of darkness, this murderous battle finally ended.

The regiment was ordered to a position near the river and spent the following night there. Two soldiers of the regiment, Wilhelm Poth and Johann Christian Beck, died in this battle of Antietam. The following members of the regiment were wounded: Captain Carl August Schloezer, Lieutenants August Claussen and Henry Ohmes, and the Sergeants Emil Müller and Carl Horn. Also wounded were the soldiers Carl Wolff, Andreas Mayer, Wilhelm Hess, Heinrich Herzog, Johann Reising, Heinrich Schorm, Jacob Kiesel, and Franz Beck. William Hamberg was hit twice, first at South Mountain and again in Sharpsburg. Captain August Schloezer received a dangerous wound to his head. After a few days in the hospital he was able to return to the regiment.

"At the last light of day, I went back across the battlefield," remarked one of the Union soldiers. "Everywhere lay the dead Rebels, mostly slender figures with pale yellowish faces. They were uniformed in any color between light gray and coffee brown. When they died these poor creatures were completely emaciated by their meager diet and the long marches. We felt no sense of hostility at such a sight." At dawn the next day, it was discovered that the army of the South had disappeared. General Lee had collected the remnants of his army and on the evening of September 18th, he marched toward Virginia. The Union troops themselves were so weakened they could not follow. The *46th New York* was deployed for the burial of the dead while other soldiers took care of the wounded.

The Battle of Antietam had been a bloody affair for both sides. The total losses for the Union Army in killed and wounded amounted to about 12,000 men; for the Rebels 10,000 men. On no other day of this war had more soldiers died than in Sharpsburg. Neither side had won this confrontation, but at the end of the conflict General Lee's army had to retreat. The Union troops followed, but far too late. The Rebels were already marching through Virginia and were securing their positions in Fredericksburg.

Due to the high number of losses for the *46th New York Regiment,* some changes became necessary. Lieutenant August Schloezer had already taken charge of the regiment from the fallen company commander, Captain Hoesterreich. With effect of September 9th, he was promoted to captain. He himself had been wounded twice. The head wound he received on September 17th at Antietam made life for him so difficult, that he had to be discharged. Captain Franz Muehlbauer resigned on his own request. First Lieutenant August Claussen took his place and moved up to captain.

Corporal Otto Haberland had just been promoted to second lieutenant on September 12th. He went to Lt. Colonel Gerhardt and confessed to him, that he was not suited as an officer. On September 20th he was discharged in accordance with his wishes. The commander of the *7th Company*, Captain Carl Paulsackel, became sick in Maryland and went to the hospital on September 23rd. He left the hospital without the knowledge or permission of his superiors and visited New York City. After Lt. Colonel Gerhardt became aware of this, he wrote Paulsackel a letter to his home address and asked him to come back. When he did not respond, Gerhardt reported him to the army for "Unauthorized Leave of Absence" causing Paulsackel to be dismissed from the army on November 11, 1862.

When the brigade was camping on September 28th at the Antietam Ironworks, Colonel Gerhardt noted at morning roll call that arms, equipment, and uniforms were indeed in order. The health of officers and enlisted men left much to be desired. In his report he noted that the regimental doctor had found evidence of dysentery. Better nutrition like rice and vegetables, for example, could improve this. The largest part of the *Ninth Army Corps* remained in Maryland until the end of October. They encamped in Pleasant Valley and later at the Potomac River not far from the present town of Dargan. Those who were not otherwise occupied went to catch fish and roasted them over an open fire. Because of the high losses in the previous battles, a regrouping of the divisions was necessary and as a result the *46th New York* was separated from the Pennsylvanian "Roundheads." Colonel Benjamin Christ, from the *50th Pennsylvania Regiment*, was now the commander of the *Second Brigade,* which consisted of the *46th New York*, the *50th Pennsylvania* and the *8th Michigan Regiments*. The commander of the *8th Michigan Regiment*

was Major Ralph Ely. Lt. Colonel Thomas Brennholz now commanded the *50th Pennsylvania Regiment*. The *46th New York* had been with this regiment a year before their separation in Annapolis.

President Lincoln and General Burnside visited the Potomac Army while they were stationed here on October 3rd. A number of new recruits for the *46th New York Infantry*, who had been recruited in New York by Captain Theodore Hohle, arrived at this time. Another important but temporary change took place on October 8th. Colonel Daniel Leasure of the *100th Pennsylvania Regiment*, who had been wounded in Virginia, returned from sick leave and took over command of the *First Division*. The former division commander, General Wilcox, stepped temporarily into General Burnside's position as commander of the *Ninth Army Corps*.

The days became cooler and very soon the ill-equipped soldiers missed their coats and blankets, that they had left behind at Fredericksburg in the spring. General Stevens had ordered all unnecessary baggage, including knapsacks, to be handed over to the quartermaster of the city. In September, First Lieutenant Schmiedel and two men went to Baltimore, Washington, and Alexandria to look for the luggage. He found five of the officers' cases but none of the property of the enlisted men. He was told that the luggage had been burned, when the army had withdrawn from Fredericksburg. Colonel Gerhardt quickly requested replacements due to the lack of clothing. After two weeks he noted at morning roll call that his men still lacked coats, pants, shoes, socks, blankets, underwear, bread bags, and knapsacks. So it remained, despite his repeated requests through December.

After Lincoln's visit, the long trek through Virginia began, however, wind and rain made a crossing of the Potomac River impossible. Pioneers had built a pontoon bridge near a small town that the German founders had at one time called Berlin. When better weather arrived on October 27th, the largest part of the army was able to march over this shaking catwalk to the other side to Lovettsville. The road from here was still called the "Berlin Turnpike." In 1916, the town of Berlin was renamed Brunswick.

On October 18th, the *46th New York* continued with the brigade to a stretch called "Point of Rocks," to provide picket duty along the river. Two weeks later, when the remainder of the army crossed over the bridge, the "46ers" waded across the Potomac at a shallow area called "Heedle's Ford." "The water was about three feet deep, yet we crossed the river in this terrible cold," wrote Lt. Colonel Thomas Brennholz to his family in Reading, Pennsylvania.

The regiment reached Lovettsville, Virginia the same day. They marched on and rested at Gaskin's Mills for a week, because of supply difficulties. There was very little for them to eat. The *46th New York* recalled this place as "Camp Starvation." The brigade had to wait here until the rest of the army had crossed the Potomac. They reached Waterford on October 29th and the regiment remained here until November 2nd. The "46ers" were surprised when they ran into their old regimental commander, Colonel Rudolph Rosa who had been wounded at Groveton. Rosa had not recovered enough to step back into his old command. The regimental surgeon, Dr. Otto Schenck, in consultation with the medical director of the division, authorized him four more weeks of convalescent leave. The regiment went through a roll call for the payment of wages, then marched on to Upperville and Rectortown. In the evening of November 7th, they reached Orlean, VA. It was cold and windy in these mountains and towards morning the first snow fell. As the

regiment marched through this barren area, supplies became more and more unavailable. Food was scarce.

At the next stop, while waiting in Waterloo, the "46ers" gained a new squad of recruits. This almost brought the regiment to the full strength of 980 men. With more men in the companies, soldiers had to be promoted to lead them. First Lieutenants Friedrich Schieferdecker and Johann Michael Kesselmark, moved up to captain. Sergeants, Friedrich Sussdorf, Richard Riegel, Gustav Hubert Schmidt, and Heinrich Dreyer were promoted to second lieutenants. For the next several days Waterloo became the rallying point for the separated marching brigades. The troops received the news on November 8th, that their commander, General McClellan, was replaced by General Burnside. Burnside was the new commander of the entire Army of the Potomac. General Orlando B. Willcox led the *Ninth Army Corps*.

Brigadier General Carl Schurz belonged to the reserve forces of the Potomac Army. He was stationed with his division nearby at the small town of New Baltimore. Along with several other generals he went to a reception to congratulate the newly appointed commander.

"I was present at the gathering of generals who met General Burnside after his promotion to congratulate him," he wrote in his memoirs. "Burnside, in his hearty way, expressed his thanks for our friendly greeting and then, with that transparent sincerity of his nature, which made everyone believe what he said, he added that he knew he was not fit for so big a command. The selection of Burnside, having such a great responsibility was not a happy one. To his credit, Burnside had indeed led some comparatively small scale operations….he was also a very patriotic man whose heart was in his work. His sincerity, frankness, and amiability of manner made everybody like him, however, he was not a great general and he, himself, felt that the task that he had been assigned was too heavy for his shoulders."

The *46th New York Infantry* moved on through the towns of Salem and Rappahannock Station. The regiment reached their destination after a three-day march with the *Ninth Corps* and here they met the rest of the Potomac Army. At the end of November this mighty force of 116,000 men reached Falmouth on the Rappahannock River, opposite Fredericksburg. At last they were on solid ground, where they built a large encampment. The changes in command of the army took some regrouping. On December 1st, Colonel Christ's brigade was reinforced with two more regiments. The *Second Brigade* of the *First Division* consisted now of the following five regiments:

29th Massachusetts, Lt. Colonel Joseph H. Barnes
8th Michigan, Major Ralph Ely
27th New Jersey, Colonel George W. Mindel
46th New York, Lt. Colonel Joseph Gerhardt
50th Pennsylvania, Colonel Thomas S. Brennholz

The commander of the *29th Massachusetts Regiment* was actually Colonel Ebenezer W. Pierce. He was rarely seen in the field and most of the time his deputy, Lt. Colonel Joseph H. Barnes, commanded the regiment. Colonel George Mindel, who for some time acted as the brigade commander, led the *27th New Jersey Regiment*. Mindel came from Frankfurt am Main and previously had been the adjutant general of the Poto-

mac Army. While in Falmouth, so many organizational changes were made, that the men of the *46th New York* put in a request to General Burnside for a transfer to General Franz Sigel's command.

Franz Sigel commanded the German regiments almost from the beginning. His *Eleventh Army Corps,* along with some other troops, formed the reserve forces of the Army of the Potomac. It was safe to drink beer there. The transfer request was, of course, on the grounds that they would be more effective with the other Germans. When the request was rejected, the "46ers" did not know that it was to their advantage. Later at Chancellorsville and Gettysburg the *Eleventh Army Corps* suffered heavy losses.

The days in Falmouth ran slow with the eternal, unchanging routine of military life. At least the supply ships came to Aquia Creek. So now there was plenty to eat. The regiment set up a kitchen, where regular meals were cooked. Lt. Colonel Gerhardt ordered that an officer was always present in the kitchen to supervise the work of the cooks. All the regiments of the brigade took turns in guarding the transports and on other days they acted as pickets on the Rappahannock. They almost felt pity for their enemies on the opposite bank. Despite the cold, they were inadequately equipped. Many did not even possess a coat.

The weather was not favorable for camping. Some days were bitterly cold and on December 10th, the snow was knee-deep between the tents. No one had any idea how things would proceed if this kind of weather continued. From the banks of the Rappahannock they heard the guns that fired on the first rows of houses in the city and they wanted to drive away the snipers who were hiding there.

Chapter 12
The Bridge Across the Rappahannock
Lt. Colonel Gerhardt Takes Over Command

The little town of Fredericksburg was located in front of a steep embankment. Way up on top, General Lee's 78,000 Rebels were dug in behind a sturdy stone wall. It was December 1862. The Union troops had just arrived on the opposite hills and were separated from their enemies by the city and the river.

When General Burnside ordered the construction of five bridges, he realized that the pontoons had not arrived yet. This delay gave the enemy some extra time to prepare for the big blow. Finally, work began on December 11th. Early in the morning, thick fog over the river protected the bridge builders from the enemy's bullets. But by lunchtime, as the project was almost half done, the final protective layer of mist disappeared and made the job more hazardous.

The *46th New York* had arrived the day before. The soldiers had to stay outside without tents during this cold, damp winter night. They were located right in front of the bridge that was still under construction. When completed, this structure would lead them straight into the city. Each of the men received food for three days and sixty rounds of ammunition. They waited for what would happen next.

"I received orders for my regiment to protect the engineers, while they were building the bridges," reported Lt. Colonel Gerhardt. "The Rebels fired on us from the houses on the other side of the river. While they prevented the work of the engineers, our

rifle fire achieved very little against them. Covered by the salvos of our artillery, a group of 100 men from the *89th New York Infantry* reached the opposite shore by boat. Approximately seventy Rebels were captured and the bridge could be completed. We rushed over as the first regiment and occupied the city. Along the railway line and the main street I posted pickets, until the evening, when more of our troops arrived," he wrote in his report.

After the whole army had crossed the bridge, General Burnside gave orders for the general assault, which later earned him so much criticism. His troops were exposed on all sides to the enemy's rifle fire as they tried to climb the rocky slopes. Burnside's heavy artillery, with a total of 147 guns, stood on Stafford Heights and took the entrenched Rebels under fire. High up above the artillery a giant yellow balloon floated with a rocking basket underneath. In it sat the observer, Professor Thaddeus Lowe, and his deputy, Captain John Steiner. Now and then the balloon was pulled down allowing the observer to report on the troop movements of the enemy. The report was supposed to be given directly from above by the telegraph, just invented by Samuel Morse, but it didn't function correctly.

General Carl Schurz was located, with his division as a reserve, on the other side of the river and watched this macabre spectacle: "Our men advanced with enthusiasm. A fearful fire of musketry and artillery greeted them. They would stop a moment, then plunge forward again. Through our field glasses we saw them fall by the hundreds and their bodies dotted the ground. As they approached Lee's lines of entrenched positions, sheet after sheet of flame shot forth from the heights, tearing fearful gaps in our lines. There was no running back for our men. They would sometimes stop or recoil only a little distance, but then doggedly resumed the advance. A column rushing forward with charged bayonets almost seemed to reach the enemy's ramparts, but then would melt away. Here and there large numbers of our men, within easy range of the enemy's musketry, would suddenly drop like tall grass swept down with a scythe. It was all in vain. The enemy's line were so well posted and protected by a canal, a sunken road, stone walls, and an entrenchment skillfully thrown up, they could not carry out a frontal assault. The early coming of night was welcome. A longer day would have only prolonged the butchery."

The *46th New York*, as a regiment of Colonel Christ's brigade, was located on the riverbank and occupied a section of the reserve line. "The battle had gone against us," wrote a soldier of the brigade. "During the night some of the shattered regiments, which had been at the front all day, filed sadly through the streets on their way to the river, telling their story of disaster as they passed along." In the afternoon the brigade was ordered to support General Franklin's corps on the left of the city. On the way there, the regiments were hit by heavy artillery fire, which caused hefty losses**.** Gerhardt's regiment made it to the city unmolested, but George Mindel's *27th New Jersey Regiment* lost 17 men, who were either killed or wounded.

The next day, Sunday, December 14th, turned out quite peaceful. The soldiers expected at any moment, to be thrown into this losing battle, but nothing happened. The "46ers" joined Colonel Christ's brigade in the reserve line at the edge of town next to the gas works. The enemy's artillery fired incessantly upon the large gas tank. Now and then the rounds hit the sides of the gasometer without achieving much. Large pieces were torn from the iron tank and rolled across the terrain. Nobody was hit.

In the afternoon the regiment received orders to break camp and get ready to leave. Burnside had recognized the danger of a complete defeat. He broke off the fighting and ordered a retreat across the river. Everything was done as quietly as possible, so the enemy would not be alerted. It was not until morning that the Rebels discovered the disappearance of Burnside's army. Now they could quietly take the warm winter coats and shoes from the dead Yankees, which they needed so badly. The losses to the Union were 12,600 men killed or wounded. For the Rebels the losses amounted to 5,300.

At three o'clock in the morning, Gerhardt's regiment arrived back at their previous campsite in Falmouth. Most of the soldiers thought it was too late to put up tents. They spread their blankets out on the ground and slept in the open field. Just when they had fallen asleep, it started to rain and in a few minutes their clothes were completely drenched. Rations had not yet arrived and did not come for the next several hours, so there was nothing to eat for breakfast except biscuits with coffee. Right after their scanty meal they had to clean and dry their clothes. In the previous battle, the *46th New York* came through almost unscathed, as they had not participated in the storming of the disastrous wall. "Our losses during this time were four men with slight wounds who are under medical care at the camp," recalled Joseph Gerhardt.

For the next few days it was bitterly cold and uncomfortable at the campground. The regiments of the brigade took turns at picket duty on the Rappahannock. Every day they watched the enemy scouts on the other side of the river. Sometimes they got involved into friendly discussions with the enemy. On such occasions the two groups came closer and began their neighborly chats. Such contacts were strictly forbidden, but tolerated by some officers. The *29th Massachusetts* was one of the sister regiments of the "46ers" and both were part of the same picket line. One of the Union soldiers rigged up a small wooden boat and sent it laden with coffee and newspapers over to their opponents, who then sent it back with Virginia tobacco and Richmond gazettes.

On December 23rd, General Edwin Sumner arrived in Falmouth as the commander of the "Grand Division". This unit had been formed from the *Second* and *Ninth Army Corps*. He was accompanied by his staff officers and walked along the front of the lined up regiments. The inspection lasted until late afternoon. Immediately afterwards each company began constructing their winter quarters. Trees were felled from the nearby forests to build the walls of the blockhouses. The joints were filled with mud and tents served as roofs. On the inside stood a small fireplace molded out of clay. Barrels were set, one on top of the other, and served as chimneys. The troops spent here in Falmouth their second Christmas of the war. The soldiers wished each other a Merry Christmas, otherwise, it was a day like any other and without a festive mood.

The year of 1862 ended with some bitter, cold days. The army was comfortably furnished and waited patiently for spring. Officers celebrated the arrival of the New Year, but only if they had enough money and could buy whiskey. At the *29th Massachusetts* Regiment across on the Camp Street some officers had been promoted. They had a double reason for celebration and became so loud, that the men in their tents couldn't sleep. They complained to Colonel Gerhardt, who was the duty officer. The lieutenants who were blamed avoided a rebuke by quickly going to the tent of the brigade commander and wishing him a Happy New Year.

Right at the beginning of the year, Gerhardt's regiment had learned that the wounded Colonel Rudolph Rosa had resigned for health reasons. "I thank the officers and

men for the many occasions of confidence and friendship, which were rendered to me in the course of time," he wrote in a letter to his soldiers, dated December 23rd. "We had a humble, but difficult beginning with the establishment of our regiment. To the dedication, energy and effort of all our members, we owe it to ourselves that we should never shy away from any comparison with other bodies of troops. Again, we were able to find, even under unfavorable circumstances, our power and strength. We have been everywhere in misery and in death together. That's why I'm convinced that my departure will leave no noticeable gap in your ranks. I hope that the regiment we have created, remains in place and will bring honor to our country and the German people."

Now that Colonel Rosa had left the army, Washington believed the regiment was in a desperate need of a new commander. The adjutant general of the Army of the Potomac sent former Austrian officer, Captain Gustavus St. Albe. He did not impress the soldiers at all. The captain had been a senior officer in the Austrian Army. He expected to take immediate command of the regiment. Lt. Colonel Gerhardt wrote, "The officers of my regiment are all citizens of this country and the State of New York. They have risked their life and limbs on many battlefields for the preservation of the Union and the Constitution. Foreign officers, however, have mostly been drawn hither from Europe for the sake of personal advancement and pay."

Thus ended the American adventure of Captain St. Albe. A few days later Joseph Gerhardt was promoted to full colonel. Major George Travers took over the position of lieutenant colonel. Captain Theodore Hohle was recalled from New York and moved up to major. The adjutant of the regiment, Adolph Tamsen, was named the recruiting officer. It was a thankless endeavor for Tamsen. After the long chain of Union failures, there was hardly anyone left in the country, who wanted to be a soldier. The *50th Pennsylvania* was the only regiment in the brigade that had no difficulties recruiting young men. In the mostly rural districts of Berks and Schuylkill County, young people joined the regiment on their own initiative. They came forward as soon as they reached their 18th birthday. This regiment did not need much recruiting.

While Tamsen recruited for the regiment in New York City, Lieutenant Theodore Schmidt acted in his absence as adjutant. Joseph Gerhardt also named in his daily orders three ordinary soldiers as acting Lieutenants: Theodore Markscheffel, Hermann Menzel, and Otto Laddy, "who have distinguished themselves through honesty and diligence." All three new officers were four weeks later commissioned. Markscheffel and Menzel died a year later. Otto Laddy survived the war as a captain.

Chapter 13
Captain Jacob Roemer's Battery

Due to the reorganization of the Army of the Potomac after the battle of Antietam, Captain Jacob Roemer's battery of light field artillery was transferred to the *First Division* of the *Ninth Army Corps*. Roemer remained with the *Ninth* until the end of the war.

He was mainly deployed in conjunction with Colonel Christ's brigade. During the battle of Fredericksburg he had been stationed for most of the time on Stafford's Heights and engaged the Rebel artillery on Marye's Heights. From this position he had observed the unfortunate course of the battle. His superiors considered Roemer a brilliant artillery officer and his guns were systematically deployed in situations where accurate firing was expected.

The battery came from Flushing, New York. It was established at a time when this little town was still surrounded by meadows and fields. That is why most of the gunners were farmers and the farmer's sons. At least half of them were German immigrants. In its earlier days the "Flushing Battery" had been a part of the *93rd New York Militia Regiment*. Jaccob Roemer became only by chance a member of this voluntary force. Most of the immigrants in Flushing could not speak English, so he assumed the office of interpreter at the local court. One day, when he had been very busy and could not come to the court, the judge sent him a summons with a penalty of $25. Roemer had no other choice but to appear. On the same day, September 11, 1845, he joined the local militia. From that point on he was exempt from his court duty.

He brought military experience from his native Germany. At Worms he had been a sergeant in the cavalry. He had grown up in Wahlheim (Alzey County) on the family farm and knew something about horses and other animals. After his apprenticeship as a shoemaker he immigrated to America and later established a thriving shoe store in Flushing. Since he devoted only a few hours a week to his service as a militia soldier, he was able to continue working in his shop. In 1848 Roemer was made a corporal. Three years later he became a sergeant. At the outbreak of the Civil War he was a lieutenant and involved himself in the training of new recruits.

"Drilling was carried out incessantly so the battery might be thoroughly prepared in every detail of our service and ready to do its work perfectly whenever it should be ordered into the field," he recalled. "The men became accustomed to performing all maneuvers at full speed, mounting and dismounting the whole battery, mounting and dismounting the pieces, charging at a gallop, etc. Mounted drills are not only exciting, but also dangerous, unless the greatest care is exercised."

At frequent inspections the riders, as well as the drivers, had to appear with their horses for a thorough examination. Cleaning the horses was a job that had to be taught. It took strength and sweat to use the currycomb and body brush on the animals until the required cleanliness was achieved. Combing the mane and tail was part of the daily routine as well as wiping the anus. The horses of the artillery needed their drilling and training as well.

The battery was ready for action by the end of March 1862. Everyone was waiting impatiently for the battery commander, Captain Thomas L. Robinson, to report that the battery was prepared, but nothing happened. Instead, another battery was reported ready. To the disgust of Roemer and his men, they had to turn over six of their best horses to the other battery. They had to start training with new horses again. This training was completed in four weeks.

Captain Robinson, the battery commander, took little interest in the drills. He oversaw these activities from a distance. When the officers were tested in Bladensburg on their military skills, it turned out that Captain Robinson knew very little about the practical use of artillery. He was the only officer of the battery that didn't pass his tests and

was consequently discharged. Lieutenant Roemer automatically moved up to captain and battery commander.

His force now consisted of 150 men and five officers. The six guns of the battery were of the most modern type of that time and had rifled barrels, with a caliber of 3 inches (7.6 cm). With a powder charge of one hundred pounds they could shoot a ten-pound shell for a distance of half a mile. All officers and noncommissioned officers of the battery were on horseback. The drivers of the gun and caisson teams rode one of the horses they drove, while the cannoneers rode on the limber and caisson chests. Roemer's battery had about 115 horses and twelve mules for the two baggage carts. His horse "Joe" had been given to him by the citizens of Flushing and was very well trained. Joe could find his place at any time in the marching column. When the bugle sounded "Boots and Saddles," he immediately pushed his way to the head of the formation and sometimes Joe was marching ahead without his rider.

Before the battery joined the *Ninth Army Corps* it had belonged to the *Second Corps*. Roemer's guns had covered the retreat of Union troops at Cedar Mountain against a vastly superior enemy force. He and two other batteries were involved in an artillery duel with the enemy's gun emplacements. The Confederate cavalry repeatedly tried to break through the Union lines and as the galloping horsemen came close Roemer, he was able with a few well-aimed shots to force the enemy into retreat. When the attacking cavalry regrouped, with the Rebel General Winder leading them, several grenades exploded right in front of their speeding horses. After the battle ended there were many dead riders and horses scattered throughout the field. General Winder was also killed.

The assignment at Cedar Mountain was Roemer's first contact with the enemy. Now he had proof that all his firing practice had paid off. Roemer had demonstrated the accuracy of his battery for which he was credited so often in later years. In the next battle at Sulphur Springs the enemy's artillery fired fragments of iron rails. Apparently, the opponents were out of ammunition. The pieces of iron were wrapped with wire making them fit into the tubes. During the battle of Groveton on August 25, 1862, the battery, along with Schurz's division, defended the Waterloo Bridge until the order came to burn it. The Rebels were trying to prevent that. They stormed the trestle several times but were repeatedly driven off by Roemer's grenades. Finally the Union troops were able to burn the bridge.

On September 17, 1862, Roemer's battery was assigned to cover the assault over the Rohrbach Bridge at Sharpsburg. In October he protected the pioneers while they were building the pontoon bridge over the Potomac. His guns were with the *Ninth Corps* when they marched to Falmouth after the disastrous battle of Fredericksburg. Jacob Roemer was particularly popular with the German volunteers of the *46th New York*. The young soldiers worshiped him as a role model and father figure because of his military experience and successes. When he was looking for someone to help out with the battery, there were always willing helpers from the regiment. His prowess as a gunner was associated with an unencumbered view of life, an incomparable charm, and his ability to win friends everywhere. He was a respected person with heart, talent, and natural humor.

The regiments of the division had their own merchandisers. Roemer's battery had also such a "sutler". Soldiers and their officers had a very low opinion of these merchants, but Captain Roemer's Sutler was the exception. This merchant of the battery was his brother-in-law, Ludwig Budenbender, whose wife was Roemer's sister, Louise. Cap-

tain Roemer's fifteen-year-old son, Louis, served as Budenbender's occasional assistant. Louis Roemer accompanied his father during most of the war. He had him equipped with a specifically tailored blue uniform. While all other sutlers were solely out for profits, this was not the case with Ludwig Budenbender. He was always interested in the military successes of the battery. If the ammunition was running low during an assignment, he would harness up his horses and managed to bring in the grenades with his wagon.

Chapter 14
The Ninth Army Corps at Falmouth
Back to Newport News

On December 31st Captain Roemer invited his friends to a New Years Eve Party, including a hundred officers of the division. He had borrowed a large hospital tent for this rare occasion and the festivities started about an hour before midnight. "We wished each other better luck for the New Year and spent a few happy hours with the little whisky that our meager resources permitted," he later recalled. The tent stood behind a protective wall, where the guests were safe in spite of the enemy's proximity.

The first few days of 1863 were biting cold and proceeded without incident until General Burnside's orders were read: "The army will again meet the enemy," he announced. In the frontal attack he had been unable to beat the Rebels. Now he was trying to circumvent them farther up on the river and attack them from behind. All preparations were made for it, but a devastating storm began. Rain continued for a day. The *46th New York* packed cooked rations for three days and all the soldiers received sixty rounds of ammunition. Now stood Gerhardt's Regiment ready on the highway with rolled up blankets and "in light marching order". They had to find a place in the endless column of soldiers. But the opportunity never came. The winter weather, with the freezing rain, had turned the streets into a bottomless quagmire.

The marching troops that were already on the road were literally stuck in the mud and had to turn back after only one day. They passed by broken ammunition and baggage wagons, dead horses, and mules. "Such a winter campaign meant wet feet for us, an empty stomach, and cold nights without sleep," said one of the marchers. "It meant shivers, cough, rheumatism, and fever."

Captain Roemer's artillery was still on the mountain with the three other batteries of the division, when the order came to leave. There was not a direct road down from there. To reach his destination, Roemer would have to follow the road to Falmouth, which had many twists and turns into the valley. It was a route of six miles through muddy trails, yet the new positions were close by and located at the foot of a steep slope.

Roemer decided to slide the guns and ammunition wagons on a long rope down into the gorge. This was done without much effort and without the draft animals. It saved his men, as well as the horses, an arduous march through the cold and rainy night. Below the horses were waiting to pull the guns into the new positions. The other three batteries came much later. They were under orders to march the entire route of six miles.

Their draft animals were exhausted and tired, while Roemer's horses were still fresh. From his new position, Roemer observed the road ahead of him. What he saw was the result of General Burnside's mud-campaign. "All we could see was eighty to one

hundred artillery carriages and ammunition wagons stuck fast in the mud. Many of the cannons could not be pulled out for three days. Some were so deeply imbedded, they had to be pried out with fence rails." On January 25th, following this new disaster, Burnside was dismissed. The new commander of the Army of the Potomac was General Joseph Hooker.

The campsite at Falmouth became a place of desolate misery. The weather had improved somewhat, but the paths between the tents were still soggy and impassable. The repeated failures seemed to have damaged or destroyed the discipline and fighting spirit of the troops. The supply system did not work and Washington seemed to have forgotten about their army. The soldiers had not been paid for six months. On February 1st the paymaster finally arrived at Gerhardt's regiment. But the men were not given their entire retroactive salaries, only until October 31st of the previous year.

With money in their pockets, everyone seemed to be happy. But Colonel Christ's brigade did not see their happiest days in Falmouth. A few drunken soldiers from the *50th Pennsylvania* and the *29th Massachusetts* got involved in a dangerous brawl, using sticks and rifle butts. Soon all members of the two formations were fighting. The Pennsylvanians had shown from the beginning very little sympathy for their fellow soldiers from Massachusetts. Their officers had to draw their swords and step in between the combatants to stop these outrages.

One of the Pennsylvanians pointed his rifle at the adjutant of the *29th Massachusetts*. Fortunately, nothing happened when he pulled the trigger. Apparently the gun was not loaded. In early February it was still bitterly cold and on many days it rained constantly. It would snow and then thaw turning the camp into a bottomless swamp. The log cabins protected against the cold and wet, but still hundreds of men died of scurvy, dysentery, typhoid, diphtheria, and pneumonia. One of the unfortunate soldiers was Henry Bode of the *46th New York Regimen*t, who had been infected with bronchitis. Up to 200 soldiers deserted almost daily. Often they had been released from the hospital and went home, instead of back to the army.

It was in this situation, that the *46th New York* received new marching orders. "In the early morning hours of February 13th we boarded the trains after a hasty breakfast. At 10 o'clock in the evening, we were already at Aquia Creek," recalled one soldier. "The entire *Ninth Army Corps* seemed to be in motion. First, one rumor followed the next, until we were on a river steamer and sailed downstream to the Atlantic. We passed Fort Monroe and landed at Newport News, where we set up our tents on the banks of the river. It was the same place we had camped a year earlier after our return from Port Royal."

Even by changing their location, the soldiers had not escaped the miserable weather. At times it was snowing at night and quite often the storm deranged their tents. Instead of a well-deserved rest, they were soon entangled in a daily military routine: Wake up at 6 o'clock. Right after breakfast, roll call, followed by several hours of drill, first with the company and later with the battalion and after lunch the same routine again. Every evening at 5 o'clock there was an inspection of clothes and equipment.

Immediately after the arrival of the *Ninth Corps* in Newport News, General Getty's *Third Division* was transferred to Suffolk. The Union troops were fighting there against the Rebel General Longstreet. Now the *Ninth Corps* had only two remaining divisions. The first was commanded by General Orlando Willcox and the second by General Samuel Sturgis. The commander of the whole corps was Major General John G. Parke.

Some of the regiments received the new standardized uniforms. Until then, there had been numerous variations in color and style. Some units initially wore even gray uniforms. This color could easily be confused with the enemy's uniform.

A recruit wrote home to his parents, "I now wear light blue trousers, a dark blue jacket and cap. In our bread bag we carry our rations and a bottle we fill with water. I also have a backpack for the blankets and the rest of my clothing. A bag contains forty rounds of munitions. I also wear my bayonet in a loop, held by a shoulder strap and belt. I use a Springfield rifle, and this is the best there is. Haversack and canteen are hanging under the left arm and we carry the knapsack on our back. The rifle I carry on my shoulder. I also have a blanket. Another one is made of rubber. My tarpaulin is made of muslin. Two of them buttoned together make a dwelling for two. We put the rubber blanket on the ground and over it the wool-blanket. Our knapsacks serve as pillows and we cover ourselves with the second blanket."

While the regiment was stationed here, the following officers received their commissions, to lieutenant colonel: George Travers; to major: Theodore Hohle; to captain: Frederick Schieferdecker and John Kesselmark, and to lieutenant: Carl Bayer, Heinrich Dreyer, Edward Schmidt and Gustav Hubert Schmidt. In accordance with the general practice, the usual cheerful celebration of the concerned officers followed. At this time were also the missing company commanders replaced. The former First Lieutenant Henry Ohmes of the *4th Company* became the captain of the *1st Company*. First Lieutenant Friedrich Rasch of the *5th Company* now became the captain of the *6th Company*. Former First Lieutenant Andreas Seelig of the *7th Company* advanced to captain of the *8th Company*. The comrades of the *50th Pennsylvania Regiment* had to separate themselves from their precious Austrian rifles, which they were particularly proud of. It was a weapon of "great beauty," the historian of the regiment explained and was even a few pounds lighter than the ugly Springfield. The change was necessary because this regiment was the only one in the *Ninth Army Corps* armed with such a rare gun. It needed different ammunition from the rest of the army.

On February 25th, the entire *Ninth Army Corps* was lined up on the parade ground for an inspection by General John A. Dix, the commander of Fort Monroe. The military procedure lasted from ten in the morning until three o'clock in the afternoon. On March 1st, at the next roll call, several new promotions were announced. One of them was for Lieutenant Ernst Gerhardt, who was commissioned to first lieutenant. Finally, the soldiers learned about their imminent deployment in the West. It still took another four weeks, before they noticed that something was actually being prepared. Each man received the usual sixty rounds of ammunition and rations of cooked food for two days. Gone were the hours of military training. At the pier arrived one by one the ships. They would transport the brigade on March 23, 1863 to Baltimore.

At the quay waited for them a number of Confederate sympathizers. They carried baskets of bread and refreshments, as they had actually expected a transport of prisoners of war. The friends of the South disappeared very quickly, when they realized their error. The regiment marched to the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad station where cars with bench seats were already waiting for them. Before entering the rail cars, the regimental commanders read an order by General Burnside: When they passed through friendly country, the general said, he expected them to behave like gentlemen. From this communication they guessed where the transport was going. Burnside was located in Cincinnati. He

commanded the new military district of Ohio (Department of the Ohio), consisting of the states of Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois and Kentucky.

"We found ourselves very crowded. Board seats had been placed in the cars, and while there was room for us to sit down," recalled one of the passengers, "we could not stretch ourselves out to rest. The end sections of the cars were dark. Using the butts of our muskets, we punched holes in the sheathing to let in the light. Hammocks were improvised from our blankets and were slung from the sides of the cars. We soon were as comfortable as our cramped quarters permitted." The train stopped in the morning at Harper's Ferry for a meager breakfast of coffee and fresh bread.

Here in western Virginia crossed the paths of the two hostile armies, which caused much suffering for the rural population. The Barns and fences of the deserted farms had all disappeared, as the passing troops had used the wood for their campfires. The train passed burned-out villages and in spite of this visible horror, the population warmly welcomed the troops at every stop. The western part of Virginia was not Rebel territory and remained loyal to President Lincoln. The entire railway line was single track. The trip was continually interrupted by long waiting periods. Every time a major train passed in the opposite direction, the transport of troops had to wait on the sidetrack. Behind Martinsburg the tracks were washed out. The regiment helped for two hours to repair the line. They reached Parkersburg on the Ohio on March 26th, where the regiment was loaded onto a paddle steamer.

"For us New Yorkers was such a vessel something new," explained one of the passengers. "We found space on the wide decks and at 10 o'clock in the evening we sailed off. We admired the two independently working horizontal steam engines, which could turn one wheel forward and the other backwards to maneuver the ship. As we passed the villages on the Right Bank, the people waved in a friendly manner to us. In Virginia, on the Rebel side, no one could be seen."

The journey ended in Cincinnati. People were crowded on the pier to welcome the troops. The *46th New York*, the *50th Pennsylvania* and the *29th Massachusetts Regiments* marched to their lunch at the market hall. The officers were invited to a banquet at the Gibson House. The friendliness of the people was boundless. For small purchases, the dealers took no money from the soldiers but instead gave them many thoughtful presents. When the brigade marched over the Ohio Bridge to Covington, they were accompanied by so many people that it seemed as if the entire population of the city was on their feet.

Chapter 15
On the Way to Somerset, Kentucky

The arrival of the *Ninth Army Corps* turned the lovely town of Covington into a restless military camp. Colonel Christ's brigade stayed only for a single night and his troops rested in their provisional tents. Immediately, at first light of the following day, they boarded the trains of the Kentucky Central Railroad for their journey to Nicholasville. The brigade commander explained to his men that the Ninth Corps had been as-

signed to Kentucky for the protection of the loyal citizens of the state. Another important task was to secure the rail lines for supplies.

Two companies of the *29th Massachusetts Regiment* were already on their way and were dropped off in pairs at the various railway bridges to reinforce the local guards. The remainder of that regiment got out in Paris and took over the garrison duties. The other regiments of the brigade went on to Lexington, where they were assigned to the central military district. At Lexington *the 46th New York* met their old friend and administrator of Tybee Island, General Gillmore. He was now serving as the Military Governor of the Central Kentucky District based in Lexington.

At the beginning of the war, when the state of Kentucky was still neutral and didn't want to get involved in the Civil War, Camp Dick Robinson had been a recruitment center for the Union Army. At the present time there were already several Kentucky regiments fighting for the North and unfortunately, also for the South. Colonel Gerhardt and his regiment was assigned to the area around Danville and Camp Dick Robinson for garrison duty. To get there, the regiment had to travel first by train to Nicholasville and from there it was a short hike to Camp Dick Robinson.

While the soldiers were marching through the village of Bryantsville they met, to their surprise, the missing Lieutenant George Hohmann. His comrades hadn't seen him since their departure from Baltimore. Colonel Gerhardt put him immediately under arrest for "being absent without leave", but because he was an officer he could not be locked up. Hohmann took this opportunity and disappeared again the next day. A soldier from his company, John Steel, went with him. Hohmann was discharged from the army with effect of April 10, 1863.

Meanwhile, several officers were promoted to higher ranks or had left the service. Colonel Gerhardt decided to assign others as replacements. The First Lieutenants Heinrich Ohmes and Andreas Seelig received their promotions to captain and company commanders. The Sergeants Gustav Ranhaus and Philip Betz, and the soldiers Herman Mentzel, Theodore Markscheffel, Otto Laddy, Johann Kaufmann, and Hugo von Brandenstein were promoted to lieutenants. Since February, Mentzel, Markscheffel and Laddy had been serving as acting lieutenants.

While the regiment was encamped here, the North had begun the conscription, the forced recruitment of new soldiers for the Union Army. President Lincoln had signed the conscription into law on March 3, 1863. The army could no longer find the necessary number of recruits by just inspiring volunteers. Colonel Gerhardt expected to get so many draftees, that the German uniqueness might be lost for his regiment.

"Our regiment is composed entirely of Germans," he wrote to General L. Thomas, the representative of the War Ministry. "Most of our soldiers don't have the slightest knowledge of the English language and must therefore be guided by the Prussian type of military order and in their native language. I ask you to fill up the regiment with only Germans, so that it is possible to continue on the same basis and with equal success for the good of our country." Colonel Gerhardt was also thinking of other ways to reinforce his command: "In a very short time several New York regiments will be mustered out of the service. These are the *Regiments 7, 8 and 20 of New York City*, consisting like the 46th NY, entirely of Germans. A good many members of these soldiers had not served more than two years. By transferring those enlisted men to the *46th NY Volunteers* to serve out their full time of enlistment, I am fully convinced, that your Excellency hereby would

make a good regiment, one of the best in the service." Governor Seymour did not send him these men. Much later, some members of the disbanded German regiments came on their own initiative to *the 46th New York*.

The Rebels had been the strongest force here in eastern Kentucky, but the general population was almost unanimously in support of the North. Thousands of volunteers from this area could be recruited to strengthen the Union Army. The people of Louisville alone, formed two full regiments and the German inhabitants contributed about half of the recruits. The city of Lexington was the center of American horse breeding and was under Union control. This benefited, in particular, the neglected cavalry of the North. Among the many new mounted troops was the *Second Kentucky Cavalry Regiment.* Half of its members were Germans.

The area around Lexington is called the "Blue Grass Region." Germans were the first settlers of the area and arrived before the start of the 19th Century. They had been attracted by the special fertility of the soil. These colonists brought along the "blue" grass, which gave the countryside its name. At that time, the packing material for fragile kitchenware had mostly been hay. After unpacking the plates and cups, the grass had often been thrown out. The seeds in it were scattered and produced, quite unknowingly, the German grass. Horse breeders soon preferred this grass for their pastures. Without the "Kentucky Bluegrass", they would certainly not have raised such remarkable horses.

The population of this area suffered particularly under the cruelty of war. The Rebel Generals Morgan, Wheeler, Pegram, and Clute were regularly stealing horses, cattle and crops from the Blue Grass Region in order to supply the armies of the South. A few days before the arrival of the Ninth Corps, John Morgan attacked the garrison in Mount Sterling and captured three hundred Union troops as prisoners. The following day John Pegram's guerrillas advanced against Danville and forced Gillmore's troops to withdraw. Finally, on March 30th, when the Ninth Corps was in Kentucky, Gillmore was able to defeat the Rebels at the Cumberland River. But the following night the enemy succeeded in taking their booty of 537 cattle with them across the river to Tennessee.

The 46th New York remained for only two weeks at Camp Dick Robinson and then they left on the march to Stanford, where they remained until April 30th. This was the arranged meeting point, where all other regiments of the brigade arrived in due time. The sutler of *the 46th New York Regiment*, Arnold Davidsohn, arrived earlier with his fully loaded wagon so that he could supply the entire brigade with his delicacies, and of course, if nobody was watching, with beer, wine and other alcoholic beverages. After Colonel Gerhardt received the first complaints about drunken soldiers, he threatened the merchant with the seizure of his forbidden merchandise. Lt. Colonel Travers and Major Hohle were ordered to keep an eye on the type of commodities the merchant was selling.

Many of the soldiers had not seen each other since their arrival in Kentucky. After the first handshakes, they started telling each other of their latest adventures: Colonel Barnes of the 29th Massachusetts had learned, that a group of partisans was lodged near his garrison at the rich farmer Talbot. He went there at night with twenty of his men and surrounded the house. The farmer denied having these guerrillas in his house. In the very first room they checked, they found a bearded man, who was sleeping there. Talbot introduced him as "the village school teacher." Under the roof of the same house they found two other guests. One of them wore a bloody bandage on his leg. He confessed that he was one of Colonel Clutes partisans, who recently had been wounded in a skirmish

with Union soldiers. Colonel Barnes arrested Talbot and his three guests. The bearded man was later identified as one of Clutes officers and the third man was a known spy of the Rebels. Colonel Barnes had them transported under guard to Cincinnati.

The small town of Paris announced several times a public sale of slaves. When this transaction took place, some of the soldiers went there to observe the affair. They were immensely shocked and told about it in letters to their families. On the same occasion, mules and other livestock were also traded. This presented the ugliness of the affair even further. At home in New York and Pennsylvania were such shameful dealings long forbidden, but this war was not – or not yet – fought for the liberation of the slaves.

Soon the troops became negligent as a result of the friendly environment at Stanford. Small offenses on guard duty could have serious consequences. The disciplinary court of *the 46th New York*, under the chairmanship of Lt. Colonel George Travers, had to punish several soldiers for being drunk or for leaving their posts. Private Conrad Moeckel received the most severe penalty. He had left the regiment from March 20th through April 4th without the permission of his commanding officer. He was fined with a salary-cut of 13 dollars and had to march daily around the parade ground for four hours with a heavy backpack.

Carelessness was very dangerous here. Small groups of enemy guerrillas still lurked everywhere. Alcohol at the Ninth Corps was usually held in short supply and on the orders of General Burnside, spirits could not be sold in the camp. The company commanders of the *46th New York* had to read this order every Sunday at roll call. Such a ruling concerned only the common soldier. Officers were able to buy as much whiskey as they could pay for. The historian of the Pennsylvanians later wrote that they had never seen such neat farms as the ones in the vicinity of Stanford. “In Kentucky, the sellers of butter, eggs and pies are either honest or they have not yet learned to charge us higher prices,” he recalled in the history of the *50th Pennsylvania Regiment.* “Compared with Washington, Baltimore and other places we have visited, these people here seem to have souls. What we buy from them is really worth the money. Eggs and chicken are especially plentiful and available at reasonable prices.”

At the end of April, the army established the new Twenty-third Army Corps under the command of the German-born Major General George L. Hartsuff. It was formed from all the troops in Kentucky, that were not part of the Ninth Corps. This force consisted mainly of new enlistees, who had been recruited in Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Kentucky. Colonel Christ’s brigade, and thus his own regiment, with *the 46 New York, the 27th New Jersey and the 29th Massachusetts,* were provisionally attached to this new Twenty-third Army Corps.

On April 30th, after all these regiments arrived at Stanford, the entire brigade moved further toward Somerset. It was the warmest day of this spring so far. The path led over rocky and rough mountain roads and several small rivers had to be forded. At nightfall the regiment camped at Carpenter’s Creek near Houstonville. They could not have found a better place on this bright, sunny day. By a happy coincidence, the order to continue the march had to be postponed twice. Finally, on May 5th, the column was in motion again and by noon marched through Middletown. The friendly spring weather was gone and a light, but dense rain drizzled on the marching troops for the next few hours. Slowly the brigade advanced on the muddy and slippery roads. The troops went constantly up and down steep hills. The heavy rain lasted through the following night, while the

regiment camped at Fishing Creek. In the morning of May 16th, the arduous climb continued over high mountains and rutted streets, sometimes through deep mud and over rocky granite. With such road conditions, the marchers managed just eight miles before it was time to stop again for the night.

Like the day before, it rained all night and the men were shivering as they slept in their wet and leaky tents. It was only four more miles to Somerset, but Colonel Christ decided to rest the next day and clean the clothing and equipment at the campfire. Some soldiers were looking for something to eat and visited the surrounding farms. The rural population they found in these mountains, were far removed from the political struggles of the city dwellers. Nearly all the men were well received and usually invited to dinner.

One such soldier who was provided for, told his comrades what he had received at such a feast: fresh-baked biscuits, corn bread, homemade syrup, pork, coffee, milk, and maple-derived sugar. The log cabin, where the twelve-member family lived, was built out of logs and had only two rooms. These people made all the clothing they were wearing out of wool, flax and cotton. Right after dinner, the lady of the house sat at the loom. The soldier witnessed for the first time in his life this good old custom which, at one time, had prevailed in every home in New England and New York.

Chapter 16
Garrison duty in Somerset

The 8th of May 1863 was a hot and cloudless day. It was in the late morning hours, when everyone had cleaned his uniform and the march could continue. It took only a few hours until noon, before the brigade had reached Somerset, the ultimate aim of the long forced march. *The 46th New York* selected a joined campsite near the city center with *the 50th Pennsylvania.* Nearby on a slope camped *the 29th Massachusetts and 27th New Jersey*.

Located close by were also the two batteries of light artillery and a detachment of Colonel *Frank Wolford's Kentucky Cavalry*. All of Wolford's cavalrymen were farmers from the surrounding area. As a military force, it was a very unconventional organization. Each position in the regiment was actually occupied by three men, of which only one was present for duty. The other two were allowed to do their farm work, until they relieved the man on duty, so that he could also take care of his farm.

The small town of 2,000 inhabitants had been robbed several times by the guerrillas. Everything here made a gloomy impression. The citizens were terrified and stayed mostly hidden in their homes. Once when the artillery conducted their shooting exercises, the entire population was frightened. They believed it was the start of a major battle.

Somerset was the new garrison for Colonel Christ's Brigade. It was located four miles north of the Cumberland River. The enemy's guerrillas crossed here on a regular basis, when they came from Tennessee to Kentucky for their raids in the rural areas.

The north bank of the stream was kept constantly picketed by the regiments of Christ's Brigade. Occasionally one of his regiments followed over the wide river in pursue of their opponents. When *George Mindels 27th New Jersey* was returning from such

an expedition, his flatboat capsized in the swift current. Thirty-three of his men, including two officers were drowned in this tragic accident.

The Union soldiers were not too happy in these desolate mountains. Never had they been so far away and cut off from the rest of the world. They rarely saw a newspaper or received reliable news about the present course of the war. The mail only reached them irregularly. No railway station was closer than 80 miles. Nevertheless, they prepared themselves for a long stay. There was nothing edible to buy in Somerset. They lived exclusively on the rations from the army. A carriage brought them from Stanford, a distance of thirty-five miles.

Only the Sutler would like this loneliness. The soldiers depended exclusively on him for such luxuries as tobacco, cigars, fruits, lemonade, bacon, cheese and sometimes alcohol. His prices were always too high, because he drove his wagon the same long distances, before he had completed his assortment. Arnold Davidsohn, the Sutler of the 46th New York, had to submit all his prices for their approval by a commission. It consisted of Lt. - Colonel George Travers, Major Theodore Hohle, Captain August Claussen and Lieutenant Edward August Schmidt.

Davidsohn's tent was opened during the day and served as a sales room. At night slept his assistant there, August Müller or he himself. The merchant had to be careful. If something was stolen from him, some of the soldiers thought of such a shameful activity as a patriotic deed. The booty was often divided fraternally with the comrades. The disciplinary court of the regiment, chaired by Lt.-Colonel Travers and Captain Alphonse Servière, had to involve itself on May 21st with such an affair. August Müller, the Sutler's assistant, accused the soldier Johann Voss of stealing. He was ordered to pay for the goods from his next wages. At the roll call, he had to stand in front of the regiment, while this judgment was read to his comrades.

The often-invisible enemy gave the small garrison no chance for a rest. Colonel Christ learnt from his scouts, that General Morgan had crossed again the Cumberland River with about a thousand of his guerrillas. They were now plundering the outlying settlements. The neighboring first brigade of the Division had already met this enemy force in a fierce struggle. When members of *the 79th New York* were building a bridge over the Green River, they had been attacking by hostile cavalry, but were able to drive them away after a brisk skirmish. After this brigade reached Jamestown, their own cavalry rode ahead and met Morgan's guerrillas at the Cumberland River. They had once again crossed the river into Kentucky. In the following skirmish, a large part of the enemy force was killed or wounded.

Three days later, the 79th Regiment met a mounted detachment with a white flag. Carefully they went closer to this gray uniformed column. It could have been one of those cunning tricks. However, the horsemen said, they belonged to Morgan's people and were tired of fighting and ready to capitulate. Several times the troops in Somerset were put on alert. They stood for several hours ready to march, but luckily, nothing happened. This went on during the rather carefree days. Even the heavy rain was soon replaced by bright sunshine.

Lieutenant William J. Borden had been transferred in February to the 46th New York. He came from the hospital after having been wounded in Fredericksburg. He had previously belonged to another New York regiment. Because he spoke no German, he could not take part in the activities of the Regiment. He was told that things could no

longer go on like this. He was of very little use for Colonel Gerhardt. Finally Borden asked for a transfer to another regiment or dismissal, if no solution could be found. "Our regiment is composed entirely of Germans and is commanded by Germans," attested him Colonel Gerhardt. "Lieutenant Borden has asked for his dismissal because he can neither speak German nor understands it." On May 10th the regimental commander gave him an honorable discharge.

But the case was still far from being settled, as Colonel Gerhardt immediately appointed Sergeant Philip Betz of the 3rd company to lieutenant, to replace the dismissed officer. When his papers arrived in Albany, Governor Seymour refused to commission Philip Betz. Now the former sergeant could not be paid as a lieutenant and not as a sergeant, because he had been dropped from the enlisted rolls. To get at least his money, he took two months later his rank back as sergeant.

Only in November, after another eight months, he was able to obtain a promotion to second lieutenant. In this position he remained until the end of his army career. Shortly after Lieutenant Borden's dismissal arrived another officer, who had been sent by the army. George Clark came from *the 113th New York Regiment*. He had been recently promoted to lieutenant. Colonel Gerhardt, now an experience richer, sent him immediately home, also because he did not understand the language of the regiment.

Better luck had Lieutenant James Bailey of Rochester (New York), another only English speaking officer, who had arrived on June 13th 1863. Colonel Gerhardt occupied him as much as possible and assigned him later on as quartermaster. After nearing the end of the war, many recruits came to the regiment, who did not speak German. There were enough of them to form a whole company. First Lieutenant Bailey was promoted to captain and company commander of these troops.

On the 25th of May followed for the members of *the 46th New York* their last deployment in Kentucky. Morgan's guerrillas had again crossed the Cumberland River and were met in a brisk skirmish by Colonel Wolford's cavalrymen. *The 46th New York* had to be dispatched immediately to the river with a battery of howitzers. But the rebels were already escaped, not before they had taken forty of Wolford's horsemen as prisoners.

The activities in early June showed, that a transfer of the brigade was imminent. Burnside was preparing for an invasion of Tennessee. The 9th Corps and a division of the 23rd Army Corps was to advance on Monticello and through the Cumberland Mountains to Knoxville. But this did not happen. Washington had other ideas. General Burnside's plans for Kentucky and Tennessee had to be shelved for now. As the soldiers learned much later, the army needed the 9th Corps again for a more important assignment.

In the morning on the 4th of June 1863, just after breakfast, the order came to break off the camp. The 46th New York set out immediately for their four-day march back to the train station in Nicholasville. The same miserable road (now U.S. 27) was no longer soggy and sticky, but dry and dusty. The Regiment managed until five clock in the afternoon a distance of 18 miles. They stopped for the night in Waynesburg, a town with a tavern, five houses and three "whiskey shops" as a soldier remarked.

The march was a journey into the bright spring. The entire path from Somerset went through the picturesque mountain landscape with soft broom-clad hills, for which this part of Kentucky is famous. In the lowlands they passed the emerald-green wheat fields, which formed a marked contrast to the famous blue grass, with the various shades of green. In between they noticed the dark spots of red earth. They were the freshly

plowed fields, where the infant corn was growing. Here and there they saw in the midst of this vegetation a neat farmhouse, surrounded by tall maple trees. For the marching soldiers, it was the perfect picture of peace and harmony.

Colonel Christ ordered a lunch-break at noon at the mountain pass of "Hall's Gap". It was in the evening hours of the 5th of June, when they reached the same Campsite in Stanford, where they had stopped in April. Here they met Major Stone, the paymaster of the division, who was always surrounded by a troop of cavalry. Thirteen dollars a month was the pay for an ordinary soldier, but usually they had to wait for a long time until they got it.

After leaving the following morning, many stragglers strolled slowly along behind the column in order to buy milk and freshly baked bread from the farmers. Now they had money and why should they not buy something? The nearest major town on this route was Lancaster. Here Colonel Christ sent a company as "Provost Guards" ahead to prevent his men from loitering and shopping for whiskey.

Just past the town the brigade entered Camp Dick Robinson, where they stopped for the night. Here were also the Sutlers waiting, the official merchants of the regiments. They had learned by now, that the troops had been paid. Many of the senior officers disliked these merchants. They would prefer to do without them. Some of the Sutlers were illegally selling alcohol and carried on a clandestine trade with the enemy. The march of the troops was often delayed, when they blocked the roads with their wagons.

For the transport columns it was hard enough to supply the troops and why should the Army make room for the itinerant traders with their soft drinks and sweets? “Mr. Sheepe” was the authorized Merchant of *the 29th Massachusetts Regiment*. He appeared at Camp Dick Robinson with a large supply of pies, cakes and other delicacies. He knew that the sale of alcoholic beverages was prohibited, but nevertheless he sold whiskey, the bottle for the outrageous price of three dollars. As soon as the regimental commander became aware of this trade, he ordered the seizure and destruction of the illegal merchandise. The soldiers of the entire brigade watched impassively, as the many bottles were opened and then destroyed. The days were now warm and dry. Building tents was no longer necessary. Everybody was lying down on his outspread blanket and slept until the early morning. The brigade had only five more hours to march. Already at noon on the 7th of May they reached the railway station in Nicholasville. The trains were already waiting for them, but they did not leave for Cincinnati until the next morning.

As always, the people of this city had prepared for a festive reception. Crowds of men, women and children accompanied the soldiers to the banquet hall at the Market Square. At the depot of the Ohio & Mississippi Railroad were already the long trains waiting, freight cars for the enlisted men and passenger cars for the officers. Gen. John G. Parke commanded now the 9th Army Corps for the imminent expedition.

Colonel George Mindel with his *27th New Jersey Regiment* had already left the brigade. The required service of his soldiers had expired. But as they were waiting in Cincinnati for their return journey, they heard of the rebels’ invasion of southern Pennsylvania. Rebel General Jubal Early had captured the city of York, where he forced the inhabitants to a delivery of a thousand hats, 1,200 pairs of shoes and socks as well as $ 28.000. Mindel's regiment voluntarily remained a month longer in service. The soldiers were sent by train to Pittsburgh, but got there too late for any fighting. Mindel himself remained after the departure of his men in the army. He was assigned to command the

new *33rd New Jersey Regiment*. Later on he became a Brigade Commander. By the time the war ended, he was a Major General and commanded a division in the *15th Army Corps*.

Chapter 17
The Journey to Mississippi

Enthusiastic civilians surrounded on June 8th 1863 the Market Hall in Cincinnati. It was then the "German City" of Cincinnati and everybody seemed to know something about the regiments from New York, Pennsylvania and Massachusetts that were bound on an important mission in Mississippi. When the time came for the men to leave, it was impossible to form a line in the street. As soon as they emerged from the building, hundreds of people rushed toward them, presenting the soldiers with gifts, flowers and flasks of whiskey. Finally the officers stepped in and ordered the friendly people to make room for the troops. On the following march to the station, the citizens of the city again followed the soldiers.

With the departure from Cincinnati began for *the 46th New York* one of their most important deployments during this war. The trip went to unknown destinations in the West. In almost every city, where the train stopped, they were welcomed by the enthusiastic people and invited to festivities. In Washington (Indiana) was a meal with coffee and cake waiting for them. For such a longer stay, the train had to be pulled onto a siding. In the Morning of June 10th, the *9th Corps* switched in Odin (Illinois) to the trains of the almost luxurious "Illinois Central Railroad." On the evening of the same day they arrived in Cairo on the Mississippi.

With the departure of several regiments followed some organizational changes for the *9th Army Corps*. Colonel Christ's small force was now the third brigade in General Potter's second Division. The regiments included again *the 46th New York, the 29th Massachusetts and the 50th Pennsylvania.* In addition, Captain Jacob Roemer's "Flushing Battery" from New York was added. Here in Cairo boarded the Brigade the paddle steamer "Edward Walsh". The following journey along the wide Mississippi passed Columbus (Kentucky). As soon as it went dark, the crew moored the ship at a pier. Traveling at night was too dangerous. The enemy's guerrillas were still roaming around the banks. Two companies of the regiment were assigned to permanent guard duty on deck.

Memphis was reached on the 12th of June. While the steamer went into the shipyard for repairs, the soldiers inspected one of the new iron river-gunboats. Two of them accompanied the paddle steamer when the journey continued on Sunday, June 14th. One of the gunboats ran ahead of the fleet and the other followed behind. The soldiers could guess now, that the expedition was headed for Vicksburg, where General Grant's Army besieged a large Confederate force. Helena, Arkansas, was the next stopover for the night. Colonel Thomas Brennholz with his 50th Pennsylvania Regiment was on the second steamer. When they passed Napoleon, Arkansas, they received rifle fire from the shore. Luckily no one was hurt.

The ship anchored for the next night behind the junction of the White River. Immediately after their departure on the next morning, Colonel Gerhardt's regiment was also hit by gunfire. A group of partisans in company strength was entrenched behind the dike,

trying to shoot down individual soldiers. The gunboats were far away, but on the next ship that followed, the "Mariner", Jacob Roemer had two of his cannon placed at the bow. The captain was ordered to steer closer to the shore. When they came within range of the guerrillas, Roemer set a grenade between these tormentors. Immediately after the blast, they were seen jumping up and running away in confusion.

During this difficult maneuver, the ship got stuck on a sandbank. The passengers had to use long poles to push the steamer back into the stream. It took all day before the journey could continue, but it was the last adventure on the Mississippi. For the next and last nightly rest on the Mississippi, they decided on a stop in Providence. At noon on this fourth day of travel, the small armada left this majestic river and turned into the sluggish waters of the Yazoo. On the low and swampy banks on either side stood the evergreen oaks with their small oval leaves (Quercus virginiana). From the branches of these powerful, but stocky trees, hung the long fibers of greenish-gray moss. Under the bright midday sun made this river an almost ghostly impression.

After another hour, the vessels reached a wharf on the right side. It was "Snyder's Bluff", the destination of the voyage. On the shore stood the white tents of the army. Here were General Grant's troops stationed. It was the extreme right flank of the siege of Vicksburg. Colonel Christ's Brigade had arrived too late to perform any further function. General Grant had enough troops and did not need any more reinforcement. The rebels were already so firmly in his grasp that they could only capitulate.

When the First Brigade of the division had arrived three days ago, it still looked as if they should immediately reinforce the besiegers in their trenches. *The 79th New York Regiment* had stayed across from Vicksburg on the Mississippi levee and then watched as the encircled city was being bombed. The mortar fleet was anchored on both sides of the river. In the darkness they had been watching the flight of the grenades with their burning fuses, until they exploded between the houses. Colonel Christ's brigade was assigned to a position in Milldale. Here the soldiers met some men from the other regiments of *the 9th Corps*, who had arrived earlier. They were busy constructing fortified positions. It was a long line of trenches and dugouts between Hayne's Bluff and Oak Ridge. All roads and streets in the direction of Vicksburg were already blocked and barricaded. General Sherman was stationed nearby with his army. He was assigned to intercept the other rebel army of General Johnston. General Grant expected him to make an effort to open the siege of the city. Should such an attack take place, *the 9th Corps* would have defended the roads leading from the Black River to Vicksburg.

The campsites of the Brigade in Milldale were located about ten miles inland from Sherman's army. “This location would not have been so bad a place to camp, if it were not for the mosquitoes, gallinippers, ticks, rattlesnakes and a few other unpleasant natives,” recalled Lieutenant Ayling of *the 29th Massachusetts Regiment*. “The mosquitoes in particular were simply awful.” Jacob Roemer had heard already on the steamship "Mariner” from Captain Collier and his wife, with what dreadful disease here to reckon was. After midnight it is usually quite cool on the Yazoo. Those who are not covered up, had Mrs. Collier told him, can really catch a bad cold. With the otherwise harmless catarrh starts usually the dangerous "Mississippi" fever. Roemer ordered accordingly, that everyone of his battery has to cover up past midnight with his blanket. The Army was still expecting an appearance of the enemy. Barricades were still being erected all around the campsites.

“This kind of work drives us almost to our deaths," one soldier wrote home. "The climate in Mississippi is so much warmer than what we're used to. Additional to the extreme temperature comes the scarcity of water. The little that we get is miserable.” The men were also complaining about their diet. "We are in good health, but the quality of food could be better," said another letter writer. "Fortunately, blackberries and wild plums are ripe and enough to find. From time to time, we are able to requisition a pig or sheep and improve our everyday meals."

The expected enemy troops did not show up. Just now were the soldiers were domestically established, it was obvious that they had to vacate the field. Already on June 28th received the regiment rations for five days and the usual sixty rounds of ammunition. Next came the order to get ready for an imminent departure. The very next morning, the knapsacks were packed and the column began to move. The days had so far been very hot, but toward the evening, it started to get windy. Suddenly the sky darkened and a torrential rain swept down. The wind increased to a hurricane and in no time everyone was soaked to the skin. The storm lasted until the next morning. The regiment spent this awful night without tents in a forest. This forced march ended in Vicksburg, where tents had to be pitched up near the city. The 9th Corps waited for further orders, but instead appeared in the morning of July 3rd the couriers of General Grant with the welcome news, that the city had fallen. The whole brigade cheered with enthusiasm. Out of sheer joy, the soldiers threw their caps into the air.

Now there was no further siege necessary. Many members of the regiment took the opportunity to visit the captured city. Everywhere they noticed the campsites of the escaped slaves, who had more than anyone else hoped for a Union victory. Many were dressed in the fine clothes of their former masters, which they had taken from the plantations. Others still wore the rough homespun attire.

By late afternoon came the order to march. The long column moved toward the Big Black River. Right at dusk was camped on a hillside. Each company maintained a huge bonfire, where the victory celebration continued. The next day there was more reason to celebrate. It was the Fourth of July, the Independence Day of the United States. The soldiers also learned of the great victory of the Army of the Potomac at Gettysburg. By happy coincidence, the army simultaneously celebrated two great victories and the birthday of the country. The war could not last much longer, so thought the soldiers.

Chapter 18
The Siege and Capture of Jackson, Mississippi.

Vicksburg surrendered on the 4th of July 1863 and 30.000 rebels of General Pemberton's army became prisoners of war. The Mississippi was once again open for commercial shipping. The new situation left only the other remaining rebel army of General Johnston to be taken care of. Johnston had been posted on the Big Black River. If necessary he could have taken action against the besiegers of Vicksburg. But as soon as he

learned of Pemberton's surrender, he advanced with his troops to the immediate neighborhood of Jackson, Mississippi.

The 9th Army Corps received orders to follow the enemy. Gerhardt's Regiment with Colonel Christ's brigade left at noon on the 7th of July from their position in front of Vicksburg. They marched straight towards the east through hostile country. "It was a very hot day and the road was dusty and dry," recalled one of the marchers. "Water was very scarce and our knapsacks were as heavy as lead." The state of Mississippi had been from the very first day on a merciless war zone. The rebels knew that *the 9th Corps* was following them close behind. They threw animal carcasses into the wells to make the water undrinkable. Where they had just removed the well pump, it was possible to use a bucket with a clothesline and reach the precious liquid. For their daily nourishment the troops depended almost entirely on what was found here on enemy territory. The baggage wagons of the army could hardly follow. Many of the soldiers nibbled the green corn, which was everywhere to be found in the fields.

Such a diet would have been very agreeable in a cooked condition, but the consequences of raw foods were stomach pains and vomiting. Sheep, oxen, pigs and chickens were running in whole packs across their way. But the guerrillas attacked constantly the procurement teams. While harvesting corn, such a group was once surrounded by the rebels. Only through the rapid deployment of cavalry were they freed.

In the evening of the first day of marching, the regiment reached the Big Black River, a muddy brown waterway. It was approximately 90 feet wide and not drinkable. But at the shore they found a few streams with clear water, where everyone filled his canteen. The enemy had destroyed all bridges. The comrades of the 45th Pennsylvania Regiment were in the process of building a new one. Captain Roemer set up his guns to protect the work crews.

After about three-quarters of the 9th Corps had passed over the wooden structure, it broke apart. Some of the ammunition wagons, including the horses, plunged into the water. The following night was utterly black in its darkness and Colonel Gerhardt's regiment was among the troops, who had not yet crossed the river. Here at this point they had to stay and try to catch a few hours of sleep. The regiment spent the following day to reach another bridge at Messinger's plantation, where they finally crossed to the other side.

The Ninth Army Corps was still very close behind the fleeing enemy. General Parke determined to continue the march without rest until midnight. The whole day it had been unbearably hot. A considerable number of marchers had simply dropped off by the roadside. There they remained until they regained their strength and could slowly follow. Along with the twilight came the drenching rains and storms, so that the soldiers were soon soaked to the skin.

Now they had enough water, but the road was soon softened, getting the artillery stuck in the mud. The marchers had to step around deep puddles and arrived around midnight in Bolton. While stopping here for the remainder of the night, they dried their clothes on the campfires and crawled into their tents. Nobody was able to sleep. After a few hours the storm and rain set in again. It took a long time after waking, until the poorly rested men were ready to march.

The army had been on the road during this sweltering heat for three days. But finally the officers realized that it would be better not to move at midday under the hot sun.

From now on they were going to rest at noon and then advance from four o'clock in the afternoon until one o'clock at night. Unfortunately, this was not always possible during the next few weeks. The following day was the 9th of July. When they stopped here at nine o'clock in the evening, they noticed that the brother of the president of the Southern Confederate States owned the next plantation. Some of the regiments stayed right here on his property and inspected his large library.

For three more days they followed the road, until the advance guard reported the first hostile contact. The rebel pickets were entrenched along the railway embankment of the Jackson & Grenada Railroad and fired several rounds at the advancing troops. The two regiments, the 46th New York and 50th Pennsylvania, took positions on the Canton Road (now U.S. # 51). They were pitted against the enemy for some time, until they withdrew into the nearby woods. The brigade continued for two more miles, before they reached the plantation of Mr. Hardeman at the Mississippi Central Railroad. Here they remained for the next day.

Immediately after breakfast the two regiments were assigned to a hill outside the town of Jackson, where they entrenched themselves in a defensive position. This strategic location had been wrested from the enemy on the day before by the first division. When the regiment was crossing a corn patch, they stood before the state mental hospital. "One of the inmates came to his grated window and held us a long speech," one soldier later recalled. "I suppose the poor fellow called it a speech, although we could make neither head nor tail of what he said. But he was a glib talker all right, and judging from the way he shook his long fingers at us, he must have been a retired clergyman or politician."

During the following night was the entire brigade occupied with the digging of trenches, not for their own protection, but for the soon arriving replacements. At the first light of day, the brigade itself was assigned to the front line and in sight of the city. For the ailing Colonel Samuel Christ had Colonel Gerhardt stepped in and was leading temperately the full brigade, consisting of his own *46th New York, the 50th Pennsylvania and 29th Massachusetts*. These three regiments were now taking over the skirmish line at a distance of fifty yards from the enemy's position.

"The enemy's defenses consisted of a line of earthworks, which enabled him to make a decided resistance to any attempt to dislodge him," wrote the historian of *the 9th Army Corps*. "Opposite the right of our line were two forts, one an earthwork, the other constructed of cotton bales. Both were well armed. In front of our center was a six gun fort, the artillery of which was well manned and numerously supported. Opposite our left was an earthwork, armed with field artillery. All the works were connected with lines of rifle pits and a large number of troops could be seen behind them."

The enemy had without any doubts the better position that could not be attacked without the greatest loss. General Sherman decided therefore, to wait for the arrival of heavier artillery. Meanwhile, several days passed on which *the 46th New York and 50th Pennsylvania* were exposed defenseless to the scorching sun. Only during their replacement could they find some shadow among the nearby trees.

In the morning of the 16th of June at three o'clock they broke camp and relieved *the 36th Massachusetts Regiment* in a well-fortified entrenchment at the front line. Colonel Gerhardt himself was not with the regiment, but temporarily led the Third Brigade. Immediately with the first light of day, a heavy rifle fire showered the two regiments, during which the soldier Henry Oppermann was mortally wounded. The whole effort

ended quickly and was followed by a suspicious silence. Lt.-Colonel George Travers, who was now leading *the 46th New York*, decided to explore the strength and intentions of the enemy. It was a dark night and hence favorable for secret movements by both besiegers and besieged. By 10 o'clock the men heard strange noises, resembling the rattling of wheels.

„At 12 o'clock noon we heard the two cannon shots fired from Edward's battery in our rear, recalled Lt.-Colonel George Travers. "It was the signal for a cautions advance of about one-third of our skirmishers along the line. The order was to advance slowly and feel the enemy's position, and in case he should still be in the rifle-pits, to fall back. The skirmishers of the Forty-sixth New York advanced at once, constantly firing, driving the enemy out of his rifle pits. When the enemy's artillery opened upon our men on the right with heavy volleys, we drove the rebels back to their lines. This engagement lasted an hour, and as information about the enemy's strength was gained, our men slowly returned to their former positions."

During the dark some soldiers crawled again as close as possible to the enemy line. They could hear how their opponents were pulling out their guns and marching off. Lt. - Colonel Travers was visited in the morning hours by a citizen of the city, who carried a white flag. He informed him, that the rebels had retreated during the night. "We immediately stormed together with the 35th Massachusetts into the city," recalled Travers. "Captain Alphons Servière with his company was able to capture twenty enemy straggler and seized the flag of a Texas regiment. During this operation were again two men of our regiment wounded. From a reconnaissance patrol at the Pearl River, later on this day, brought Captain Servière another thirty prisoners back." The State of New York today preserves the Texas flag with blue, white and red stripes and a single star. The two wounded soldiers of the regiment were Friedrich Schiemansky and Johann Scheel. Schiemansky died later of his wounds. Overall, the Union troops captured 138 rebels.

The enemy General Johnston with his army had arrived in Jackson just three days before *the 9th Corps.* He had not been able to stay through a siege by the Union Army. He lacked the ammunition and the necessary supply of food. The quick escape from here had at least saved his army. The streets of Jackson were almost deserted and many of the houses stood in flames. The majority of the population had followed Johnston's army across the Pearl River. Where it was still possible to put out the fire, the brigade did so and preserved complete rows of houses from the flames.

Captain Roemer discovered in a burning warehouse the salt supply of the city. He sent Sergeant Rossbach to fill two large bags with it. "The Salt found in Jackson was a great acquisition for the battery, for both men and horses had needed it for some time. Salt is one of the necessities of life, and must be provided in order to maintain an army in good health. The same is true, in a measure, of pepper. I think that we would have suffered more from sickness than we did, if I had not been careful to keep a proper supply of these articles on hand, in accordance with the advice of the battery surgeon, Dr. Edwin Freeman," explained Roemer.

He had just left the warehouse, when he heard a deafening explosion. His horse bucked immediately. The sudden blast had thrown him almost from the saddle. Intense flames flashed out of the burning gas plant, which had been torched by the enemy saboteurs. The damage was only hurting the citizens of the city, as the Union troops did not intend to remain.

The commander of the 50th Pennsylvania Regiment, Colonel Thomas Brennholz, had been severely wounded in the previous skirmishes. Dr. Siemon, his regimental surgeon, suggested an immediate transport on a stretcher to Vicksburg. He was sure the colonel would not survive a trip in the ambulance on the bumpy road. Four men from his hometown of Reading took over this function. They carried him over the forty-mile route to the hospital ship. Unfortunately, the effort was in vain. Colonel Brennholz died on the trip to Cincinnati.

The 46th New York was sent to the embankment of the Pearl River to set up a temporary campsite. They stayed here until July 20th, while other regiments destroyed north of the city the railway station Colhoun and the tracks of the Mississippi Central Railroad. As a result, the city of Jackson lost all strategic importance to the South. When the slaves were freed after the war, the land of the former plantation was divided into lots for settlers. In 1905 settled several German families from Indiana and Illinois, who named their town “Glückstadt” after the German city of this name in Schleswig-Holstein.

Chapter 19
Mississippi Fever and Diarrhea

It was three o’clock in the morning of July 21st, 1863, when the bugle called for an immediate wake up. The sunrise was indicated by a slight discoloration of the sky. The departure was to begin quickly, because in the morning the marchers were not exposed to the scorching July sun. But even when the heat became unbearable, they went on quickly, without shadow and without enough water.

Quite soon were all the ambulances filled with the exhausted soldiers, which could no longer continue. After the ambulances were filled up, the many horses, mules, carts and wagons the fugitive army had left behind, were put into service for the innumerable patients. Officers as well as soldiers stumbled along the street and many drove or rode in donkey carts. The 9th Army Corps moved along like a caravan of evil warriors, not like a victorious army.

"From the terrible heat on this forced march, I was completely exhausted," recalled Sergeant Ludwig Gaebel of *the 46th New York Regiment.* "For several months afterwards I was sick and not fully fit for duty. Even for ten years after this march I was suffering from bronchitis and asthma.” The men as well as the officers were angry about the unnecessary haste. Now where the enemy was driven away, they saw no reason for this hustle.

Some of the soldiers believed, however, they had an explanation for this speed: General Parke wanted to reach the Yazoo with *the 9th Corps* before Sherman's troops arrived there, because there were not enough ships available for the return trip. So who arrives first, they thought, would also be the first to leave this terrible region. Upon reaching camp, some of the officers convinced General Parke, that this rapid hike will only exhaust the troops unnecessarily.

From now on was no longer marched during the particularly hot noon hours. Where possible, they were allowed to rest in the shade of the numerous evergreen oaks. In the afternoon of the 22nd of June they reached the Pontoon Bridge at Messinger’s Plantation, were they crossed the Big Black River. Not all the regiments of *the 9th Corps*

had made it to the other side, where they were surprised by a terrible rainstorm, which soaked uniforms and equipment. The following routes they marched were completely flooded and resembled in some stretches rather streams than streets.

The draft horses were suffering from the dreadful hardships. General Parke asked Captain Roemer while crossing the river, how many horses he had lost at this battery. "Not a single one," he replied. At the other batteries of *the 9th Corps* had already ninety-four horses died in the last few days. Jacob Roemer had been raised since early childhood in Germany with horses. Here on the muddy streets had his gunners to wash daily the hoofs and then scrape and grease them. Was this not done, the horses could soon suffer from hoof-rot. When his battery put up for the night, he had a line strung between two trees, the "picket rope ". Here were the unhitched horses tied up, where they rested for at least two hours, while they were rubbed down with towels. Water or food was given to them only after they were sufficiently rested and cooled. In the other batteries Roemer had observed, that the exhausted and sweaty animals were immediately fed and watered after being unhitched. He explained to General Parke, that this was probably the reason for the loss of the animals.

Colonel Christ's Brigade broke camp at 4 o'clock in the morning of the 23rd of July and left Messinger's plantation. In just a few hours, the three regiments reached the previous campsite in Milldale. The long trek in the unhealthy climate and the unhygienic prepared meals showed soon a negative effect on the health of the troops. When the regimental surgeons diagnosed malaria, the patient received quinine or capsicum (paprika powder). Every day the regiments reported deaths and still no one knew how long the troops were to stay here. The greatest evil was the dirty water. "Our horses refused to drink it and we ourselves have to cook coffee with it," said one of the Pennsylvanians from Reading.

The 46th New York remained here for three more weeks and every day it got warmer. This did not change not even when it occasionally rained. "The strongest downpour has here not the cooling effect as at home," noted Lieutenant Ayling. Colonel Gerhardt received orders to return with his regiment to Kentucky. At the same time General Grant thanked *the 9th Corps* for the expulsion of the rebels from the vicinity of Vicksburg and Jackson. Finally on the 12th of August 1863, the brigade moved out of camp and marched slowly to Hayne's Bluff, where the entire division was embarked.

The return trip with the immense Mississippi River steamboat "South Wester" bore no resemblance to the many happy journeys they had already experienced. There was an almost tropical heat and the ships were hopelessly overcrowded. The passengers were suffering from the insidious disease, which they had brought with them from the poisonous atmosphere. Especially the regimental commander, Colonel Joseph Gerhardt suffered from his recurrent liver disease. On the 15th of August 1863 he filed here on the "South Wester" his request for a discharge from the army.

Deaths were very frequent among the troops. Every night when the ship was moored, the passengers observed by the light of the lanterns, when the burial squads went ashore and buried their comrades. Even the commander of *the 9th Corps,* General Parke, was so seriously ill, that he could not be recognized, when he arrived in Cincinnati. He went there to the hospital and gave temporarily the command of the 9th Corps to Gen. Robert B. Potter. Also, General Welsh, the old veteran of the Mexican War and commander of the First Division was fatally ill and died here on the ship. As a result of

the change in command, the sick Colonel Gerhardt advanced to the command of the brigade.

When the ships finally reached Cairo (Illinois), the regiment was barely able to march through the streets. The people of the city invited the soldiers to a banquet, but very few were able to attend. Many had to be taken to the local hospitals. The healthy continued with the cattle cars of the railroad to Cincinnati, where they finally arrived on August 23rd. The two divisions of the 9th Corps had departed to Mississippi with more than 8,000 men, now on their return they counted less than 6,000. The missing members were lying everywhere between Vicksburg and Cincinnati in the hospitals.

At the marketplace they received their usual breakfast and then marched over the Ohio Bridge to Covington. For the following night they encamped in provisional quarters at the Licking River. *The 9th Army Corps* belonged again to the Ohio Army and Colonel Benjamin Christ was still in command of the Second Brigade in General Ferrero's First Division. There were still the same sister regiments. Added was only the 27th Michigan under the command of Col. Dorus M. Fox.

Again some of the soldiers had to be left behind in the hospitals, including the three most senior officers of *the 46th New York Infantry:* Colonel Joseph Gerhardt, Lt.-Colonel George Travers and Major Theodore Hohle. All three were sick from the effects of a malarial fever and overwork. The Berlin Huguenot, Captain Alphons Servière, now led the regiment. Major Hohle died on the 5th of September in Cincinnati of typhoid and diarrhea. Of Captain Roemer's Battery were 44 of his 99 men in the hospitals. The other batteries of *the 9th Corps* were even worse off. Their manpower had been so severe reduced by illnesses, that they couldn't be deployed again until the following spring.

The 46th New York left the campsite in Covington on the 27th of August. Early in the morning the soldiers marched under the command of Captain Servière to the railway-station and assisted Roemer's gunners in the loading of their equipment. The battery was already lined up in front of the ramp. Roemer had persuaded his recovering patients to accompany him on the journey. *The 9th Corps* would have been completely without artillery, if it weren't for his battery. Only seven of the worst cases were left behind. The others found conformable sleeping places under the gun carriages and ammunition-wagons. The journey went through the mountainous Kentucky Bluegrass District. Roemer noticed here already the first signs of improvement with his recuperating gunners.

No one knew where the trip was bound. Only gradually it became clear, that the ultimate goal was Knoxville in Tennessee. One who had stayed behind was Lieutenant Johann Ludwig Heupel of *the 46th New York.*

"When I joined the regiment, I was still a healthy and strong fellow," he recalled. "But during the campaign in Mississippi while marching under the hot sun and in these unsanitary conditions there, my health was ruined completely." When the regiment departed with Roemer's battery, Heupel stayed in the hospital for another two months.

The train traveled in a southerly direction. At seven o'clock gasped the little steam locomotive into Nicholasville, where the tracks ended. Again, the "46ers" helped unloading the guns and provided for the accommodation of the sick.

Half of Roemer's sick gunners were sufficiently recovered and fit for duty, but he had still not enough people for a possible deployment. Lieutenant Wilhelm Schirmer and thirty men from the 46th New York were temporary assigned to Roemer's Battery. For the next few days, the brigade remained in the vicinity of the station. Here came the long awaited paymaster of the division and paid off the men. The rest of the day they had off. Soon after the Paymaster followed the Sutlers. They were always there when their customers had money in their pockets. Colonel Christ was taken ill on arrival in Nicholasville and Colonel Pierce of *the 29th Massachusetts Regiment* stepped temporarily in his place as brigade commander. Another regiment was here added to the brigade, the 2nd Michigan, under the command of Captain John Ruehle.

The 46th New York had to leave here all their sick comrades behind, who could no longer march. From the 2nd Brigade of the 1st Division stayed so many, that they filled a special recovery unit. Dr. Otto Schenck, the regimental surgeon of *the 46th New York* stayed behind to care for the patients. Some of them died here, including Lieutenant Gustav Ranhaus, the first "Commissary Sergeant" of the regiment.

Another patient in Nicholasville was Captain August Claussen, the company commander of the 3rd Company. Claussen received on the 2nd of September permission from Dr. Schenck to take the train to Lexington, in order to go to a dentist. Instead of immediately returning, he went without leave to his family in New York City. When he returned on the 15th of November, the regiment had already reached Knoxville. From the disciplinary court, he was fined for "unlawful leave" and dismissed from the Army.

Meanwhile *the 46th New York* had marched on foot from Nicholasville through Lancaster to Crab Orchard. It was an arduous trek of three days. The men had encamped in the woods by the roadside. The little town of Crab Orchard was a well-known seaside resort. All around the municipality were mineral water springs. A large part of the troops were sent again to the hospitals. Almost all the soldiers were suffering from their wounds and still others showed the effect of their "Mississippi River fever". *The 46th New York* counted at their morning roll call barely a hundred men, and even these were not in good healthy condition.

The 50th Pennsylvania Regiment had only a little more than eighty men on their feet. The healthy men in Captain Roemer's battery were not enough to feed the draft horses. Again the "46ers" had to step in and help out. The army remained here in Crab Orchard for two weeks, so that everyone could relax again before the real hardships would begin.

Immediately after the arrival of the *9th Army Corps* in Cincinnati had General Burnside with the *23rd Army Corps* advanced from Lexington to Tennessee. On September the 3rd he had occupied Knoxville, Kingston and Clinton. The rebels didn't put up a fight. Many of the residents had stood on the streets and greeted the troops as liberators. *The 9th Army Corps* was now on the way there to reinforce the garrisons.

Chapter 20
Through the Cumberland Mountains to Tennessee –

The Army had allowed two weeks of rest, before the advance to Knoxville began. It was on the 10th of September 1863, when *the 9th Corps* stood ready in "light marching order". It means going without the knapsacks and without the extra underwear for re-

placement. The rolled blanket was carried over the right shoulder. The knapsacks were left behind in Crab Orchard, but everyone had to carry his rations for the next eight days.

The brigade had a hard march of about fourteen miles and went into camp at a place called Mount Vernon. After the second night they reached the first hills and on the third day Louden. The reveille sounded at half-past three o'clock every morning. Half-past four the column was back in motion. This region was sparsely populated. With the exception of wild fruits and nuts the men had to live from the rations they had brought along. Many soldiers claimed afterwards, that the consumption of these wild fruits had cured them largely from the diseases they brought back with them from the Yozoo.

As long as the trek went through Kentucky, the roads had been somewhat passable, but pretty soon the soldiers faced the rugged Cumberland Hills. At Wildcat Mountain, the route led directly over the rocky ground and continued as steeply upwards as church stairs. All transports had to be hauled with ropes to the top. The miserable roads were bumpy and dusty. The column advanced between mules and baggage cars. "Nothing is as stressful as a march behind transport teams," explained a soldier. "Every time such a wagon gets stuck, we are obliged to lend a hand. Breaks an axis, we end up unloading and then reloading the goods on another car."

The night was very cold in these mountains. Everyone was sleeping as close as possible to the campfires. The supplied rations were almost gone. When the army had no longer supplies, the soldiers went themselves on the search for food. Foraging raids were strictly forbidden, but every now and then returned a soldier with something to eat. On the 14th of September it rained during the night. In their leaking tents awakened many of the sleeping men from the sudden cold and wet blankets. Half of the following day was spent drying clothes on the campfire. The next day the regiment reached Livingston and passed the battlefield, where the rebel General Felix Zollicoffer had on October 21st,1861, attacked the Union troops. As a result he was defeated by an army under the command of Brigadier General Albin Schoepf. Today this area is a small park with a monument (Interstate 75, Exit 59). At noon the regiment ran into a gray-uniformed column, which marched in the opposite direction. It was the entire garrison of the fort "Cumberland Gap", a total of 2,000 rebels. General Burnside had taken them prisoners on the 8th of September 1863 after a short siege.

The poor fellows were hungry and many of the Union soldiers shared with them their biscuits. These prisoners had been for days on a diet of flour, which they toasted on their campfire. The guards were Union soldiers from Ohio, who brought their transport to a remote prison camp in the north. Here the representatives of the two hostile armies met for a friendly discussion. Most of these Southerners felt they had actually been fighting for an unjust cause, but others were still convinced rebels.

Barboursville on the Cumberland stream was the next stop. There was no bridge for crossing the river. Fording was necessary at a shallow spot, but that was no longer possible after these downpours. It took the regiment four days to get on the other side. On the 20th of September the troops climbed up the steep path to the Cumberland Gap. At the summits of these majestic mountains they admired for a while the lofty peaks. In front of them presented itself the eastern part of Tennessee, the "Switzerland" of America. As far as the eye could see, they admired the green valleys on either side of the Tennessee River. On the southern horizon they could see the "Blue Ridge Mountains" of North Carolina, whose highest bluish peaks were reaching right up to the clouds. On the road marked

a stone the spot, where the southeastern corner of Kentucky meets with the western tip of Virginia and the northern border of Tennessee. Today, this point lies in the Cumberland Gap National Park.

The first city on the march through eastern Tennessee was Tazewell. The population had been waiting for the troops of the North since the beginning of the war to restore the old order. Many of the houses had been destroyed by the rebels or burned. The inhabitants had been expelled, because they were with their sympathies on the side of the Union. Since General Burnside had begun with the occupation of the country, many of the exiles had returned. Tennessee had officially seceded from the North in June of 1861. The decisive vote had been taken in the numerically superior western region, where slaves had planted cotton. Here in East Tennessee had the rather modest mountain dwellers little sympathy or understanding for the secession of the south. The inhabitants argued that the election results had been falsified in favor of the Confederacy.

The next large stream to cross was the Clinch River. The water was at the ford three feet deep. The soldiers found it advisable to take their uniform off and carry it on their shoulders. But since the shoes had to be kept on, the leather now softened and was completely distorted and ruined during the following mountaineering. Had the road to this point already been difficult enough, what followed now put everything else into the shade. It went up on the steep Clinch Mountain and then back down through the valley. Once again the wagons were hauled up with ropes. To descend, the rope ran in two turns around a strong tree. One end was attached to the rear axle of the wagon and twelve strong men were holding the other end and let the vehicle slide slowly down the hill. This maneuver was repeated at each of the following mountain ranges. Often these ropes burst and the car crashed with its valuable contents into the deep abyss. Several times were also the mules and horses lost, when they were not unhitched.

Captain Roemer's cannoneers had come this far without problems. Here they ran into their first adventure. All the gun carriages and caissons had passed safely over the rocky road. But the battery wagon, drawn by eight horses, struck a rock with one of the rear wheels. This vehicle had an immense length and took a wider swing than any of the others. When the rear wheel came off, the wagon with eight horses and four drivers went down the mountainside, turned over three times and finally struck a stump, which stopped the fall. As a result, the wagon was preserved along with its crew and horses from falling into the deep ravine.

“One has to imagine our astonishment, when one of the drivers, without a cap and his clothes torn, crawled out from under his horse, stood up, rubbed his head and called out ‘The Berliner is alive yet,” recalled Jacob Roemer. “Berliner” was his nick name in the battery, but his real name was Henry Käsemeyer. It sounds incredible, but neither the men nor the horses had been seriously injured in the fall. General Ferrero, the Commander of the Division, had observed this strange event. He gave the order to take the horses to safety and leave the car temporarily where it was. The column marched on and in the next morning, Roemer returned with 35 men and ten horses to retrieve his battery wagon.

Finally the troops arrived at the Holston River. Again, there was no bridge. But after this stream was forded, there ended the arduous climbing. The terrain was flat and even. That same evening, the regiment reached Morristown, a small community on the East Tennessee & Virginia Railroad. This line had been already for a year out of service. The local Union loyalists had burned five wooden bridges between Stevenson (Alabama)

and Bristol (Tennessee). Here the rebel government had lost an important supply route to Virginia.

Jacob Roemer's horses had lost on this journey through the Cumberland Mountains between twenty and thirty-five horseshoes on every day. Of the five hundred spare horseshoes, he had taken along from Covington, there was not a single one left. Also, there was a lack of horse feed and food. The baggage wagons of *the 46th New York Regiment* had not yet arrived and did not come the next day. Everyone had to find himself something to eat. Who had his good fortune, found in the city some biscuits, a dozen for 25 cents.

While the regiment was encamped here in Morristown, further west in Chickamauga raged the great battle between the Union forces under General Rosecrans and a rebel army led by General Braxton Bragg. General Burnside dispatched from Knoxville *the 23rd Army Corps* to support the hard-pressed Union Army. No one knew that it was far too late for such help. *The 46th New York* along with its brigade advanced immediately in the direction of Knoxville, in order to the replace *the 23rd Army Corps*.

The soldiers received flour as a supply for this trek. The army had nothing else. Some of the men used it to make themselves pancakes and others managed in swapping the flour in town against biscuits or corn bread. The amount did not last very long, but luckily it was not very far to Knoxville. After only two days' march, the target came into view. It was the 26th of September, when the troops arrived in the city and built up their tents. Three days later, General Burnside arrived and welcomed *the 9th Corps.* Despite his many failures, which had cost so many soldiers their lives, he was popular with the men. Many of the young warriors had grown themselves a beard in the typical style of their general. Here in Knoxville arrived by and by the men from the 46th New York, who had been left behind in the hospitals. Among them were none of the missing senior officers. Therefore Captain Alphonse Servière had to continue in his post as regimental commander. Along with the newly arrived recruits numbered the regiment again 300 members.

Most general stores and shops in town were closed. There wasn't enough merchandise to sell. For the little that was available, the retailers demanded outrageous prices. Salt had once cost one and a half cents for a pound. Now the cost was thirty cents. For a pound of brown sugar, the price had been increased from twelve to seventy cents. The newspaper of the city consisted of only a few pages. This publication was quite often discontinued, when the supply of ink or paper was running out. Several times they had to use wallpaper instead of newsprint. Many commodities were not there at all. Where fabrics such as cotton was available, the merchant would demand an eightfold price. Nevertheless, the regiment spent some very pleasant days here. What was produced in the immediate vicinity, such as bread and meat was plentiful, but with the other supplies such as ammunition, uniforms and shoes, they had difficulties. The trails to Knoxville were still dominated by the enemy's guerrillas.

More and more Confederate troops arrived in Tennessee after the battle of Gettysburg. In early October they attacked the smaller outposts of the Union. These opponents wiped out an entire detachment of new recruits at the Telford garrison. Almost 350 of them were taken prisoners. Their fate was particularly severe. They spent the next few years in the terrible camps of the South. The first item they lost to the rebels was mostly their pair of shoes. If they were lucky, they received in exchange the homemade moccasins from their opponents.

To eliminate this constant threat, General Burnside sent on October 3rd several companies of the 9th and 23rd Corps to Morristown, where he suspected the stronghold of the enemy forces. The cavalry met the enemy and immediately noticed their numerical superiority. They had already occupied Greenville and were on their way to the Cumberland Gap to cut off the supply-lines for the Union troops. Burnside advanced on the 8th of October the rest of the 9th Corps, with a forward detachment of two brigades, to which the 46th New York belonged.

By train they traveled up to Rogersville. Rails and locomotive were in a dreadful condition. The passengers had to step constantly out of the cars and push every time it went uphill. In Rogersville, they learned from the cavalry, that a larger enemy unit was encamped behind Blue Springs. General Burnside arrived with the main part of his forces on October 9th and took over the further planning. But the rebels had been for several days observing the Union columns and now tried to block their way at Blue Springs.

They were entrenched on top of a wooded ridge that ran across the road. From there, they fired on the marching column. When the Union troops regrouped for an assault, *the 46th New York Regiment* formed the left wing of Colonel Christ's brigade. Burnside was still waiting with his command to attack. First he sent Colonel Forster with the cavalry behind the enemy's positions to block their escape routes through Rheatown. In the afternoon, when the entire front advanced with a bayonet attack, the regiment had to climb over several fences, the enemy constantly driving in front of their lines. The fleeing rebels stormed down the bare mountain, through a small stream and into a grove, where the skirmish ended for the night. Colonel Christ changed his position and attacked the enemy's battery, which had just started to fire on his troops. When the rebel cannoneers recognized his intention, they turned their guns around and galloped away.

The night turned utterly black in its darkness and brought the end of the offensive. "Had we had only thirty minutes more daylight, it would have enabled us to take at least half of the rebels prisoners," recalled the adjutant of *the 50th Pennsylvania Regiment*. Colonel Christ was going to continue the very next morning with his fighting, but very soon he realized, that the enemies had disappeared. They had observed the movements of the Union cavalry and could guess, what was going to happen. In their haste they left behind their artillery, baggage wagons and even the wounded and dead. The Union troops followed, but the Confederates had already gained too much of an advantage. Only about 150 of the stragglers could be taken prisoners.

The remains of the much-weakened rebel army retreated behind the Wattage River and was pursued by Colonel Foster's cavalry. The riders destroyed six bridges, three locomotives and thirty wagons. *The 46th New York Regiment* reached Rheatown, where the chase was abandoned. The soldiers rested here from their last two days of physical strains. The escaped enemy had unintentionally taken care of the food supply of Colonel Christ's brigade, by leaving behind a baggage wagon with fresh bread and other edibles.

In the morning of the next day began the march to the next railway station. The locomotive for the trip to Knoxville derailed after the first few miles. Again the troops continued on foot. Another train was boarded in Morristown, by which the regiment reached Knoxville in the evening of October 15th.

Chapter 21
Skirmishes at Cambell's Station

The day was gray, cloudy and cold, when *the 46th New York Regiment* arrived late at night in Knoxville. The Confederate troops had been defeated in Blue Springs on the 15th of October. It had been an easy victory. The New Yorkers had survived without any losses. But two men from *the 50th Pennsylvania Regiment* had been wounded. The Confederate troops had been defeated in Blue Springs on the 15th of October. It had been an easy victory. The New Yorkers had survived without any losses. But two men from the *50th Pennsylvania Regiment* had been wounded. The Confederates escaped. But nevertheless, their forces became stronger by the day and threadened the garrisons of the Union. Many had to be abandoned in October.

From Chattanooga approached the Rebel General Longstreet with a considerable army. His intention was, without doubt, to put a siege on the Union forces in Knoxville. Recognizing this, General Burnside concentrated at the end of October the bulk of his army between Kingston and Loudon. The enemy forces could here be intercepted, even before they reach Knoxville. This required that Burnside moved his headquarters to Loudon. Right in the morning on the 20th of October marched the entire *9th Army Corps* to Lenoir and remained there for the next three weeks. *The 79th New York* built at Loudon a pontoon bridge over the Holston River. From other regiments came some of the craftsmen to assist. Captain Roemer's farriers made nails from scrap iron.

The soldiers had orders to build accommodations. Everyone had now the impression, that this would be the safe winter quarters, where they could stay for a few weeks and wait for the coming spring. The Division sent out more supply-wagons with foraging-teams to the surrounding farmers and bring in as much as possible on edible stock for humans as well as animals. Pretty soon it became clear, that all this had been an unnecessary effort. Again had a strong rebel force from Virginia invaded the countryside. On the 10th of November they surprised in Rogersville an entire garrison and took 500 Union soldiers prisoner, also captured four guns and 36 wagons. This failure had shown that the *9th Corps* was now threatened from two sides. Consequently decided General Burnside in agreement with General Grant, to wait for the rebels in Knoxville.

Meanwhile, Longstreet came closer with his army and bridged at Hough's Ferry the Tennessee. The advance guard crossed the river in the night of the 14th of November. The rebels had only 30 miles more to go to reach Knoxville. Lenoir was located on the way there. The small town was filling up quickly with the retreating soldiers of their scattered army. Finally arrived General Burnside himself with a locomotive and took command of his troops. According to his plans should Longstreet's army be stopped as long as possible, so that he could then use the Union troops successfully against him. If this should not succeed, Burnside was going to withdraw his formations.

In the distance sounded already gunfire. There were the first skirmishes fought between Longstreet's Army and the Union cavalry. Early in the morning, during a terrible thunderstorm, came for part of *the 9th Corps* the order to march. It rained in torrents, when they went for the assistance of *the 23rd Corps*, which had already advanced at the enemy. *The 46th New York* was with Colonel Christ's Brigade in the vanguard. Around noon, the regiment was about five miles before the Confederate bridge. It had stopped

raining, but the roads were softened and barely passable. As the brigade finally reached the battlefield, the gunfire had subsided noticeably.

So far had only one part of the enemy crossed the river. The Union troops were not yet dealing with the entire enemy army. Colonel Christ's regiments had to march through a dense and dripping forest, before they were able to take up their positions. Campfires were not allowed because of the proximity of the enemy. Even on sleep could not be thought, because no one was allowed to put the gun out of his hand. Immediately with the onset of darkness began again a storm of rain and soaked every man to his skin. A Company of rebels and their lieutenant appeared suddenly in the position of the brigade. These enemies had lost their orientation in this dark and wet night. They could be captured without any difficulty.

Under the cover of darkness succeeded Longstreet and brought also the rest of his troops across the river. Against this entire army were the weak forces of *the 9th Corps* hardly a match. Prompt came the order to retreat. In the morning was *the 46th New York* waiting for a deployment against the enemy, but instead they had to march off, exactly in the direction they had come from. All along the route they went there were still the abandoned campfires burning, but the troops were long gone.

Again it was raining and storming on this march to Lenoir. For twelve hours, the soldiers had not eaten. Only here and there, they had succeeded in picking some corn on the cob. It took until the noon hours, before they could stop and cook their scanty meals around the campfire. Hardly, however, the feast was ended, when the bugle called out to collect. The enemies were close behind on the Kingston Road. The scouts of the brigade watched, as the relatively strong rebel army was advancing with about 10,000 men. In the absence of horses, oxen drew most of the guns. "They were progressing very slowly," recalled one of the soldiers. "The guns and wagons sometimes stuck up to the axle in mud." When other regiments of *the 9th Corps* arrived, they succeeded immediately in stopping the march of the rebel army. After dark it came to the usual skirmishes with the enemy's pickets.

In Lenoir increased the battle noise and in the morning of the 16th of November came for the rest of *the 9th Corps* the order to leave the recently completed quarters. Everything that could have been used by the enemy, had to be destroyed, including the cotton mill, the books of the regiments and some of the baggage cars. They had to give their horses and mules to the artillery. For the Union troops had the fighting only the purpose of stopping the advance of the enemy and give the construction crews more time to finish the fortifications in Knoxville. Colonel Christ's brigade was now the rear guard of *the 9th Corps* on the muddy trails they were marching.

"The road was often blocked by our artillery and transport wagons," said one soldier. "Now and then we had to push them out of the muddy holes. The enemy was always close on our heels." On the 16th of November continued the trek even at nights. Here the rebel-division "McLaw" attempted to overtake the Union troops on a parallel road and get sooner to the intersection with the cross-road to Campbell's Station. This maneuver would have prevented the *9th Corps* from reaching Knoxville. Instead the Union arrived sooner and received their opponents with salvos of artillery. *The first Division of the 9th Corps* was here formed into battle line and gave the rebels a reception. The regiments of the brigade were on the right outside, where they fell immediately under the artillery fire of the enemy.

"The attack of the enemy's infantry happened at noon with a massive assault on our right, where Colonel Christ' s Brigade was located," wrote the historian of *the 9th Corps.* "The rebels came in several waves and hoped to break our flank with an overwhelming superiority. But our line did not waver in the slightest. Colonel Christ avoided with a quick change of front, that his brigade was about to yield the position. The desperate attack was successfully repelled. *The 46th New York* stood here for four hours in the worst infantry and artillery fire. While this fierce struggle took place, all cars of the Union transport convoy passed this dangerous intersection and succeeded in reaching the safe road to Knoxville. Now where the skirmish was over, however, had the two brigades of the 9th Corps to defend themselves, until they found their own way to Knoxville." This occurred only after nightfall. Historians call this artillery-duel the "Battle of Campbell's Station".

Chapter 22
Besieged in Knoxville

The battle at Campbell's Station had been one of the toughest with the use of artillery on both sides. From *the 46th New York* had the soldier Heinrich von Hausen died and from the *50th Pennsylvania* the Corporal Emanuel Faust. When one of the rebel guns had exploded, several of their gunners had been wounded.

The Regiment reached Knoxville before dawn on the 17th of November. Soldiers and civilians were busy constructing defensive barriers and trenches. The citizens of the city and two hundred freed slaves worked under the guidance of pioneers on the construction of artillery positions. A small-scale strategic fort had already been built during the occupation of the Confederacy. Union pioneers and troops were making it the most important stronghold at the entrance to the city. For the newly arrived soldiers was still the most important work to be done, the digging of trenches and foxholes along the defensive line. *The 46th New York* was placed at 3 o'clock in the morning at their location along the railway line.

"We were all completely exhausted from the constant fighting and marching during the last three sleepless nights," recalled Colonel Christ, "but every man took over his function and started digging trenches. At first, we were working during the day, but then after the appearance of the enemy under the cover of darkness." In front of the lines had the Confederates cleared a pine forest, while they had been in control of the city. Between the still-standing foot-high stumps strung the pioneers a dense network of trip wires and got ready for the reception of the rebels.

Outside the city succeeded General Sanders with his cavalry to slow down the rebel division McLaw, so that they arrived late the next day at noon in front of the Union lines. General Sanders himself had been mortally wounded during these skirmishes. The little fort was named in his honor "Fort Sanders". The enemies had this bastion called "Fort Loudon."

Throughout the day there appeared little by little the rest of the opposing army and took position in front of *the 9th Corps.* Longstreet's siege stretched now from the left at the Tazewell Road down to the Holston River. More than three-quarters of the city

were now encircled. Only a small section from the southeast at the Holston River remained open. Here General Burnside had built a pontoon bridge, over which the rural districts south of the city could be reached.

It was the same bridge, for which Roemer's blacksmiths had provided the nails. The pioneers had managed to pull this floating structure up to this point. General Foster's cavalry was stationed on this side to secure the passage. As long as the rebels could be kept away from the southern bank of the river, the supply of the city was secured.

Longstreet tried desperately to destroy this pontoon bridge. He had his pioneers build a raft to make it float with the current against the pontoons. The city people, who had already set up a device for the protection of the bridge, had expected this. Patrols of the rebels were looking for a gap in the defense, through which they could get in. But that was very difficult. The city was situated on a hill and the streams around it favored the defenders. Right at the third day of the siege, the Confederates drove the outer cordon of defenders back and occupied the woods in front of the lines. Thereafter happened very little except for the occasional skirmishes. Colonel Christ's brigade was shivering in their foxholes and watched the activity on the other side.

"My men were on picket every other day", he recalled. "When off duty they stood in a cramped position in their rifle pits; during the day to avoid the bullets of the enemy's sharpshooters. At night one third of them were kept constantly awake to guard against surprises. Add to this one-fourth rations of coffee and one-half ration of coarse, heavy corn bread, and the fact that they were poorly shod, some even barefooted and poorly clothed, without their overcoats and many of them were without blankets." Lieutenant Philip Betz later told that it was especially the knees and bare hands that ached, when crouching on the ground.

Between the fronts of the two armies were several private houses, which the rebels used as hiding places and storage rooms. Here they were under cover and could safely prepare their next surprise attack. Colonel Christ sent in the night of the 20th of November a few volunteers over to burn down these houses. The action was a complete success. The enemy's snipers lost their hiding place, from which they fired their deadly bullets. The 26th of November was a holiday, usually an occasion for the big feast. But here there were "only half rations of bread and full supplies of ammunition," as one of the soldiers remarked.

The 46th New York passed here eighteen days together with the comrades of the *27th Michigan, the 29th Massachusetts and the 50th Pennsylvania Regiment.* They were almost completely locked in by the enemy and could not even come in contact with their own troops in the city. Sergeant Gustav Hempel of *the 46th New York* Infantry caught a sniper's bullet on a walk outside during the dark night, which wounding him fatally.

"On the night of the 28th of November we had every reason to expect an attack on our position," recalled Colonel B. C. Christ, the brigade commander. "Consequently I had taken every precaution to render it unsuccessful. About 10 o'clock a charge was made, but by setting fire to some combustible materials previously prepared in the large round-house and other railroad buildings, as well as a number of private houses, making a complete wall of fire along our entire front. The enemies were checked and soon after retired to their lines."

It looked as if all hell broke loose, remarked one of the soldiers, as the flames illuminated the wintry sky and the surrounding natural forests and fields. At the end of the

burning line of buildings stood the round locomotive-shed, which was filled with obsolete munitions. Once the flames also reached these, an even more powerful explosion shook the frosty night. Wreckage and splinters whizzed through the air. A violent blast threw the soldiers against their protective walls. Where previously had been the shed, they just saw a blood-red fire, from which echoed more explosions across to them. Immediately afterwards, *the 46th New York Infantry* was almost alone in their rifle pits. Colonel Christ had to send almost his entire brigade to Fort Sanders, because there they expected the first attack.

Captain Roemer was in charge of the artillery at Fort Byington. Two more guns he had set up in Fort Sanders, along with those of Lieutenant Benjamin and Captain Buckley. When by the first light of the 29th of November the artillery duel between the two camps began, he realized that his fired grenades did not explode. Roemer inspected his remaining stock and noted that the ignition-channels were clogged by corrosion. To open them up, they had to be drilled out. But such a job was very dangerous. Volunteers had to be found to do this job, but nobody stepped forward. When Roemer started himself with the boring, Sergeant Volkmar declared himself ready to help. The two repaired a total of sixty shells and afterwards every shot exploded in the enemy lines.

As soon as the artillery fire slackened, the enemy's infantry began with their suicidal assault. Their attack could be almost effortlessly turned back. The defenders had no losses, but the fort was on the next morning all around covered with 182 dead rebels. Even more dead and wounded were found between the stumps, where the trip wires were stretched. After Longstreet had pulled his troops back, General Burnside allowed the rebels to collect their casualties from the battlefield. In the meantime were all hostilities suspended.

The Confederates stayed for another three days in front of the lines. As on December 4th the darkness of night fell, noticed the Union soldiers a bustling and striving noise on the other side. There were muffled voices, batteries and troops were moving to and from by the light of lanterns. Either the enemies were planning a new attack or maybe they marched away? Colonel Christ ordered his entire staff at the ramparts and into the trenches, but this was an unnecessary effort. Captain Schwenck from the *50th Pennsylvania Regiment* brought at 3 o'clock in the morning a captured rebel to him, from which it was learned, that the enemies had left their position during the night. They certainly had recognized the hopelessness of their situation. From their spies they knew, that General Sherman's army was on the march to Knoxville to free the city from their grip.

Chapter 23
Starvation in the Winter Quarters
- Friends Become Enemies

Longstreet's rebels opened the siege of Knoxville on the 5th of December 1863 and disappeared into the dark and cold night. For the garrison it was more than a happy event. Now where the troops returned to their regular military life, at least they could sleep again, wash themselves and eat enough. Some of the officers visited the abandoned campsites of the enemy. Patrols collected the scattered stragglers of the hostile army.

Within an hour they brought in hordes of deserters. Some of them had probably missed the departure. Others had simply run away. General Ferrero, the commander of the *first division,* received around noon the message that a full regiment of the enemy's army had stayed behind and was hiding in a paper mill on the road to Loudon.

Colonel Christ's Brigade and *the 46th New York regiment* went on a search and took numerous prisoners, including some officers. In the factory they found 130 sick and wounded rebels, who were left without any care to their fate. In addition to these innocent patients and shirkers no significant enemy forces were found. The stressful march had been unnecessarily. Colonel Christ had the impression that he had fallen victim to a malicious prankster.

Many of the soldiers were now after the long siege at the end of their fitness. Nevertheless, they had to prepare for the pursuit of the retreating rebel army. About a thousand men of the *First Division,* which had stood during the siege in the rifle pits, were completely exhausted. Others could not march because of their inadequate clothing. Yet the important expedition could not be postponed. The regimental doctors sent all their patients who were not totally incapacitated to return to their regiments.

Pants and jackets were patched with scraps. Those who had no longer a blanket, bought one from the inhabitants of the city. Some of the missing pieces of clothing and equipment could be replaced by purchases at local stores. If boots or shoes were not available in the army's supply, then some of these soldiers bought them for their own money. Other soldiers were sewing or mending their old shoes and some knew how to make a pair of Indian moccasins. Not every soldier was so skilful, that he could handle a needle and thread. Captain Roemer explained how one could make do in the simplest way: "I bought five untanned ox-hides, because fifteen of my men had no shoes. This leather we cut into strips of eighteen inches (46 cm). Such were wrapped around the foot and ankle, so that the feet were protected on the march." Despite all these efforts for the upcoming campaign, we had to leave a quarter of the soldiers in Knoxville.

On the 7th of December began the march of the *9th Army Corps* toward Morristown. Mostly it went along the East Tennessee & Virginia Railroad. Before leaving in Knoxville, there was very little time left to care for the physical welfare of the troops. After the siege there was hardly anything edible left that could have been given to the troops. The campaign developed into a relentless hunger march. Fortunately, everyone had a little money and could buy himself something. Colonel Christ's brigade followed the retreating army toward Virginia until he reached Rutledge on the 9th of December. Here had Longstreet been reinforced by another rebel group. He had taken up a well-fortified position in front of the important mountain pass at "Bull's Gap."

General Parke was also waiting with *the 9th Corps* to see what the Confederates intended. The two armies faced each other and nothing happened, except the usual skirmishes. Provisions had to be procured mainly by the soldiers themselves. From the army was hardly anything to be expected. Here, where it concerned the physical well being, they discovered soon the friends in their own army as enemies. In two nearby mills had the wheat supply of the rebels been seized. Colonel Christ sent Quartermaster John Eckel and Sergeant Lewis Crater there to grind the grain.

As Eckel had processed about half a ton, the officer of another Union regiment arrived with a troop of soldiers. He ordered his men to take over the prey for his own troops. Eckel's objections he did not listen to. Fortunately, the other officer did not know

about the second mill. The flour from there transported Eckel to his own regiment. What had happened here is easy to explain: The “other officer” was apparently of the opinion, that he had a right to this booty. His soldiers had probably discovered the first mill and then repaired it.

The two armies confronted each other for another five days, before Longstreet was finally sure that he was numerically superior to his enemies. On the 14th of December he attacked the Union forces and drove them back toward Knoxville. On both sides were the starved men barely able to fight against each other. The onset of a freezing rain brought now anyway an end to the hostilities. On the 17th of December reached *the 46th New York* with Colonel Christ's brigade Blaine's Cross Roads, about 20 miles northeast of Knoxville. Here in this wilderness followed for the entire Ninth Corps the construction of winter quarters.

It was not an ideal campsite. Life in this seclusion went harder by the day. The icy wind that blew mostly from the mountains, made things difficult for the soldiers. There was no more to do than the occasional guard duty. Colonel Christ tried to employ his people according to their professional abilities. Work was finally the best antidote against boredom and dissatisfaction.

Many members of *the 29th Massachusetts Regiment* were from Boston and had been employed there in the shipbuilding industry. They built new pontoons for the pioneers, since a great many had been lost here in Tennessee. The men chopped down large trees and then cut them with a long hand saw into planks. From them they constructed the bulky ferries and pontoons. Among the members of *the 46th New York* regiment had been a large number of wheelwrights, locksmiths and mechanics. They were the proper manpower for the repair of the baggage and ammunition-wagons of the artillery.

Jacob Roemer’s horses had lost almost all their horseshoes. He could not replace them, because his portable forge had no coal and no charcoal. While wood was here plentiful, nobody knew how to make charcoal from it. Finally he found three men in the brigade, who knew how to turn wood into charcoal. The first attempt burned the wood, but then the experiment was successful. Soon Roemer had so much charcoal, that he could also supply the other batteries.

The soldiers showed themselves as masters of improvisation, but in order to fill a hungry stomach, the best ideas did not help. From the dwindling rations could nobody live anymore, so they went on a search in the area, mostly to return bitterly disappointed. The residents of this area had never been very wealthy. From their own supplies they had already given the most to the passing troops. But a painful hunger is not easy to endure. Whenever the horses and mules were fed in the evening, some of the soldiers sneaked into the barn and stole the corn of the animals and eat it themselves

The thefts took on such proportions that the feedings soon had to be monitored. But because the guards were just as hungry as their comrades, they also shared the food with the animals. With wheat or corn, which can also be found elsewhere, it is hard to prepare a meal. Not until a soldier came up with the ingenious idea of grinding it in a coffee-grinder. Thereby he got coarse flour and could make pancakes. The result was, that almost every company of the regiment bought such a coffee grinder.

Here in this solitude arrived on the 19th of December First Lieutenant Ernst Gerhardt with two other officers of the brigade from convalescent leave. Almost a month he had been on the road, after he had reached the last station in Nicholasville. Then he had

to walk most of the time and beware of the marauding guerrillas. Only once he had been taken along by an army supply-wagon and on a different stretch, he was allowed to ride the spare-horse of a cavalry patrol. When he had finally arrived in Knoxville, they told him that his regiment was in Blaine. To get there, it was another ten miles by train and another ten miles on foot. Who in such a situation arrived too late and could give no credible reason for it, had to reckon with stiff punishment.

At Ernst Gerhardt's arrival, the regiment was hungry. The entire brigade had been put on half the usual ration. Arnold Davidsohn, the Regiment's sutler supplied at times butter, cheese and canned food, but the men had to pay for it. Here in this barren mountain landscape, where the ground was now covered with ice and snow, slept the soldiers in their leaky tents. The only thing that protected them from freezing to death, were the large campfires, which they could keep up with an abundance of lumber.

The brigade has had no opportunity since September to replace worn-out shoes and tattered clothes. Officers and men were full of lice, just because everything was missing. Few had a second set of underwear for replacement. In this miserable condition they spent the Christmas holiday and the arrival of the New Year. "It was very difficult for us in these last few weeks," wrote Colonel Christ on Christmas Day to his son in Minersville (Pennsylvania). "Some days we stayed outside in the rain on the wet ground, often without a fire. Sometimes it was so cold that we could not think of sleeping."

Chapter 24
The 50th Pennsylvania Regiment goes on leave

With the arrival of the year 1864 came for some regiments the expiration of their three years' of service. But the war was far from over. Right now it took these experienced and proven fighters to finish it up. Before the year 1863 ended, the Congress of the United States had adopted new rules for the re-enlistment. Anyone who signed up for another three years of service was awarded a bonus of four hundred dollars and thirty days' home leave, provided that three-quarters of the total strength of the entire regiment committed itself to it.

In this case, the regiment should go on leave during the unexpired term of service and thereafter maintain the existing organization. "It speaks for the patriotism and loyalty of our troops that two of my regiments, *the twenty-ninth Massachusetts and fiftieth Pennsylvania*, have already re-enlisted as veteran volunteers", reported Colonel Benjamin Christ to the division commander. "In addition, *the forty-sixth New York* has almost but not quite the required number of new signings, while *the twenty-seventh Michigan* regrets, that they have not been in the service long enough to avail themselves of the provisions of the General Order."

The first to go on leave were the comrades from *the 50th Pennsylvania Regiment*, because they had been the first to fulfill the conditions of the General Order. They shook hands and said good bye from their friends of the 46th New York on the 10th of January, with whom they had been together almost since the beginning of the entire war. They had a long way home and needed to cross first of all through the rugged Cumberland Mountains. An officer of the regiment described later this arduous journey: "The earth was

covered with snow and many of our people walked barefoot. From Blaine up to Nicholasville it was a distance of about two hundred miles. Nevertheless, this route took us only ten days. Before leaving our campsite we had received thirty untanned hides, from which we had made moccasins. Every day at noon, when the ground thawed, softened these green skins and expanded, so that they could not be kept on our feet. When we finally had the rough roads of the mountains behind us, we were on open ground and exposed to the cold winds of this season. In addition to all these strains we almost died of hunger. On our arrival in Nicho- lasville, we finally got something to eat and received new uniforms."

Even before they reached Nicholasville, they had to cross the Wild Cat Mountain. Here on this difficult trail overturned one of the baggage wagons. It was during the onset of darkness. An immediately repair was not possible. The two drivers covered the car with a huge tarp and they also found themselves a place under it to lie down. During the night fell 4 inches (10 cm) snow, beneath which they slept pretty well.

In Cincinnati they took quarters at the Fifth Street Market Hall, where they waited a few days for the paymaster. Then finally they went by train to Harrisburg. It was the first time in their lives, that they used real salon-wagons. From Harrisburg they were sent home on the 6th of February.

The 46th New York Regiment remained further in Blaine and lived with a quarter of the rations. On some days there was nothing more than two ears of corn per man. All soldiers with the exception of sentries went early to sleep, because candles to make light were no longer to be found. Here where every member of the regiment was tired of this kind of life, they asked them again at the morning roll call, if they wanted to stay in the army for another three years.

Despite their miserable existence signed 256 their new pledges. Some said they just signed to avoid a slow death through starvation. Others explained that they were primarily interested to be sent home for three weeks of promised leave. Now they waited patiently for the assured vacation, or at least better weather and the order to leave this desolate place. It was not until mid-January, when they noticed signs that major changes were under way. Longstreet's rebels had themselves established in the vicinity of Rogersville and Morristown. From there they endangered the supply lines of the Union army. Now and then there were skirmishes with the enemy's cavalry, when they attacked the pickets of the Union. While Colonel Christ was with his regiment in Pennsylvania, Colonel Ebenezer Pierce of *the 29th Massachusetts Regiment* commanded the brigade and General Sheridan of the *4th Corps* was in command of the entire Union Forces.

On the 16th of January was the 9th Corps awakened early and moved immediately out of the camp. Like a long stretched blue worm moved the companies in the pale dawn through the freshly fallen snow. The subsequent march went mostly over plowed farmland and was quite exhausting for the starving soldiers. The last rations had consisted almost entirely of flour mixed with water and baked into pancakes. By ten o'clock crossed the division the Holston River and by four in the afternoon it reached Strawberry Plains, a railway station on the East Tennessee & Virginia Railroad. The brigade camped here near the Railway Bridge, which had been several times destroyed and rebuilt during this war. Why camp out here was everyone asking, but it was probably to protect the bridge against the marauding guerrillas.

Captain Roemer's battery left here the division to cross without horses and without guns the Cumberland Mountains. Almost all of the gunners had committed themselves to a further three years of service and went for three weeks to their families in New York. Awaiting them there except for the bonus of $400 was an present of $300 from Queens County and another $75 from the State of New York.

The 46th New York was for two days stationed on the Railway Bridge, when the order came to march. They were ready in a few minutes, but waited for a few hours, while nothing happened. They would have been too happy to leave this exposed and windy campsite. But the tents had to be built up again. In the evening, the brigade was again ready for immediate departure, but the order did not arrive, not even during the next two days. On the last night they had three inches of snow and that was probably the reason for the delay.

Finally, on the 21st of January appeared other troops to take over the watch at the bridge. The brigade crossed the Holston River and marched through a silent, snowy cedar forest. From the branches clattered the snow and struck dully on the ground. Here under these trees, the regiment moved into a slightly more appropriate campsite. Artillery fire could be heard from a distance and later also rifle fire. *The 4th Corps* had met the enemy's cavalry. Still, the brigade remained undisturbed, but on the next day just after midnight, the regiment was awakened. The entire division was put on the march to Knoxville. Longstreet's rebels had succeeded in the meantime in destroying the important wooden Railroad Bridge.

Chapter 25
Small victory on Chucky River and back to Cincinnati

The 21st of January 1864 was no different from any of the other cold winter-days. It was cloudy and the icy winds swept over the barren mountains. After the departure of the 9th Army Corps from Strawberry Plains appeared the enemy troops at about 11 o'clock in the morning on the south side of the Holston River and began with an harassing gunfire. Only when they brought six heavy guns against the marching column into position, it started to get dangerous. When the Union batteries replied the fire, it developed into a four-hour artillery duel, which was finally terminated by the enemy.

The Army crossed at Armstrong's Ferry with the entire artillery and baggage train through the shallow river. To ensure their safety, the entire *46th New York Regiment* stayed behind with the brigade. Commander of the Brigade was still Colonel Pierce, as long as "Papa Christ" was with his regiment on furlough in Pennsylvania. As the enemy's cavalry attacked the rear guard, the ensuing skirmish moved along on the river until *the 9th Corps* reached Knoxville. One of the casualties in this battle was the 23- year old Lieutenant Hermann Mentzel from the *46th New York Infantry.* Some of the troops, who marched ahead, pulled two heavy guns with them on long ropes. Apparently their horses had been lost. After only a short stretch stood one of these guns abandoned by the roadside. The brigade could not leave it for the enemy, so the marchers grabbed the stiff frozen rope and pulled the heavy thing with them, uphill, downhill and through streams and fields until horses later replaced them.

The soldiers were now too dirty from this trek over the muddy roads, that they could not venture through the streets of the city in this pitiable condition. They remained for another day in the woods to bring weapons, equipment and uniforms in order. Each of them scrubbed and polished uniform and equipment, as if he wanted to go to a wedding. Shoes and boots soon shone in a high gloss. The long beards were trimmed back into a civilized length. "We then marched to the music of our regimental bands and with flying colors through Knoxville," recalled one soldier later on. "The well-known *Ninth Corps* made a dashing appearance. Our ruffled flags found here a universal admiration."

On the other side of the city marched the *9th Corps* again for eight miles and encamped in a cornfield near Lyon's Mill. Foraging squads of the brigade were sent from here with baggage wagons to the Clinch River to supply the entire corps with food. Whenever the Army seized food from the farmers, they were given written statements, so that they could be paid later by the authorities. But there was money only for those people, who could prove their loyalty to the legitimate government.

For another week stayed the *9th Corps* in the vicinity of Knoxville, mostly at the Erin station of the East Tennessee & Virginia Railroad. It was very peaceful at the time, until the *23rd Army Corps* met the enemy at Morristown and needed help. The march to Morristown took place “in light marching order.” The muddy season was still not over and the ankle-deep slush was slippery. Now and then slipped someone and fell to the ground. The next morning it was found that the assistance was no longer necessary. The column reversed course and returned to the abandoned camp.

On the 18th of February came orders to break camp in Erin and march to the other side of Knoxville. Here they built a new campsite in a grove west of the city, where another week went by in monotonous boredom. Judging from the many rumors, they thought a new attack was imminent on Knoxville. Now and then it snowed and in spite of the general calm, the mood at *the 46th New York* was depressed right now. During the siege of Knoxville, the pay-forms for November and December had been lost and needed to be re-submitted. Thus, the regiment had not received any money for six months. It was also unknown when the regiment would go on leave.

On the 26th of February arrived the brigade in New Market. All indications showed that a major military operation was imminent. The entire baggage of the division, along with the knapsacks, had to be sent by train to Knoxville. Each man received rations for the next fifteen days. New Market was a charming little village and all inhabitants, including many pretty girls, were standing on the street and watched the troops marching by. The small town was one of the many settlements along the Holston River, which were founded by German Lutherans. At the beginning of the nineteenth century was this stream still called the "Holstein River".

In the morning at seven o’clock continued the march and two hours later crossed the brigade the river with boats. The wooden bridge had been burned once again by saboteurs. For several days the troops kept marching further east. The road led through the lowlands along the river, through uncultivated fields and past the cedar and oak forests. Mossy Creek was passed and on the 29th of February they reached Morristown, where they set up for the night. From the gray overcast sky, it trickled slowly and steadily until late into the night. A rebel attack was expected and the troops received orders to prepare for it.

After two uneventful days in Morristown came the order to return to Mossy Creek. Here too they found themselves with nothing to do and many of the soldiers were wondering, why they came here, when there is no trace of the enemy. The days passed now with a boring military routine, twice a day drill and in the evening inspection. Finally by daybreak on the 12th of March broke the division camp. Immediately began the march and to everyone's surprise, it went in the opposite direction to Morristown.

Here at last something had happened: During the night was suddenly alarm given, and some regiments of the brigade, including *the 46th New York*, advanced during the darkness to the Chucky River. Local scouts had found a hiding place of the rebels. Just seven miles from the main mountain pass "Bull's Gap" waded the regiment through the river. From here they penetrated into the secret lair of the enemy. Two battalions had been hiding here. They fled in the ensuing battle, leaving behind their luggage and their horses, also large quantities of weapons and equipment.

The brigade patrolled for another week the vicinity of Morristown, before the retreat began to Knoxville. The entire *Ninth Corps* camped here in front of Fort Sanders. Lt.-Colonel Travers received here orders to transfer all members of the regiment, who had not re-enlisted, to the *36th Massachusetts*. From these seventy transferred men were only fifty-six present. At 9 o'clock in the morning were they ready to leave. Travers gave his departing comrades a last sentimental farewell speech.

For those who remained behind, it was not easy to separate from their companions. For many of them it was the same sad farewell. They now regarded the transfer as a punishment for their refusal to re-enlist. They did not mind to serve in the other regiment, but in this case were their names cleared from the records of the *46th New York Regiment.* Here at the campground in Knoxville was *the 36th Massachusetts regiment* located directly opposite. The adjutant of the 46th, Lieutenant Adolph Tamsen, marched across with these comrades and handed them over to the commander of the other regiment.

The formalities took nearly all day until the arms and the equipment of these men were accounted for. Some of the transferred soldiers were still in the hospital or on convalescent leave. Thus they were not entered into the rolls of *the 36th Massachusetts Regiment.* This resulted in unexpected difficulties for these individuals or their pension payments. The army saw only much later that they had made a mistake. It was not until the Summer of 1864, when a transfer back to the original regiment was ordered. But then it had become impossible to correct such mistakes completely. At that time the regiment fought in Virginia and some of the books and papers had been lost. Some of the displaced "46ers" had been killed by then or wounded while serving in the other regiment. Applied such soldiers or their families after the war for a pension, some of the names were not found in the books of the one nor the other regiment. The conclusion could be here, that the man had deserted.

In the spring of 1864 had the Union troops the eastern Tennessee firmly in their hands. Once again were the regiments of the *9th Army Corps* needed in Maryland and Virginia. The transfer to the Atlantic began on the 21st of March with the arduous march over the mountains to Nicholasville. Anyone who's health was too weak to march was sent by train via Chattanooga to Louisville. From there they took the steamer "General Buell" to Cincinnati.

The regimental surgeon of *the 46th New York,* Dr. Henry Hoevet had already been discharged at his own request due to illness on the 19th of February. He accompanied the

suffering members of the regiment to Cincinnati. Dr. Otto Schenck, his assistant, moved up as regimental surgeon.

The Regiment under the command of Lt.-Colonel George Travers encamped before the departure at the banks of the Clinch River across from Clinton. Here they crossed with pontoons in the morning of the 22nd of March. Just as the rest of the regiment and the brigade was on the other side, began a heavy snow storm, so that a further crossing of *the 9th Corps* was no longer possible. Colonel Barnes of *the 29th Massachusetts Regiment*, who now led the brigade, received orders to march on immediately, without waiting for the remaining troops.

Again it was biting cold. The march over the hard frozen ground was very burdensome on the soldiers. They were dressed inadequate and wore tattered footwear on the feet. The Regiment had six mules available, which dragged the luggage and food supply, as well as the tents of the officers. Because of the terrible weather, the brigade stopped already by early afternoon and camped in a wooded area along the roadside.

Here began immediately after midnight a freezing rainstorm and continued until early the next morning. As soon as the rest of the *9th Corps* had caught up, the trek continued, now up and down the steep roads of the Cumberland Mountains (now U.S. 27). The officers had to dismount and lead for most of the time their animals by the bridle. Sometimes it rained, and on other days they toddled through the snow. Point Isabel (now known as Burnside), a small village in the mountains, was reached on the 27th of March.

Here had a Sutler his shop established, hoping to do a small fortune with tripled prices. When the first regiments arrived, the men protested immediately. This outrage rose to the extent, that soon the entire division protested. The angry customers removed the entire merchandise from the shop and everything was fairly distributed. This actually unlawful act seemed to find a general acceptance. Not even the officers intruded. No one has been punished for it later on.

On the same afternoon crossed the Regiment the Cumberland River and arrived later in the evening in Somerset, Kentucky. In another three days they reached the railway station in Nicholasville. This route marched *the 46th New York* for the third time, most recently in June 1863 on the way to Mississippi. The road went over Waynesburg, Stanford, Lancaster and Camp Nelson and by train from Nicholasville to Cincinnati. The entire convalescence transport had already arrived sooner in Cincinnati, in spite of their much longer journey over
Louisville.

Chapter 26
"Over the Rhine" in Cincinnati – The trip to New York

It was a bright sunny afternoon on the 1st of April 1864, when the two divisions of *the 9th Army Corps* arrived in Cincinnati. Despite the many military failures of the last months were the soldiers welcomed by the population. The troops found accommodations on Sixth Street at the barracks of the regular army. The officers stayed for the night at the

Gibson House. *The 46th New York* spent here a few relaxing days. It happened very rarely that they had so much free time and were allowed to have fun in a big major city like Cincinnati. The people were very friendly and the German district "Over the Rhine" was at that time of almost magnetic attraction. There were numerous beer gardens and pubs, where they met their comrades from the other regiments. This "Rhine" in Cincinnati was actually the old Miami-Erie Canal (now Central Parkway). Behind this Canal lived most of the ethnic Germans. "If you come over the canal bridges into this district, there echoes the mother's tongue from every door and every open window," noted the author Friedrich Gerstäcker.

The regiment awaited any day the order to leave for New York, but instead were the comrades of *the 29th Massachusetts Regiment* allowed to take their furlough in Boston. They left Cincinnati on the 6th of April, just after the Brigade had received their back pay.

For *the 46th New York* and the remainder of the division followed the journey by boat to Annapolis. They were once again part of the Army of the Potomac, now under the command of General U. S. Grant. From him expected President Lincoln, that he would after so many defeats, bring the war to a victorious conclusion. Grant had been promoted on the 29th of February 1864 by the Congress of the United States as the only officer to lieutenant general. Immediately thereafter he had taken command of the entire armed forces of the North.

The 46th New York was kept for one final week in Annapolis, when the men were finally sent off on their long-awaited vacation in New York. With real enthusiasm they proceeded to prepare everything for their departure. In a few days, they were going to be home and could forget about the war. Each soldier was given his outstanding salary and bonus payment on the four hundred dollars for the new signing. Additionally owed them the State of New York 75 Dollars for the past three years. Only the enlisted men received these awards, not the officers.

The new regimental commander, Lt.-Colonel George Travers, was expected to bring a few new recruits back from his furlough. But this was hardly possible. The enthusiasm had considerably subsided in this third year of this war, not least because of the endless string of defeats. Also with the introduction of forced recruitment in the last years, there had been serious riots in New York City. Thousands of demonstrators had made the streets unsafe for days and recruitment offices had been demolished. How could there somebody find volunteers? New soldiers for the regiment came only from the State of New York and they were at these time rarely German immigrants. They were at best conscripted recruits. Most of them proved to be indifferent and lazy.

However, the Regiment received some positive reinforcements from such veterans of other regiments that remained still in service. Captain Adolph Becker came from *the German 20th New York (Turner) Regiment* and Lieutenant Edmund Schweighofer from *the 25th New York Cavalry*. These officers brought with them some of their soldiers, among them Julius Lautenschläger from Hagstadt (Württemberg). He had deserted from the 20th Regiment and had to make up his missing time. Certainly he was not a deserter in the true sense. Under the existing circumstances of that time, it often happened that some soldiers "were lost" during the long marches and transports.

Meanwhile, General Grant had begun with his march through Virginia. He established his headquarters at Culpeper Courthouse, 75 miles northwest of the rebel capital of

Richmond. On the 27th of April 1864 he began with his great Virginia Campaign. His goal was it to meet the enemy head on in order to end the war. The subsequent series of bloody clashes took place in one of the earliest German settlements. Already during the British colonial period, there had been immigrants from the cities of Siegen and Meusen, who founded the small town of Germanna, first known as Germania. Most of these original settlers had been skilled metal workers and came from the 14th Century Westphalian Iron Industry. In honor of their governor, Alexander Spotswood, they had called the area Spotsylvania County. Their settlement had not been a permanent success. The area where their furnaces once stood was later overgrown with impenetrable thickets. During the Civil War it was called "Wilderness".

Here in this tangled forest, the "Wilderness" clashed the two armies on the 5th of May. For two days continued the fighting. The Union had here losses of 2,246 men killed and 12,073 wounded. For the enemy there were only about half as many casualties. The Union troops retreated and marched further south. Fifty miles before Richmond they met the rebels again. It was here from the 8th to the 12th of May, that they fought the bloody Battle of Spotsylvania. The Southerners were laying in their well prepared trenches, the two wings forming an open "V" toward their enemies. Unsuspecting stormed the Union troops into this trap. After the battle were hundreds of dead and wounded Yankees laying in front of the rebel lines. The losses for the Union troops were again 3,000 on dead and 15,000 wounded. Another 2,000 went into the prison camps of the South.Colonel George Travers and the vacationers of *the 46th New York Regiment* were lucky to be with their families during this time.

Chapter 27
The Comrades at the 36th Massachusetts Regiment

General Grant's army moved south in May 1864, to confront General Lee's rebels. This led to a series of bloody engagements that the furloughed members of *the 46th New York Regiment* were spared. It was different for most of their comrades, who had been transferred to *the 36th Massachusetts.* Let us first follow what had happened with them. This regiment, of which they were now a part of, belonged since the battle of Fredericksburg to *the Ninth Army Corps* and also to the same division as *the 46th New York*.

Since *the 36th Massachusetts* had not matched the required number of re-enlistments, it was chosen to include such soldiers from other regiments, who had also preferred not to re-enlist. The 36th Massachusetts was commanded by Lt. Colonel Thaddeus L. Barker and belonged to Colonel John I. Curtin's First Brigade of the Second Division, along with *the 45th and 48th Pennsylvania, the 7th Rhode Island, the 58th Massachusetts and the 2nd New York Regiments*.

While stationed in Annapolis, the entire Ninth Corps had to be regrouped again. General Burnside personally took command and got back his Third Division, which was temporarily fighting in Virginia. A new *Fourth Division*, composed entirely of freed slaves, was added and put under the command of General Ferrero. He had commanded previously the *First Division. The Ninth Army Corps* had now a total strength of 25,000 men.

This large fighting force left on April 23rd for its march along the Elkridge and Annapolis Railroad, heading in the direction of Washington. When they stopped for the night, they had reached Bladensburg, about eight miles from the capitol. At noon of the next day, the entire Corps assembled at New York Avenue until the complete column was ready to march. When it became known in the city, that *the Ninth Army Corps* was taking part in a parade to honor President Lincoln, the streets were soon filled with enthusiastic spectators, who happily waved to the soldiers.

At the head of the column marched *the 34th New York Light Artillery Battery* from Flushing, New York. "The boys were highly elated over the honor bestowed upon them by General Burnside and performed their duties with great alacrity," recalled Captain Jacob Roemer, the battery commander. "We passed down Pennsylvania Avenue in review before President Lincoln and Lieutenant-General Grant, General Burnside, and many other officers, military and civil, who had assembled on the balcony of Willard's Hotel.

They saluted as the battery and other troops passed by. We, at the head of the column, with a cavalry escort in front, felt that we were being subjected to a very close scrutiny by the generals. Therefore we were bound to appear at our best. The cannoneers sat on the ammunition chest with folded arms, and acted as if they thoroughly appreciated their dignity and the importance of the occasion."

After the parade, the column marched out from the city over the "Long Bridge." From here the march began through Virginia, where the Ninth Corps was to be stationed between the Potomac and Rapidan Rivers, so they could protect the Orange & Alexandria Railroad. The men were not very enthusiastic about this task. General Willcox took up his headquarters in Manassas and distributed his divisions along the railway line. As early as the end of April other troops arrived to relieve *the Ninth Corps*.

The 36th Massachusetts Regiment, including the transferred "46ers" crossed the Rapidan River on May 5th. The following day this regiment marched to the Wilderness battlefield, where it participated in the bloody fighting. *The 36th Massachusetts* stormed three times along with the division and had losses of eleven deaths and fifty wounded. The following morning the regiment met the enemy again and fortunately there were no casualties.

The next encounter with the enemy occurred on May 12th at Spotsylvania Court House, where the regiment occupied a line of trenches. At dawn General Hancock's *Second Corps* assaulted the enemy's entrenchment in a daring attack and took the Rebel General Robert D. Johnston and his entire division prisoner. Johnston's forces accounted to a total of 2,800 men, plus twenty guns.

The 36th Massachusetts was involved in this murderous struggle, which lasted for nearly three hours. Then followed the repeated counterattacks by the Rebels, which led to no success. *The 36th Massachusetts* remained for some days in the same position and had losses of twenty dead and fifty-six wounded. One of those killed was Corporal Karl Jaeger, who had been transferred from the 46th New York, as well as four others from this Regiment, who had been wounded. If anyone else from *the 46th New York* had died here, it is not known, due to the tragic circumstances of their transfer.

While all this happened, ended the furlough for men of *the 46th New York.* But not the entire force was healthy enough to participate again in such a stressful function. One of them was Lieutenant William Schirmer, who received an honorable discharge after his

stay in New York. The others left the state on May 16th by boat and arrived the next day in Belle Plain, south of Alexandria. Captain Alphons Servière once again led the regiment. The actual commander, Lt. Colonel George Travers had to remain in the hospital and followed later. The army did not allow the soldiers to march alone from Belle Plain through the still hostile Virginia to the present location of the Union forces. They were kept back until May 22nd, until more troops arrived, who also had to return to their units. Among them was *the 29th Massachusetts*, a sister regiment of the "46ers," which also had come back from furlough. These fresh arrivals formed a provisional brigade of five regiments, who left now together under the command of Brigadier-General Lockwood.

After crossing the Rappahannock, they continued through Bowling Green, Milford, Penola, and Aylettstown to the nearest river, the Pamunkey. The river had to be crossed with pontoons. Immediately afterwards they met the first units of General Grant's troops, who had just left their positions at the North Anna River. The Ninth Army Corps, to which *the 46th New York* still belonged, was not close by. It was necessary to assign the newly arrived troops elsewhere. The officers and men were quite disappointed. During almost the entire war they identified themselves with the *Ninth Army Corps*.

The regiment was temporary attached to the *Fifth Army Corps*. Together, with five other regiments, they formed the Second Brigade of the Fourth Division. One of these regiments, *the 56th Pennsylvania* came from Philadelphia. It consisted mostly of Germans and their commander was Colonel William Hofmann, who led the brigade.

The 46th New York found Hofmann's brigade where it camped on a plantation in the vicinity of Hanovertown. This estate had belonged to Patrick Henry, the well-known politician of the revolutionary years. On the morning of June 1st the regiment as part of Hofmann's brigade moved against General Lee's Rebels. At the Bethesda Church, south of the Totopotomy, followed the first skirmish, which developed into a prelude for the main battle at Cold Harbor.

The joint deployment with Colonel Hofmann's brigade lasted only for four days, but during that time the 46th New York lost six men through injuries. They were fatal for the Corporals Urban Mileck and August Weber. Wounded were the Sergeants Ludwig Gaebel and Johann Gieritsch, also the soldiers Jacob Selig and Alex Fautz. The Corporal Johannn Schmidt was captured and died later of his wounds. During this time the comrades of *the 50th Pennsylvania Regiment* fought at the Poe River and dug entrenchments.

On June 1st, Captain Henry Lantz wrote to his wife in Reading, Pennsylvania: "We are moved from three to five times a day and when we throw up breastworks or dig rifle pits, it means work, march, and fight day and night."

Grant's army reached Cold Harbor on June 3rd. On this location he was standing just six miles in front of Richmond. As always, the Rebels had arrived earlier and were waiting behind their ramparts for the attack. What followed was one of the ugliest battles of this war. Whole regiments seamed to disappear in the hail of the Rebel's fire. The Union forces lost 7,000 men in two hours, the Rebels 1,000. It was here that the practice developed of attaching a small piece of paper on the uniform with the name and address of their loved ones, so that they could be identified in case of death.

On the same day as this murderous battle was fought, *the 46th New York* received the order to return to the Ninth Army Corps. They were soon united with their comrades, who had returned from *the 36th Massachusetts*. Lt. Colonel George Travers also returned

from his sick leave in New York. He marched with the regiment to General Burnside's headquarters, where he was assigned to a section of the front line. *The Ninth Corps* had already carried the brunt of the fighting. At least a thousand of their men had been killed or wounded. Due to the late arrival of the regiment, they escaped with only minor losses.

The 46th New York was back in Colonel Christ's *Second Brigade*, which was now part of General Willcoxs' Third Division. *The 50th Pennsylvania* was also part of it. Only *the 29th Massachusetts* had been detached and sent to the First Division. Another unit from New York, *the 24th New York Cavalry Regiment*, had been steady companions of the "46ers." They were riders without horses and had so far been fighting as infantrymen.

This regiment was formed in August 1863 in Auburn by Colonel William Raulston and consisted mainly of farmers' sons. But the army had not yet entrusted them with horses. To keep them in good humor, their commander had to tell them once in a while, that the horses would arrive within the next 60 days. These cavalrymen were brave warriors and had heavy losses in every contact with the enemy.

"Everything is very nice and clean here in the South," wrote one of those New Yorkers to his family in Buffalo. "The corn is already 12 inches tall and even the cherries and berries are ripe at this time. Our daily diet consists of seven to nine hard biscuit slices. Ground coffee we get twice daily, every time two teaspoons full and just as much sugar. Every day there is a pound of beef, which we fry ourselves over the campfire. Bread, we have not seen for days."

The "46ers" had arrived here during the last skirmishes before Cold Harbor. *The Ninth Corps* had been in a position before the Tucker Estate, where the enemy had retreated the night before. As a working command proceeded to dig new trenches further ahead, a strong enemy formation attacked once again and over-ran this squad. Captain Alphons Servière reported, "A detail of the regiment, while working in front of the breastworks on June 7th, was surprised by the enemy. In the following engagement they lost eight men in killed, wounded and missing."

In this engagement was the Corporal Johann Jerg killed. Sergeant Johann Marks and the soldiers Frederick Pohl, Johann Hirth, Edwin Haase, Frederick Ohmes, William Merte, and Christian Scherer were injured. During the afternoon of the same day flew the white flag over the battlefield, so that the wounded could be taken care off. In the following retreat were some of them left in the field and then taken prisoner by the enemy, including Joseph Heigel, Siegmund Murr, Ludwig Wecker, Seng Och, Adam Dehl, William Hochel, and Philip Hast. The 22-year-old Sigmund Murr died later in the infamous camp at Andersonville from malnutrition.

The 50th Pennsylvania Regiment had been part of all previous engagements: the Wilderness Campaign, the battle at the Nye River, Spotsylvania, and Cold Harbor. The Pennsylvanians drove their enemies from their positions on May 6th. When they ran out of ammunition, they were ordered to hold their location with the bayonet. This stubborn defense cost the regiment sixty men in killed and wounded. In the Battle of the River Nye, on May 9th, the enemy stormed up a hill. From here they could have recognized the weakness of the Union forces. As soon as Captain Schwenck recognized this danger, he ordered a bayonet charge and drove the Rebels back with a part of his regiment. Hereby prevented Schwenck a disaster for the entire brigade.

During the fighting at Spotsylvania Court House, Captain Schwenck was the leader of just his company. But when all higher officers were wounded during that

carnage, he commanded the entire brigade of five regiments. In the battle of Cold Harbor he injured his spine. He was thought to be mortally wounded and carried off the battlefield. Several months elapsed before he was again fit for duty and returned to the army.

After the main battle at Cold Harbor, on June 8th, a cease-fire once again prevailed. During this time both sides buried their dead under a white flag. Then everything was quiet except for the occasional clashes between the pickets. On the morning of June 12th, *the Ninth Corps* left their positions and prepared for departure. *The 46th New York Infantry* was left behind as a rearguard. During the following clashes with the enemy, Lieutenant Theodore Markscheffel of the Ninth Company died.

The soldier Jacob Kessel received a serious wound and Sergeant Johann Gierisch was hit by a bullet in the left shoulder. Much later in his life, in 1873, he was awarded a monthly pension of three dollars for this injury. After the recent skirmishes, *the 46th New York* crossed the Chickahominy River and after a three-day forced march reached Charles City Courthouse. Here they encamped until the evening of June 14, 1864, when they continued again to the James River, where the pioneers were constructing the pontoon bridge.

General Grant had recognized at Cold Harbor, that he was unable to defeat the Rebels. He decided to cross the James River with his giant fighting force and occupy Petersburg. As a first move, *the Second Army Corps* had already crossed the river with boats. Thereafter had the pioneers started with the construction of the long pontoon bridge. It was the longest the army had ever built. This giant structure was half a mile long and consisted of hundreds of pontoons, which were stabilized in the middle of the stream by three anchored schooners.

The bridge was completed during the night of June 14th. At once began the rest of the army to cross the stream. For *the 46th New York* it was on the next day at ten o'clock at night, when their turn came to march with the division over the bridge. They continued farther in the direction of Petersburg, until they stood in front of the enemy's position. By midnight, on June 16th, over 70,000 men had crossed. A day later stood a part of this Union army before the enemy's fortifications. The city was an important transportation center for the Southern States. Richmond was dependent on the roads and railway lines that led through Petersburg for their supplies.

All around the south side was a ten-mile line of defenses with breastworks and artillery redoubts for 55 batteries. The wide Appomattox River protected the north side of the city. It was Grant's goal to occupy Petersburg and to cut Richmond, the capitol of the Confederacy, from its supply routes. On June 15th this would have been immediately possible, as the garrison consisted of only 5,000 men. In the meantime, more Confederate divisions had arrived. The Rebels now had 14,000 men, who were manning the defenses; a few days later there would be 50,000.

The Ninth Army Corps had been one of the first to come across the river, reaching Petersburg on the afternoon of June 16th. On the East Side of the city *the Second Army Corps* had already captured the battery No. 5 from the rebels. This corps was now in the process of throwing back the entire eastern line of defense. *The 46th New York* immediately took its assigned location at the left wing of the attacking force. They stormed with Colonel Christ's brigade through a forest and came immediately under gun and artillery fire of the enemy.

"We did some very hard marching, caught up with the enemy and fought very hard with them since Friday," wrote a soldier of *the 24th New York dismounted cavalry* to his family in Buffalo. "We had to charge their breastworks across a large cornfield and you cannot compare it to anything but a very hard storm with thunder. We had very heavy losses, but thanks God I came through it safe." The Confederates were digging a new front of trenches just outside of the city, to which they could later retreat, when necessary. Meanwhile, they stubbornly kept their position and tried to stop the Union troops as long as possible. The men from *the 9th Corps* made it just up to the lines of the defenders in some places, but then went back for their nightly rest.

In the early morning of the next day the commander of the Army of the Potomac, General George Meade, ordered a massive assault on Petersburg. *The Ninth Army Corps* carried with their First and Second Division the brunt of the close hand to hand fighting. The enemy lines, in a length of two miles, were captured, plus four guns with all their horses and caissons. Six hundred of the enemy soldiers were captured. The name of this little elevation that the two divisions had taken was Shand House Hill. Further to the right, the Second Army Corps captured another mound: The Hare House Hill, from which the lines of the enemy could be observed.

In the afternoon, the Third Division received an order to attack. "Our division, under the command of General Willcox, was placed in a formation of three lines," wrote the historian of the *50th Pennsylvania Regiment. "The 24th New York dismounted cavalry, the Forty-sixth New York Infantry, and the 50th Pennsylvania* formed the third line. We had not advanced far before the first and second line wavered and gave way to the right and left. Our third line became now the first and advanced steadily, until a few men of *the 46th New York and the 50th Pennsylvania* had reached the entrenchment of the enemy and climbed on top of their works."

Colonel Christ hurried ahead with his brigade and occupied an area, that was located in the middle between their earlier captured defenses and the new position of the enemy. Colonel Christ kept this advanced point until the next morning in spite of persistent counter attacks and heavy losses. "I cannot help paying a passing compliment to the gallantry and coolness of Colonel Christ, who handled his men in the most admirable manner," wrote the correspondent of the New York Herald. "His quick eye scoured the battle field, and where the enemy seemed the most determined and where our men needed assistance, he quickly dispatched his regiments. He amply redeemed the fortunes of the Third Division; and it is regretted that his success was purchased at the price of a painful wound. A bullet struck him in the side of his head just behind the left ear and traversed about three inches of his scull."

The command of the Second Brigade fell to Colonel William Ralston of *the 24th New York Cavalry Regiment.* Eleven men from *the 46th New York* had been wounded on this day, some very seriously, including Lieutenant Henry Dreyer. Wounded enlisted men were the sergeants Frederick Pfeiffer, John Jung, and David Malb, as well as the corporals Emil Jegele, Bernhard Klipphahn and Franz Hacher. Also, the soldiers Mathias Abele, Johann Leipel, Louis Walther, as well as the musician August Haddlich were wounded.

Chapter 28
Lt.. Colonel Travers wounded –
A tunnel and an explosion.

At dawn on the 18th of June 1864 prepared the Union Army for an attack on the Confederate entrenchment in Petersburg. Again fell the brunt of the fighting to the *9th Army Corps.* Colonel Christ with his men was assigned to the Shand House Hill, where he occupied a far better start position than on the previous day. The Division Willcox and thus *the 46th New York Regiment* stood in the forefront of the assaulting force. Parallel in front of the enemy's lines ran the tracks of the Norfolk & Petersburg Railroad, which the Union intended to occupy. The assault went well underway and the objective was successfully completed.

The rebels were easily driven back to the railway tracks. Next during this murderous struggle they were forced to abandon their positions along the rails. The two regiments removed the sleepers and rails of the track and used them to reinforce the entrenchment. The captured rail line led through a deep gorge with steep slopes on both sides. In order to climb up here, the soldiers had to dig steps and holes into both sides of the embankment. Thereafter, the Division was able to hold this difficult position, despite the now beginning counterattacks.

During the afternoon covered the Union artillery the enemy side with a crushing bombardment. Following a moment later was a new assault ordered on the whole Confederate line. While most of the other troops were thrown back and could not win any new ground, *the 46th New York* and the other regiments of the Brigade managed to get close to the enemy's rifle pits and gained a foothold there. This advanced point was located only 300 Feet from the Confederate's main lines and was now during the darkness expanded and strengthened by the men of *the 46th NY and 50th Pennsylvania.* This location remained for the next few months in the possession of the Union troops and formed later an important part in the encirclement of the city.

While they did not succeed in breaking through the enemy lines, the division had at least achieved a noticeable success, however with considerable losses. The Second Brigade had to change three times its commander during the skirmishes on the 18th of June. After Colonel Christ had been wounded, the command fell on Colonel Raulston and as soon as he was injured, Lt.-Colonel George Travers, the commander of *the 46th New York* took over. When he also suffered the same fate, Lt.-Colonel Walter Newberry followed him. When Colonel Raulston returned from the dressing-station, he again took command of the Brigade. His injury was only a harmless blow. However, the soldiers did not see their seriously wounded Colonel Christ for the next several weeks.

From *the 46th New York* was Captain Heinrich Ohmes killed, also the soldiers Joseph Dallhausen, Johann Kohlmann and Carl Naumann. Wounded besides Lt.-Colonel Travers were the Lieutenants Gustav H. Schmidt and Carl Link, as well as the Sergeants Carl Wiegener and Johann Meyer, also the Corporals Ludwig Knippel and August Graf, the soldiers Carl Wolff, Theodore Kasten, Friedrich Ehrich, Joseph Stumm, Simon Kroeninger, Friedrich Eckhard, Hermann Wille, Johann Wiesner, Carl Gaenzler and Friedrich Merkel. The injured enlisted men August Graf and Theodore Kasten died later in the hospital. Particularly distressing for the Regiment was the death of Captain Ohmes, the commander of the 1st Company. In September 1861 he had joined the Regiment with

his two sons, Ferdinand and Friedrich. These two boys were now 20 and 21 years old and still serving in the 7th Company, where they had started with their father.

From *the 50th Pennsylvania Regiment* had also nine men died, including Captain Henry Lantz. The Regimental Commander of the 46th New York, Lt.-Colonel Travers, was hurt very seriously. After his hospital stay he took an extended sick leave. The leadership of the regiment fell back again on the Prussian Huguenot, Captain Alphons Servière. On the following day before sunrise *the 46th New York and 50th Pennsylvania* were relieved by other troops and both regiments were ordered behind the lines for a well deserved rest.

Despite his losses of more than 11,000 men had General Grant failed to take Petersburg. In the struggles between the 16th and 19th of June had the Union forces suffered losses of 1,688 killed and 8,513 wounded. The enemy had taken prisoner another 1,200. The efforts had not been entirely in vain: The Confederates had lost on the east side of the city all of their supply routes and two rail lines. The harbor of City Point was now located behind the lines and could serve as a supply depot for the Union Army.

Convinced from the futility of further attacks, decided General Grant to besiege the city. The Union forces in a strength of 80,000 men were standing here in front of well-prepared defensive positions and had to start digging parallel trenches. From the Appomattox in the north all the way down to the Jerusalem Plank Road in the south, it was a length of five miles. The 46th New York occupied after the 21st of June the section of the front line they had only three days earlier captured with Colonel Christ's brigade.

At this time started the expansion of the temporary positions and their connections to the lateral lines of the other divisions. The already existing ditch was dug deeper and wider. Tree trunks formed a solid wall on the side facing the enemy. Further in front they dug a second trench and the soil derived therefrom formed a rampart against the wall of the trench. On top of that came sandbags and logs, between which were openings left for the sharpshooters.

The soldiers dug later on at regular intervals ditches from the trenches to the rear positions, so that the relief-crews could reach unseen a location. Far ahead of the positions ran a line of obstacles, called "Abatis". These were cut trees lined up side by side, so that the bushy branches showed against the enemy. The branches were sharpened and then it was almost impossible to get unscathed through this shrubbery. It was the start of a trench-warfare, which was to last for eight months.

After the 30th of June was Captain Roemer assigned to a position opposite the enemy's artillery, called Cemetery Hill. Here he recognized immediately that a quite inexperienced artillery-officer had chosen this location. The parapet was so low, that he could not fire over the heads of their own infantry. With the consent of the division commander, he built a new redoubt, for which he had already drawn up the plans. Pioneers felled trees for him and sawed the logs to the desired length. After that were 2,500 men busy with the earthworks. On the 3rd of July they completed this bastion, which was now admired by the staff officers. Many just came because from here they had the best view on the enemy lines. The gunners called their position "Fort Wilcox," but for the army, it was known as "Battery XVI".

On the enemy’s side of the front stood a row of wooden houses, from which they fired their deadly sniper bullets. They shot through small holes they had

drilled into the walls. Their fire was so accurate, that no one could show himself without being hit. The infantry had here in these sections daily losses from ten to twenty men. Here was also the 46th New York stationed, where the two hostile armies were closer together than on any other point of the entire line.

The snipers on both sides took advantage of this and shot at anyone who was careless and showed himself. The 46th New York had between the 22nd of June and the 27th of July losses of eight dead and seventeen wounded. Shot dead were during this time Sergeant Dietrich Pelz and the soldiers Albert Jensch, George Horn, Adam Reinecke, August Heppler, Jacob Schirmer, George Weiland and Wilhelm Scherer. The following members of the regiment escaped with more or less severe wounds: Captain Johannn Michael Kesselmark, Captain Friedrich Schieferdecker, Lieutenant Ernst Gerhardt, the Sergeants Friedrich Schoepfer, J. G. Gemunder and Otto Reilenberger, also the Corporals George Brauer and Wilhelm Hess, furthermore the soldiers Charles West, Carl Siegel, Anton Schott, Louis Mueller, Edwin Wendehaak, Johann Seipel, Johann Huss, Carl Finn and F. Kuhlmann. For the same reasons died here eight of the comrades from the 50th Pennsylvania Regiment.

Captain Roemer was asked several times whether he could destroy these houses, where the sharpshooters were hiding. His cannon-shots drove the snipers from the wooden buildings, but as soon as the guns fell silent, returned the insidious gunfire again. There was only one solution: The houses had to be burned. Roemer removed from one of his cannon-shells the closure piston and found that there was still enough room behind it to install an incendiary device. To make one, he would require meal powder, resin, turpentine, tow and sulfur. Not all of it could here be found. But with that what he had and some tar, he built the devices and installed them in thirteen of his grenades.

Three days later, on the 21st of July was the perfect north-easterly wind blowing, which he needed to ignite the fire. Four of Roemer's guns were loaded with incendiary projectiles. Two more stood ready with shrapnel to scare the rebels away, if they should attempt to extinguish the fire. The fourth shot hit the roof of one of the houses and set it on fire. Immediately Roemer heard the cheers and applause from the infantry, because they understood now what was going on. The fire spread immediately over the entire building. In a short time all the Buildings were burned to the ground.

Most of the wounded from *the 46th New York Regiment* were in the hospital at City Point, only about twelve miles away. “We are here so close to the front that we can hear the cannonading every day. The troops are laying in rifle pits facing each other,” wrote one patient home to his family, who was suffering from diarrhea. Diarrhea and dysentery were feared more than the bullets of the rebels. According to official calculations died more than 57,000 men from these diseases during the war years.

In order to water the horses of Roemer’s Battery, they had to be taken behind the lines. Along the way they could easily pass through the enemy's rifle fire and get hurt. Roemer decided to dig a well for them direct behind his trenches. In the first experiment he found no water. The second time he oriented himself with a divining-rod and had more luck. He had to listen to all sorts of nasty comments from his men as he walked through the area with this peach branch. But they needed water, and finally after it was actually found, the mockers were silenced.

In the trenches next to the "46ers" were their comrades from *the 48th Pennsylvania Regiment.* Most of them came from the coal-mining areas in Schuylkill County. They

noticed the very short distance to the enemy. Their regimental commander, Colonel Henry Pleasants, suggested to General Potter, that in his opinion a mine should be run under one of the enemy's batteries, by which means it could be blown up and make a breach in the Confederate lines. Potter in turn mentioned it to General Burnside, by whom it was fully approved. Colonel Pleasants was a mining engineer in civilian life and immediately made plans for the implementation. General Burnside presented the proposal for the tunnel construction to the commander of the Potomac-Army, General George Meade, who also gave his consent.

Only the engineer-officers were against this project and did not believe in its success. "No matter what I requested, I couldn't get it, even when General Burnside had a positive attitude," said Pleasants later in an inquiry. His men had to transport the dissolved earth in biscuit boxes from the tunnel, because Plaesants could not even get a wheelbarrow. Nevertheless, his people worked day and night. After four weeks they were at the end of the 500-foot-long tunnel under the enemy's fort. On the 30th of July, at 4.45 o'clock in the morning, after an unsuccessful attempt, exploded the charge.

The 29th Massachusetts Regiment, which only recently belonged to Colonel Christ's Brigade, was located directly in front of the now unfolding spectacle: "First, there was a deep, prolonged rumble, like the sound of distant thunder," recalled the historian of the regiment . "Then the whole surface of the ground in the immediate vicinity of the galleries of the mine began suddenly to heave and swell, like the troubled waters of the sea. The Confederate line, which up to this moment had been silent, was now thoroughly aroused. Their men lining the breastworks were seen peering over the parapets, filled with wonder and alarm at the terrible sounds that were issuing from the earth. The ground seemed to swell into a little hill. Presently there burst from its summit a huge volume of smoke and flame. Eight tons of powder had exploded directly under a six-gun battery of the enemy and its garrison of two hundred men. Large masses of earth, guns, caissons, tents, and human bodies filled the air. The first explosion was quickly followed by others of lesser magnitude, but it was all over in a few minutes."

The blast left a huge crater, which was now stormed by *the 9th Corps.* The initial plan had been to let the regiments of ex-slaves attack, because they were in comparison to the white troops rested and fresh. General Meade did not agree to this. He ordered changes at the last minute. Now the lead of the attack fell to the division of General James H. Ledlie, closely supported by the black troops, commanded by General Ferrero. When the order came to charge, the soldiers noticed that they had not opened passages for them in their own defenses. So the assault came only very slow forward.

Also the General Ledlie was known as a drunkard. He remained back in the bunker, while his men pressed ahead alone without him. Instead of passing by the crater and attacking the Confederates, they took cover in it and waited for orders. But nothing happened and the project was messed up. The surprise moment was not used. Had everything gone according to plan, Ledlies' Division had reached the opposite Cemetery Hill under the strong cover of the Union artillery. But it did not happen. The rebels recovered quickly from their panic and put the crater and the positions of their opponents under artillery fire. Burnside's troops had to be recalled after ponderous losses.

The 46th New York was at 9.00 o'clock in the morning part of another force to advance against the enemy. They had orders to occupy the enemy trenches to the left of the crater. But that was hardly possible, because now after four waisted hours was the other

side prepared for anything. When the regiment was in the front line and waiting for the order, immediately four men were wounded. The regiments of the brigade did not make it all at the same time over the parapet. On the right side hurried the men immediately forward, without waiting for the entire line.

In this situation began the second attack. “My command charged about 100 yards forward in the face of a galling musketry fire from the enemy’s works,” reported the regimental commander, Captain Alphons Servière. “I could see the impossibility of taking the fort. My right wing was disconnected. There was no support coming up from the rear and a number of my men were falling dead or wounded at every step forward. I was fearing a panic might seize upon my men and I gave orders to retire to the [sunken] road, where the other regiments on my left had already retreated.”

From *the 46th New York* were Sergeant Emil Krieg and the soldiers Philip Hermann and William Hawkshott mortally wounded. Sergeant Ludwig Gaebel had received a shot in his left arm. He discovered much later, that he no longer could practice his profession as a locksmith. Quite severe wounds received the following members of the regiment: Lieutenant Theodore Schmidt, the Sergeants John Futensky and Martin Straub, Corporal Joseph Vollkommerer, and the soldiers Wilhelm Reinwald, Gustav Waldenburg, Henry Goek, Ferdinand Kunzelmann, Peter Schwarz, Jacob Kaufmann, William Arndt, Robert Schmidt and Patrick Harney. Ferdinand Kunzelmann died immediately afterwards in the hospital. Only slightly wounded were Lieutenant Adolph Tamsen, Corporal Philip Humbert and the enlisted men John Simmons, Johannn Zehn, Philip Eberhardt and Jacob Schmidt.

For the failure of the second attack was primarily the 46th New York blamed and their 25-year-old Captain Alphons Servière. “Had it not been for the causeless breaking of the Forty-sixth New York, there is no doubt but the whole line would have been carried and the [enemy-] troops occupying it captured,” as the new brigade commander, Colonel William Humphrey, thought. General Ledlie was replaced by General White and the new regimental commander of *the 46th New York* was now Captain Johann Kesselmark.

Chapter 29
The New Recruits
The Fight for the Weldon Railway

The explosion under the Confederate fort on July 30th could have shortened this senseless war by eight months, if the Union troops had stormed through the open breach into the city of Petersburg. Those generals responsible for this failure were forced to leave the army, but the soldiers heard very little about the allegations that were raised against them. Even General Burnside was not entirely blameless. The army authorized his

requested leave; and on August 13th, he immediately left the army and went to his hometown of Providence, Rhode Island. For the remainder of the war let General John G. Parke once again the Ninth Army Corps.

The 46th New York remained in the entrenched lines across from the crater. This position was now the focus of all military activities. These shelters were under a steady artillery fire from the enemy. Additionally the men had to hide from the treacherous fire of the hidden snipers. From August 7th through the 14th enjoyed the regiment a rest behind the lines. During this period the men received their outstanding pay for the last six months. The sutler had the primary advantage. This merchant was considered a necessary evil and belonged to the official entourage of each regiment. His merchandise was usually sold directly from a horse drawn wagon, but in this long stationary war in front of Petersburg, he had built himself a fixed stall. What the soldiers primarily asked for were alcoholic beverages, but their sale was strictly prohibited at the Ninth Corps.

New recruits had arrived for the regiment and were drilled behind the lines. Few among them were volunteers and not even draftees. Most of them were serving the compulsory military service for another person, who was able to pay for it. These people were called "Substitutes," replacements for wealthy citizens who could pass on their civic duty to somebody else. They were quite often tired and jaded poeple, who lacked the momentum of youth - substitutes in the truest sense of the word. The 46th New York Regiment received several of them and tried to group them as a separate auxiliary force.

Almost all were pitiful fellows and had taken this unusual step to escape an economic hardship. The new adjutant of the regiment, Ernest Gerhardt, was required by the continuous arrival of new recruits, to write the daily orders in English and German. Later the orders were written only in English. The last entry in the German language was posted on September 22nd, 1864. It was a translation of a circular from the adjutant general of the Army of the Potomac, Major General Edwin D. Townsend.

General Grant intended for the coming months to encircle more and more of the enemy's position. Step by step were the lines of the Union forces extended north of the James River and south of Petersburg. The Confederates put up a desperate resistance against all such attempts. It was only through hard fighting and heavy losses that the Union gained an upper hand. *The 46th New York* took part in several of such front extensions, where the enemy's main railway connections were destroyed.

Early in the morning on August 19th marched *the 46th New York* with its brigade to Ream's Station of the Weldon Railroad. This line ran three miles from the southern flank of the Union forces and was still supplying the enemy with ammunition and provisions. *The Fifth Army Corps* had been assigned to destroy these tracks. *The Ninth Corps* had the order to protect them from the enemy, while they were doing their work. At the same time it was planned to extend the chain of rifle pits and trenches in this direction.

Even though it was a rainy day, the soldiers were in a good mood. For a long time they had not left the vicinity of their hated trenches. In the early afternoon they stopped for a snack in front of the Globe Tavern. Some of the men gathered wood for a campfire and the commissary sergeant of the regiment distributed rations from the baggage car: mackerels and biscuits. Usually the salted fish was soaked in the frying pan, but in this rainy weather they were thrown into a puddle.

Most of these mackerels had to stay there. Just as the troops began their feast, they heard gunshots in the distance and the familiar yell of the Rebels. The bugle called

to collect and the regiment had no other choice but to form a battle line. The enemy troops, under General A. P. Hill, fought rather desperately to keep the railroad under their control. It did not help though. By 8 o'clock in the morning, *the Fifth Corps* had already arrived and destroyed the tracks for a distance of five miles.

"We saw the Rebels approaching and went forward with the brigade across an open field, where we ran into the enemy's rifle fire," recalled Captain John Kesselmark of *the 46th New York Regiment.* "Immediately several of our comrades were killed and wounded. While at the side of us the regiments of the Fifth Army Corps retreated, our brigade charged forward through the pine forest. The enemy retreated slowly before us. We were able to take a number of Rebels as prisoners. We then occupied a number of trenches that *the Fifth Corps* had previously abandoned."

The enemies had to be driven from some of these positions and this resulted in a fierce hand to hand fight. From *the 46th New York* were three men killed: Philip Kalmbach, Carl Buckey, and Wilhelm Moebers. Wounded were Lt. Otto Laddy, the sergeants Conrad Molst and Ernst Gauss, also the soldier Philip Humbert. The ground of the shallow trenches they had wrested from the enemy were muddy. Nevertheless, the men had to take cover in them, as the enemy's bullets hit anyone who showed himself. *The Ninth Corps* had taken a total of 600 prisoners. For a short time, Captain Kesselmark had more prisoners in his custody than soldiers in his regiment. The flag of the *Confederate 47th Virginia Regiment* was captured by *C Company, of the 50th Pennsylvania Regiment.*

The 46th New York had to stay in their shallow burrows until the next morning. *The First Brigade of the Third Division* replaced them. Next they encamped with some other troops in a grove behind the front. Returning to their previous positions, the regiment received orders to fill in these trenches and leave. "About 4 o'clock, on the morning of the 21st, we marched farther back and stopped several hundred yards behind the Yellow House and Globe Tavern, where several batteries were in position," recalled Captain Kesselmark. "We remained here during the next attack, losing two men by a solid cannon shot, one killed and the other severely wounded. After the assault was repulsed, the regiment marched to the woods in the rear and built trenches. Here our revered regimental surgeon, Dr. Otto Schenck was wounded by a chance shot. He died the next day."

The dead enlisted man, who was hit by the canon shot, was Corporal Frederick Harris and the wounded soldier was Philip Krug. A third soldier of the regiment, Julius Cohn, was wounded on picket duty. The new extended line of the Union went a little further south of Globe Tavern, where the regiment was now busy with the construction of permanent trenches.

The Confederates were not willing to give up this hard defended terrain. "They came down upon our lines and attacked with renewed vigor, charging nearly up to our breastworks," wrote Pastor Woodbury, the historian of *the Ninth Corps.* "Once and again the enemy advanced, only to be repulsed with great slaughter. It was a desperate contest and a decided victory for our troops." Gustav Blumensteller of *the 46th New York* was among the 2,879 Union soldiers, who were taken prisoner by the enemy.

During the following night the occupied positions were expanded and formed another link to the blockade of the encircled city. The Weldon railway line, that had been destroyed, was later connected with the harbor of City Point and served to supply the Union troops. From then on were the supplies from the ships directly delivered to the Union entrenchments.

Chapter 30
Captain Adolph Becker now regimental commander

Due to the high losses of the first Division between the 18th and 27th of August, the entire Ninth Army Corps had to be reorganized. Some of the regiments that had originally numbered a thousand members could bring by now barely a third of them on their feet. Where previously three regiments had formed a brigade, so were now six or seven regiments necessary. The former first Division had to be disbanded and the men were distributed on the second and third Division. Thereafter became the former third the new first Division. In this new line-up emerged *the 46th New York and the 50th Pennsylvania* as parts of the new second Brigade. The new commander was Colonel William Humphrey.

First Michigan Sharpshooters, Col. Charles V. DeLand,
Second Michigan, Captain Ebenezer C. Tulloch,
20th Michigan, Lt.-Colonel Byron M. Cutcheon,
46th New York, Captain John M. Kesselmark
60th Ohio, Lt.-Colonel Martin P. Avery,
50th Pennsylvania, Lt.-Colonel Edward Overton
24th New York Cavalry (without horses), Colonel Walter C. Newberry.

The month of September turned out to be relatively quiet, apart from occasional skirmishes with the enemy's scouts. In addition to the picket duty, *the 46th New York* was primarily occupied with the improvement of the new positions. During the day until late into the night, there was a brisk drudgery. The soldiers cut down trees, dug trenches and built fortifications. On the 11th of September, the long missing Corporal Frederick Schmidt surprised everyone with his sudden return. He came from the hospital, but had already been reported as a deserter. Meanwhile, for many of the regiments moved the date closer, when their three years' of service had expired. For *the 46th New York Regiment* was it the 16th of September 1864.

Everything went as planned. Already on the day before were the 36 soldiers of the regiment discharged, who had not signed up for another three years of service. They were here before Petersburg at the Weldon railway station solemnly released and sent home. Captain Alphons Servière took on the same day his resignation for health reasons, also the first and hitherto only adjutant of the regiment, Adolph Tamsen. Lieutenant Ernst Gerhardt was selected as his replacement. He had already worked in this position for some time.

For officers it was as yet uncertain whether they should be released after their three years of service. Those who had been recruited directly as officers remained mostly in the army after their men had been sent home. But how was it with such officers, who had started out as enlisted men? This was still unclear. On the 22nd of September issued the Army the "Circular no. 75 ", which made it now obvious, that officers could also be dismissed after three years of military duty, if that was their wish.

Of this possibility took immediately six experienced officers of the regiment advantage: The Captains Frederick Schieferdecker, Carl Bayer, Theodore Schmidt and Friedrich Obernier, also the Lieutenants Philip Betz, Edward Schmidt and Friedrich

Sussdorf. They were given their honorable farewell during the first week of October. On the 21st of September returned also the wounded Lt.-Colonel George Travers from his sick leave. He now commanded the regiment in the ensuing battle at Poplar Springs Church from the 30th of September to the 2nd of October. The interim regimental commander of *the 46th New York,* Captain John Kesselmark had been wounded in this battle by a bullet in his right hip and spend the following weeks in the hospital.

After the dismissal of so many officers, there was throughout the army a shortage of leadership. Lieutenants now commanded some companies and captains led regiments. When regiments were relieved and marched to the rear, they began to drill, as were they all recruits. Every day was drill and the newly appointed field officers had to go at seven o'clock in the evening to their classes. On the 14th of October resigned finally Lt.-Colonel George Travers for health reasons. Regimental commander became now Captain Adolph Becker, who retained this function until the war ended. The men of *the 46th New York* soon realized, that such a regiment is always in the disadvantage, when a captain commands it. Such a lower ranking officer has much less prestige and influence than a colonel. If unpleasant work was to be done, the order was now always awarded to Captain Becker's regiment.

NCOs took over after some time in the positions of the discharged field officers. Sergeant Ludwig Gaebel now commanded *the 10th Company* as a Captain. Sergeant-Major Henry Thielemann, the Sergeants Martin Streil, Julius Sauer, Johann Gierisch, Conrad Wolst, Jacob Yost (also written Jost) and Carl Otto, also Corporal Johann Ludwig Heupel advanced to second Lieutenant. Gaebel and Heupel and most other newly appointed officers had been among the founders of the regiment. Many of their old comrades were no longer with them, separated from them by injury or death. Similar changes occurred in the other regiments of the brigade. The enlistment of the original brigade commander, Colonel Samuel Christ, had already expired on the 30th of September 1864. For similar reasons lost *the 50th Pennsylvania* 46 men and all their officers except Captain George Brumm. Captain Brumm led now the regiment for the first time in the Battle of Poplar Springs Church.

General Grant ordered again a further extension of the line to the left. The first Division of *the 9th Corps* and thus *the 46th New York* marched on the 29th of September to Boydton Plank Road on the end of the entrenchment. The 9th Corps was assigned to the intersection of Poplar Springs and Squirrel Level Roads. Here they had to replace *the 5th Corps,* which had just thrown the enemies from the positions. A much stronger formation of rebels was encamped across from them on a summit and attacked the next day again.

"Within ten minutes were the flanks of our Brigade overrun by the enemy. We were ordered to withdraw, what we did in good order," reported Captain Adolph Becker. "An officer of our regiment and 29 men were here wounded. Twenty-seven more were taken prisoner. "

A soldier of *the 24th New York Cavalry* described this for the Union troops so fatal skirmish in a letter to his family: "We advanced under a heavy fire of musketry until we reached a large ravine, where the rebels attacked us in three battle lines. We were in formation with *the 2nd New York, 1st Michigan, 24th N. Y. Cavalry, 46th New York and 50th Pennsylvania.* Our own regiment was in the middle. All stood their ground, but about forty of our men turned and ran. The officers tried to stop them and we cheered them on, but to no avail. Also some of the other regiments on our left started to fall back. Our regiment

kept the enemy in front of us until we were flanked. When our Colonel noticed this, he ordered us to fall back. From our new position we fired two rounds. Again we retreated a quarter of a mile, formed a new line and held it until dark. In the morning the rebels returned, put a cannon right in front of us and opened up with musketry and shell. Here again we had to run, because we ourselves had no gun."

The commander of this "sister regiment", Colonel William Raulston, was taken prisoner by the rebels. The loss of these dismounted cavalrymen was sixty in killed and wounded. More than a thousand Union soldiers were here taken prisoners. From *the 46th New York regiment* died the soldier George Knapp. The Sergeants Johann Jung and Matthias Kehl and also the Corporal Oliver Hokirk died immediately afterwards in the hospital. Wounded were Captain Johann Kesselmark and the soldiers William Brown, Philip Rasch, William Ward, James van der Warken, James Millerman, Joseph Bohn, Nathan Coaly, Gottlieb Hanitzky, John English, Patrick Carroll, Charles Darlton, Carl Gensler, John Knox, Oscar Schmidt, James Smith, Charles Moore, George Muff, Friedrich Schindelmeyer, H. A. Norton, Edward Ryan, Johann Haas, Carl Kullmann, Edward Miller, Michael Schmidt and Johann Schenkel.

On the 1st of October was the costly encounter at Poplar Springs Church over. Just after midnight arrived other troops and relieved the regiment. The positive outcome of this struggle was, that the siege of Petersburg could be extended for another three miles beyond the Weldon railroad. On the 2nd of October organized General Willcox another campaign with two brigades along the Squirrel Level Road, where the regiment was involved. The purpose of this raid was to explore the strength and position of the enemy. Again were here three Union soldiers killed and thirteen wounded. The Confederates were well entrenched in front of the Boydton Plank Road. This route was still an open supply line with Petersburg, which the rebels used for their convoys. From here they could not be driven away. Close behind the road ran also the Southside Railroad, which still supplied the besieged city.

The regiment remained in the newly won positions for another four weeks and was involved with the further expansion of the trenches. During the previous battles noted General Parke, the commander of *the 9th Corps*: "The discipline is suffering by the presence of so many conscripts and substitutes. It diminishes the effectiveness of the army." The 27 members of the regiment who were recently taken prisoner had been such conscripts, who were only a few days before assigned to the regiment. Such unwilling warriors became quite often-voluntary prisoners, in the hope of being sent home by the enemy. It was a common practice to be "paroled" and then to promise not to fight anymore. But here it did not work out this way. The soldiers Philip Hawley, George Christ, John Labaran, James Logan and John English were killed or died of starvation in the camps of the Confederacy.

Here at Boydton Plank Road received Captain Adolph Becker on the 16th of October 1864 his promotion to Lt. Colonel. It was the same day, on which the dismissal of Colonel George Travers had become effective. Lieutenant Ernst Gerhardt moved a month later up to captain and commander of the 3rd Company.

Chapter 31
Bunker for the winter –

As a crew in Fort McGilvery –

It was already late fall and *the 46th New York* was still busy constructing shelters for the winter. The regiment was now encamped in a well-fortified position in front of the encircled city of Petersburg. The air was crisp and the leaves shimmered in all colors from yellow lemon to scarlet red. Yet the soldiers did not suspect how uncomfortable the climate could be here. Behind them they had a view on the gentle curved mountains with their sparsely forested hills. Since the 12th of October was Roemer's battery located next to them in the artillery redoubts No. 1 and 2. Shortly before had Captain Roemer lost a number of his men in a gun duel at the Pegram House. Edward Ebel and Ludwig Brunnemeyer had died and James Baine, William Berndt, Henry Kaesemeyer and Patrick Kiernan were seriously wounded. Roemer was short-handed again and needed help.

With the consent of the brigade commander he asked for some soldiers from Adolph Becker's regiment. Sergeant John Hoost and the corporals Carl Frey and Henry Schorn were sent on the 21st of October with the following soldiers: John Wiesener, Joseph Degendorf, John Friedrich, Theodore Eberhardt, Friedrich Schoelth, John Simon, Louis Miller, Johann Platte, John Rothhar, Henry Schneider, Carl Hahn, Friedrich Richard, August Silver, George Cauper , Philip Dees, Friedrich Jaehn, H. Pommering, John Berry and Friedrich Lipp.

The 46th New York Infantry and the 50th Pennsylvania had in the spring of 1864 founded Colonel Christ's brigade along with *the 24th New York Cavalry.* Already for half a year had these horsemen gone on foot. Now finally they were told that the horses had arrived at the port of City Point. On the 20th of October they received their sabers and carbines and said goodbye to the 9th Army Corps. They had originally been 1.040 men, when they first arrived in Virginia. Now there were only 432 left, who transferred to General Sheridan's Cavalry Army.

The brilliant successes General Sheridan had achieved in the Shenandoah Valley lifted also the spirit of the Union forces at Petersburg. In order to force the rebels even here into an open battle, General Grant sent on the 27th of October a division of Union troops to the southwestern flank, which ended at the little river Hatcher's Run. The 9th Army Corps was ordered, together with the 5th Corps, to attack at the front line, while other troops were to proceed against the enemy's flanks.

In the morning at three o'clock marched the regiment as part of the Division Willcox to this location, followed by the second and third division of *the 9th Corps.* At the first light of day reached the entire force the Squirrel Level Road. A brigade was sent forward to surprise the enemy's pickets. This did not succeed after a shot had accidentally been fired. It warned the enemy instantly. *The 46th New York* was located roughly in the middle of the now advancing formation. They attacked through a dense forest with bushy undergrowth, until they stood about 300 feet before the entrenchment. The barriers stopped any further movement. The positions of the enemy proved to be extremely well constructed and secured.

General Willcox had his men digging trenches to draw the attention of the enemy on his column. The other divisions gained here time to prepare for the flank attack. The Confederates however were a little faster and made a counter-attack. This confrontation reached for a short time a remarkable intensity, but without any visible results. Finally, both sides ended the struggle without the slightest advantage for either side.

The regiment remained during the following night in their trenches. Early in the morning of the 28th of October arrived General Grant's orders to march back to their previous lines. From this campaign escaped the regiment without any casualties. But for the entire ninth Corps ended the fighting with losses of eight dead and 127 wounded. *The 46th New York* took back their original positions on the left wing of the line. For another month happened very little except the usual skirmishes with the enemy's scouts. The war was temporary forgotten. Just as existed no war at all, followed the presidential elections of the United States on the 8th of November 1864. All active soldiers had to participate. President Lincoln received 116,887 votes of the total 154,000 ballots cast by the entirely military. For Lincoln's opponent, General George McClellan, voted only 33,748 men. The General had promised a quick end of the war.

During mid-November returned the entire *ninth Army Corps* to the front line at Petersburg. *The 46th New York* occupied the same section east of the city, which they had captured in June with the Division Willcox. Here they remained for the following winter months. They served together with *the 50th Pennsylvania regiment* and garrisoned the forts McGilvery and Cummings, two of the most important strongholds in the encirclement. Despite the cold, the enemy's artillery brought itself to mind and covered the Union lines with a series of grenades. From their occasional strikes were the two recruits Alfred McDonald and Thomas Rounds wounded, the latter mortally.

Thanks to the improvement in the food supplies, the regiments had a lot more to eat. "Once when we came back from our picket duty, the table was as good prepared as I had not seen it for a long time," recalled a soldier from Buffalo, N. Y. "Fried chicken, geese, turkeys and hams, there was everything from the finest at this Thanksgiving feast on the 27th of November 1864." Even in December did the population of the North do all they could, to allow the troops a decent Christmas. Piles of crates and barrels had arrived at the depot in City Point.

It was an unusually cold winter, as the year of 1864 came to a close. The cold made the already miserable life in the entrenchment even more uncomfortable. The two armies remained very close across from each other. Their trenches stretched out longer and longer every day. On every hill and on every mound along the line they had built a small fort, usually at intervals of half a mile. Such a fort was a bulky structure, made of earth and heavy tree trunks.

Forward out had the wall openings for the guns. From there could each side be reached with artillery fire. These buildings were not roofed in the rear. There stood the heavy mortars and fired straight upwards. They threw their shells far behind to the earthworks of the enemy. The lines on both sides of the front were at this time sparsely occupied. It was most unlikely that someone would attack in such a cold weather. Except for a few pickets were all the soldiers sitting in their shelters.

Behind the thick walls they were safe from the bullets of the snipers, but the heavy shells of the artillery could even here endanger them. Deep hideouts were built for that reason and then roofed with tree trunks and again covered with earth. Whenever the enemy's artillery began firing, the off duty crew went hiding in this bunker. During a particularly fierce artillery duel on the 29th of January 1865, some of the crew in Fort McGilvery found out, that they were not even safe here. "A shell made its way through the roof of the bunker, when about fifty men were in it," recalled the adjutant of *the 50th Pennsylvania Regiment.* "When the projectile dropped on the floor, the scramble to get

out was beginning. Fortunately the grenade did not explode. However, several men were slightly hurt in the panic to get out."

Several of the officers who had not been at home with their regiments, were now asking for a Christmas vacation, including Adolph Becker. He was given leave from the 24th of December to the 8th of January. Instead of coming back on time, he reported in sick at the military authorities in Baltimore. He presented there a certificate from his family doctor. He was given an extension until the 27th of January. Had he arrived on that day without any delay, everything might have worked out all right, but he came three days later.

With old Papa Christ it may have been all right, but he was no longer his brigade commander. The new one was Colonel Byron M. Cutcheon of the 27th Michigan Regiment, who called this an "unauthorized leave". He ordered Becker's immediate arrest and gave him an indictment for the disciplinary court. Such a disciplinary action for officers does not mean they were now locked up, but Becker had to give up his sword and could not leave the premises without permission. He also lost temporarily the command of his regiment. During his suspension led Captain Victor Praxmarer *the 46th New York.*

At a hearing on the 28th of February Becker was found guilty and sentenced for the loss of his salary for the period of the "unauthorized absence". In a later review of the judgment by the division commander, General Willcox, criticized this officer, that the Disciplinary Court had Becker's "authentic certificates" not sufficiently evaluated. He reversed the decision, but confirmed the loss of the salary for 19 days. Becker's sword was on his orders returned to him and he was reinstated as commander of the regiment.

The Union troops were pretty well supplied through their railroad line, but for the Confederacy it looked pretty bleak. There on the other side of the front was not only the food in short supply. Now during the bitter cold and freezing rain were these rebels poorly dressed. Many had no shoes and what they received as replacements was of poor quality and lasted only a few days. Only rarely would they find a dead Yankee, from whom they could take shoes and winter coats.

Despite the bravery of the enemies it became clear that they were near defeat. On the 25th of March 1865 they took the last desperate offensive. In the morning before dawn sneaked the first rebels over the line and claimed to be deserters. When they got into a conversation with the Union pickets, they overpowered them and cleared the way for the following troops. Next they seized the garrison at Fort Stedman and stormed far behind the lines of *the 9th Corps,* where they occupied a number of trenches. The unfortunate crew in Fort Stedman was *the 14th New York Heavy Artillery Regiment*, one of the "sister regiments" of *the 46th New York Infantry*. These gunners were unhappy in their role as infantrymen and known by their comrades as cowards. Until recently they had been stationed in their comfortable artillery bunkers in the Washington area to protect Lincoln's capital against a possible attack. General Grant had found here in front of Petersburg a more important task for them. "The gunners slept in their bunker and were surprised by the enemy," recalled a cavalryman from Buffalo. "The night was very dark. For the rebels it was pretty easy to sneak up and overpower the crew." The enemies, who fired on the positions of the Union troops, now occupied Fort Stedman. It took some time before the Union understood what had happened here.

Part of *the 46th New York Infantry* occupied Fort Mansfield and the other half was stationed with the mainly German gunners of the *34th New York Battery,* next door at Fort

McGilvery. Twenty-two men of the regiment had been assigned temporarily to the artillery, because they were short of manpower. With Captain Jacob Roemer and his gunners from Flushing (New York) was *the 46th New York* familiar since their joint operations at Antietam. Sergeant Valentin Rossbach was the officer on duty, when the enemy attacked the neighbouring Fort Stedman. He heard the first gunfire around 3:30 in the morning from the direction of Fort Stedman. He immediately woke up the battery commander, Captain Jacob Roemer. "There's something wrong," he told him, "but I cannot quite see what happened there." Roemer immediately got out of his bed and saw how the guns from Fort Stedman fired out of the back and on the Union lines. He immediately had his own guns loaded and the "46ers" opened the side of the bunker, so that Roemer could fire on Fort Stedman. This work was done in half an hour and three of the guns began to fire.

"It was now clearly evident that the enemy had broken through our lines and were in full possession of Fort Stedman," wrote Jacob Roemer in his Reminiscences. "At this moment all the guns and mortars in the rebel lines from Cemetary Hill to the forts at the Appomattox opened fire on our own Fort McGilvery. That fort was now for them the next important point to capture."

At *the 50th Pennsylvania Regiment* had in the meantime Captain Samuel Schwenck returned from the hospital. Following the battle of Cold Harbor he had been promoted to Major and was now commanding the regiment. Schwenck performed at this time with his regiment picket and patrol duty at the Appomattox, just north of Fort McGilvery. When he heard the exchange of gunfire, he moved with most of his troops in the direction of this skirmish. His rapid response found later the special recognition of the brigade and division commanders. From *the 50th Pennsylvania* were here the two soldiers Franz Starwick and Wilhelm Paulus wounded.

Now with the brighter light of the morning was it possible at Fort McGilvery to detect the incoming enemy troops. So far had the rest of the Union batteries not participated in the artillery duel. Only after Roemer had fired about thirty rounds at Fort Stedman, opened the others also their fire. Roemer looked through his binoculars and noticed, that the rebels brought several guns from Fort Stedman in order to transport them to their own lines. As Sergeant Rossbach fired some shrapnel in front of their feet, they ran away and left their prey behind. All these artillery pieces could later be brought back without any trouble.

Some of the Confederates had the lines of *the 9th Corps* quite far penetrated. Roemer noticed already a squad on the rear of his little fortress. To fire at them, he had to stand one of his guns on the outside in front of the parapet. Already at the fourth shot had his gunners zeroed themselves in on the target. The next grenade exploded directly in the ravine, where an enemy troop had no room for evasion. The rebels advanced despite their heavy losses. Only after the single gun fired another eleven shots capitulated this defiant troop. Of these opponents had 127 been wounded or killed.

Captain Roemer and three of his men had also been wounded in the engagement. The gunner John Bauer and the artillery-Sergeant Adam Murray, also the two enlisted man Banter van Steenburg from *the 46th New York regiment* died in this battle. Three of Becker's men had been wounded: Thomas Carr, Stephen Eisenmann and Joseph Meyer. Only a few hours had this skirmish lasted, then gave the rest of the rebels way and returned back to their side. Others remained in Fort Stedman and had no other choice but to surrender. At eight o'clock in the morning was Fort Stedman back in the hands of Union

troops. Any lost entrenchments were cleared of the enemy infantry. The 9th Corps took 2,000 prisoners and captured 1,600 rifles. Only the scattered corpses showed that here had recently raged a furious battle.

Chapter 32
The regiment storms Petersburg

The 29th of March 1865 was a bleak and rainy day. The garrison at Fort McGilvery was working since the early morning hours on the repair and clean-up of the devastated redoubt. At 2 o'clock in the afternoon they were surprised to see the gasping little engine with the ramshackle train approaching behind the lines. On regular runs it brings the supply from City Point. Now however, General Grant and President Lincoln rose from the cars and walked past the dead rebels that had not yet been collected. Staff officers told the President what had happened here last night. No one was bothered by the high-ranking attendance and everyone kept busy doing his work.

The 46th New York remained for the time being with Roemer's Battery at Fort McGilvery. "On the day following the attack on Fort Stedman covered us the enemy once again with a murderous artillery and rifle fire, killing two of my people and wounding four," reported Adolph Becker, the regimental commander. The two mortally wounded were the soldiers Carl Mueller and Alexander Laflane. With slight injuries escaped Lieutenant Conrad Wolst, also the enlisted men Byron Patney and Johann Ohmstaedter. Captain Roemer counted his ammunition supply and concluded that he had fired 281 rounds at the enemy. Two of his gunners were wounded.

Once again stormed the enemy's infantry Fort McGilvery and the adjacent positions. Fortunately, an icy rain-storm started and prevented the rebels from breaking through the Union lines. This ended for now all activity. On the 30th of March it rained again all day. The Union pickets reported in the morning a bustling activity on the side of the enemy, which caused the Regiment to prepare for a new attack from the rebels. Becker engaged his men with the repair of the two damaged forts Mansfield and Fort McGilvery, but instead of the expected assault began the following day a tremendous artillery fire on the Union lines, which continued until dawn the next day.

Fortunately, the enemy gunners were lousy shooters. Only once howled a salvo and immediately exploded the grenades nearby. The soldiers threw themselves on the ground and then some clumps of earth thudded down on them. It was followed by a short break and immediately continued the apparently aimless shooting. The grenades went with a thud into the soft soil and immediately exploded. The ground shook like a volcanic eruption. Huge lumps of earth were thrown into the air and then clapped with a terrible clatter to the ground.

Jacob Roemer noted that on the 2nd of April had more projectiles and shells hailed at Fort McGilvery than on the previous attack on Fort Stedman. The enemy's artillery on the opposite side of the line expended their ammunition quickly, before they would withdraw from their positions. This haphazard use of ammunition did not remain for the regiment without consequences. Captain Henry Dreyer, the commander of A Company and sixteen of his men were more or less injured on this day. From Fort McGilvery watched the "46ers" a huge fire on the opposite side, which was constantly spreading. Captain

Roemer thought they might be burning up their supplies in Petersburg, which meant that the enemy wanted to leave the city.

On the 3rd of April, after General Sheridan's victory over the Confederate army at Seven Forks, ordered General Grant the assault on Petersburg. The long wait in the trenches was finally over. The Union troops swarmed over the enemy positions and drove the rebels as far as Richmond. The city of Petersburg itself was occupied by Adolph Becker's regiment and some other troops of *the 9th Army Corps.* These units had been stationed directly across from the city.

"Early in the morning of the 2nd of April a demonstration was made by *the 46th New York* and this resulted in the capture of the rebel pickets", Becker recalled. " About 2 o'clock on the following morning my pickets reported that the enemy was evacuating his line of fortifications. At daybreak we were ordered to advance toward Petersburg and by entering the city, one man of my command captured a rebel battle-flag, which was delivered to the Second Brigade headquarters. The regiment was then sent as a scouting party across the Appomattox near Pocahontas and captured two pieces of field artillery, three caissons, thirty ambulances and ten army wagons. Also about 350 rebel prisoners fell into our hands."

The first troops who come into Petersburg helped extinguish the still burning warehouses. They had been set on fire by orders of General Lee. Here burned the finest Virginia tobacco in a value of four million dollars. There was still enough left for the Union troops, who had been insufficiently supplied with tobacco. *The 50th Pennsylvania Regiment* had been stationed on the left of Fort McGilvery and had also entered the city at four o'clock in the morning. Despite the total collapse of the rebel army, the Pennsylvanians encountered a fierce resistance. One of them, the soldier John Fritz was killed here. He was the second last man of the regiment, who had to die in this war. The Pennsylvanians captured in Petersburg twenty-two guns, three regimental flags and took a thousand prisoners.

During the assault on Petersburg had Roemer shot over the heads of the infantry into the city. When he knew that his own troops had reached their objective, he stopped the fire. He asked if all guns were empty. "Mine is still loaded," said Sergeant Townsend. Roemer ordered him to fire and this was the last shot that was fired at Petersburg, it was also the last shot of the battery in this war. "For us is the war finally over," proclaimed the battery commander. "And today is also my 47th Birthday."

When the congratulating and rejoicing was over, Roemer passed out the assigned whiskey that he had so far carefully guarded. The gunners could afford the birthday and victory celebrations. They did not have to chase after the enemy stragglers like the infantry. Roemer had recently been promoted to Brevet Major. He commanded three batteries of the first division, which had remained in Petersburg. His task was to secure the captured and abandoned guns and the ammunition.

The rebel army was gone except for the stragglers and wounded. General Lee had here in Petersburg realized, that his entire army could be captured or destroyed. In addition to Petersburg he also abandoned the capital of Richmond. His entire force consisted of only 25,000 men, most of whom had long since thrown their weapons away. The entire food of his army consisted for days of uncooked corn. The uniforms were dirty and torn and some even went barefoot. It would have been foolish to fight a battle against the 72,000 men of the Union Army.

General Lee tried to break through to the south, to unite with the other rebel General Johnston, but there stood already his enemies in his way. After he tried to move to the west, he realized that he had here also the Union troops before him. When the rebels camped in the open air during the night of the 8th of April in Appomattox, they were completely surrounded by the Union troops. The next day General Lee signed the surrender. Grant allowed generous terms. He allowed the disarmed rebels to go home and let them even take their horses along.

On the 11th of April 1865 gave President Lincoln his last public speech and called for a speedy reconciliation with the former opponents. Three days later he was murdered by the actor John Wilkes Booth, when he was a spectator at a performance at Ford's Theatre. This sad event overshadowed everywhere in the country the joyous mood at the end of the disastrous war.

While all this happened stood *the 46th New York Regiment* as a skirmish line at the Appomattox. Immediately after the surrender of the rebels marched Becker with his regiment from Petersburg to the harbor at City Point. Here boarded the regiment the steamships for the transport to the Fortress Monroe, from where it went through the Chesapeake Bay and the Potomac to Alexandria. The Regiment was still part of the second Brigade of Willcox Division. On arrival at Alexandria they met again Captain Roemer and his battery.

Roemer was just unloading his horses from the large screw steamer "Davis". “It was quite a warm day here in Alexandria,” recalled he in his Reminiscences. “The grass of the field where our battery encamped, was twelve inches high. Especially the horses liked it here, because for them it was the first fresh green during this time of the year." On the 27th of April moved *the 9th Corps* closer to Washington and camped until the 22nd of May on the road to Fairfax Court House.

The days ran along sluggish in the eternal unchanging routine of the military life. There was even some drilling and Captain Roemer had to practice his horse artillery routine. The soldiers received their outstanding wages. They now had money, but were not allowed to go over the "Long Bridge" to Washington. This enjoyed especially the sutler they now depended on. It was now evident, that a part of the 9th Corps should be sent to Texas. There was still a rebel army active, led by General Kirby Smith. Two weeks later came the news, that the journey was no longer necessary. Kirby Smith had also surrendered.

On the 22nd of May marched *the 46th New York Regiment* as part of *the 9th Corps* to Washington, where they stayed over night on the Capitol Hill. The area outside the parliament building was still an undeveloped open space, where the preparations for the victory parade took place. The locations for the individual bodies of troops were arranged in such a manner, that all formations could without difficulty add into the marching Column. At 10 o’clock on the next morning the head of the column began to march and moved along the Government Buildings in the direction of Pennsylvania Avenue. It was 10.30 before the 9th Corps turned into Pennsylvania Avenue. Captain Roemer's Battery marched at the head behind General Parke and his staff. The infantry followed behind them in rows of twenty-three men and took nearly the entire width of the avenue from sidewalk to sidewalk.

It took four hours before 64,000 men had marched past the platform, where the new president, Andrew Johnson, with Lieutenant-General Grant and Major General

Sherman inspected the army. The rest of the troops followed the next day. *The 46th New York Regiment* numbered during the parade only 311 men. Eight officers and 96 soldiers had died during the war or from their wounds. Two officers and 89 enlisted men found their death through diseases or accidents. Compared with other troops, these were low casualty figures. As brave regiments were those known, who rushed cold blooded into the fire and showed heavy losses. The 46th New York took also part in such suicidal missions, but we still notice that their officers did not consider their soldiers as cannon fodder.

In the opinion of the soldiers was the war over with the victory parade. But they still could not go home. The rebels were still fighting in some remote places. The last surrendered finally on the 23rd of June in Oklahoma. For the 46th New York came at last on the 28th of July 1865 their discharge from the army. *The 50th Pennsylvania Regiment* camped out in early July 1865 in front of the Capitol building in Washington and took part in the suppression of a riot at the depot of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad. Here was the soldier George Boyer as the last member of the regiment mortally wounded. The discharge from the army took place on the 30th of July 1865.

Chapter 33

Where did they go?

With General Lee's surrender on the 9th of April 1865 was the Civil War as good as concluded. For the soldiers of *the 46th New York Infantry* followed on the 28th of July in Washington their discharge from the army. A total of 1,234 men had gone through the muster rolls of the regiment. Some of them had remained only for a short time, sent home because of injuries or sickness. Others were transferred to different regiments. New recruits had taken their places.

Finally it had become unimportant whether they were Germans, Irishmen or Canadians, who filled the openings. While at the end of the war the ethnic German nationality had almost been lost; the command of the regiment remained until the last days in the hands of the German officers. With 311 men marched Lt. Colonel Adolph Becker on the 28th of July 1865 to the Delancey House in Washington for their discharge. Normally he would have been promoted to full colonel in these last days, but for such a step was the overall strength of the regiment no longer sufficient.

Of the 675 German immigrants, who had founded the regiment in the spring of 1861, there were at this time only 127 of them present.

Adolph Becker belonged since the 12th of April 1864 to the 46th New York. Previously he had been a captain in *the 20th New York (Turner) Regiment*, which was already disbanded. After the war he went back to Hoboken (New Jersey) and lived there with his parents. In November 1869 he married Friederike Oehler and took up his residence in Newark, 237 South Orange Ave. He first found employment as a bookkeeper and draftsman. Later he served as a German and French teacher in an urban school system. Because of an eye ailment he had contracted during the war from an explosion, he was awarded a monthly disability pension of $ 20 from 1889 until his death in 1905.

Colonel Rudolph Rosa, the founder and first commander of *the 46th New York* had taken his discharge as an officer of the Prussian army and took then part in the democratic German revolution of 1848. After leaving Germany, he came to Washington in 1850, where he first worked as a surveyor of the coast. During General Pope's campaign, he had been severely wounded. A bullet had torn his right thigh. Until the end of September he remained in the hospital in Annapolis, followed by convalescence leave in Brooklyn.

When he arrived back at his regiment in October of that year, the divisional surgeon noted his unhealed wound and did not allow him back into service. In December of 1862 he left the army. When the war was over, he opened his own land surveying company in Brooklyn. As John Augustus Roebling began in May of 1869 with the construction of the Brooklyn Bridge, Colonel Rudolph Rosa together with another Civil War veteran, Colonel William Paine, took over the survey work. As a salary they received ten dollars each a day. The two officers were working together very effectively, wrote David G. McCullough in his book "The Great Bridge". Rosa's offices were later located in a building at 194 Broadway in New York City. Until his death on the 30th of September 1904, he received a monthly disability pension of $ 7.50.

Joseph Gerhardt had in 1848 participated in the failed uprising in Baden. As these volunteers wanted to storm the Siegburg barracks on the 10th of May in order to procure weapons, he had been one of the leaders. Carl Schurz wrote in 1907 about it in his memoirs: "Our commander, Fritz Anneke, divided the group into companies. One of them came under the command of Joseph Gerhardt, who later went to America and took in the Civil War an important role as leader of a loyal regiment." As an immigrant he had contracted a chronic liver disease, "Hypertrophia Hepatitis", as the regimental surgeon, Dr. Hoevet called it. During the war he had been several times with it in the hospital. He commanded the regiment for most of the time between September 1862 and a new outbreak of his illness after the Mississippi campaign. In December 1863 he had to resign his command due to disability. The army promoted him at the end of the war for his outstanding service to Brigadier General (brevet). He returned to Washington and opened a restaurant at the former Center Market. Together with his son he built in 1870 "Gerhardt's Hotel" in the government quarter at 215 Fourth Street NW. Starting in 1872 he received a pension of eight dollars per month. "He died on the 19th of August 1881 at the age of 64 years from the recurring malarial fever, which he had contracted during the Civil War," as the Washington Journal reported.

Immediately after his death two women applied for the widow's pension. Joseph Gerhardt had been married to Ernestine Leonard in Cologne (Germany). When he had to leave the country after the revolution, his wife and the three children had been left behind. She was now living in Frankfurt/ Main, had not seen her spouse for 32 years and demanded the recognition of her pension rights. The second wife's name was Dorothea Gerhardt. She had been in Washington for the last thirty years Joseph Gerhardt's visible wife. Nine children had emerged from this marriage. She knew about the German marriage and thought her husband had been divorced. She could not submit any documents as proof of her marriage.

Ernestine however, sent a marriage certificate, documenting that "Mr. Peter Joseph Gerhardt, twenty-five years old, born in Oberdollendorf, Cologne Region, had married the Virgin Ernestine Wilhelmine Leonard, nineteen years old, in the year of one

thousand eight hundred forty-two, in the morning of the fifteenth of the month of October." Joseph Gerhardt's son Ernst from his first marriage lived at this time in Jefferson (Texas). His testimony contributed significantly to the fact, that his mother, Ernestine Gerhardt, was recognized as the rightful widow. The pension payments that had already been paid to Dorothea were stopped and went from then on to Ernestine in Germany.

Captain Ernst (Ernest) Gerhardt, the son of the regimental commander Joseph Gerhardt, had been born in 1843 in Bonn, Germany. After his discharge from the volunteer army, he went to New York City and joined on the 24th of November 1865 *the regular 17th U. S. Infantry Regiment.* A little later he was transferred to *the 35th U. S. Infantry Regiment* in Texas. He married on the 21st of May 1867 in San Antonio his wife Magdalena (Lena), nee Maxfeldt. Lena was the sister of his regimental comrade Detlef F. Maxfeldt. The Maxfeldts came from Hollstadt, Bavaria, where Lena had been born in 1849. At the end of his three-year commitment was Ernst Gerhardt on the 24th of November 1868 in Canton (Texas) discharged as a corporal. From then on he lived with his family in San Antonio. He found employment as an engineer, as it shows on the records of the census for 1880. With him lived his younger brother Karl (Charles) Gerhardt. Charles had been born in 1844 in Cologne. He was also a son of Ernestine Gerhardt, nee Leonard. In San Antonio were for the Gerhardts the following children born: Charles (1868), Mary (1870) and Joseph (1872). After 1880 Ernst Gerhardt left with his family San Antonio and took 1883 residence in Jefferson, Marion County (Texas). On the 3rd of December 1883 Ernst Gerhardt died in Fort Worth (Texas), apparently by accident or crime.

George Travers led the regiment for short periods of time in Knoxville (Tennessee), during the battle of Jackson (Mississippi) and during the Virginia campaign. After he was wounded on the 18th of June 1864 followed a three-month hospital stay in Annapolis. On the 15th of October 1864 took Lt.-Colonel Travers finally his discharge for health reasons. The small round bullet that had wounded him in front of Petersburg stayed until his death between his ribs. After the war he operated a shop at Bloomfield Street in Hoboken, New Jersey. In 1880 he returned to Germany with his wife Elizabeth. He received from the army a monthly disability pension of ten dollars, which was increased in 1904 to twelve dollars. It was sent to him until his death in 1906 to his German Address: Adelaide Street No. 4 in Wiesbaden.

As a tribute to the first Lt..- Colonel of the regiment, Germain Metternich, who had died on Tybee Island at the beginning of the war, the New York veterans association named their local club "Germain Metternich Post No. 122, Grand Army of the Republic". His widow, Marie Elizabeth Metternich, received from the date of his death a monthly pension of $ 30.

Alphons Servière had been born on the 4th of November 1839. According to his records he had served as an officer in the Prussian army, just like all his ancestors, since the first Servière had arrived in 1742 as a Huguenot from France. Because of his recurrent stomach ailments, he had taken his discharge on the 14th of September 1864. Two years earlier he was suffering from the same problems and had spent three months in a military hospital in Washington. He had been named as an "acting Major" and led the regiment for longer periods of time, first from the 27th of August 1863 to the 22nd of May 1864 and again from the 19th of June to the 30th of July 1864.

The order book of the regiment contains some written instructions by him in German, a proof that he had used primarily the German language, in spite of his French surname. After his discharge he lived for the next six years in Pennsylvania. Here he married his first wife, Anna Fonberg. He bought a farm in 1871 in Salt Creek Township (Chautauqua County), Kansas, where the family settled. Two daughters were born here, Mary in 1874 and Emma in 1876. The mother, Anna Servière, born Fonberg, died on the 1st of January 1876, apparently at the birth of her second daughter Emma.

On the 24th of March 1878 married Alphons Servière in Kansas his second wife, Clara Blecha. Clara was at that time 20 years old and he himself 37. Clara had been born on the 11th of June 1858 in Pilsen (Bohemia). Four more children brought Clara Servière here in Salt Creek Township into this World: Joseph Servière on January 1879, Frank Servière on the 4th of March 1881, Elizabeth Servière on the 8th of February 1884 and Anna Servière on the 5th of March 1887. Anna died already at the age of 12 years. Despite his severely damaged health waited Alphons Servière until 1890, when he applied for a disability pension. When it was approved, he received eight dollars a month. On the advice of his doctor, he left Kansas a year later with his family and took his new home in the warmer climate of Needville in Texas.

Here died Alphons Servière on the 26th of May 1900 at the age of 60 years. He was buried in the local cemetery in Needville. Clara received in the beginning a widow's pension of eight Dollars, which was gradually increased to 40 Dollars per month. The last years of her life she spent with the family of her daughter Elisabeth, now "Mrs. W. L. Chandler", in Beeville, Texas. Here she died on the 27th of August 1946 at the age of 88 years. She was buried in the cemetery beside her husband Alphons in Needville. She had survived him by 46 years.

The last entry for Alphons Servière in his military records carries the date of the 19th of October 1938. On this day had the army bought a new gravestone for him. Mary Servière, the daughter from his first marriage to Anna Fonberg had married in Needville Pastor Fritz Beckendorf, the minister of the German Methodist Church. Many descendants of the Beckendorfs are living today in the vicinity of Houston (Texas). Alphons Servière's son Frank was in 1946 the owner of cotton farms in Taft on the north side of the Corpus Christi Bay. The second son, Joseph Servière, was planting grapefruits on his property in Raimondville, north of Brownsville, Texas.

Ludwig (Louis) Henninghausen came from Fulda in the former province of Hesse-Nassau. After the war he returned to Baltimore and opened his law practice at 922 N. Calvert Street. For many years he served as president of the nonprofit German Society of Maryland. He also was a well-known writer. About his service in *the 46th New York Regiment*, he was not able to report very much. Due to illness he had already been discharged in the second year of the war. Henninghausen died on the 7th of February 1918 in Baltimore at the age of 77.

The chaplain of the regiment, Wilhelm Winters went back to his wife Sophie in Brooklyn, where he had married her on the 27th of August 1856. Apparently he did not continue his pastoral activities in civilian life. He became a member of the Rev. John G. Hehrs First German Presbyterian Church, where his two children were baptized. Since he had never been wounded in this war, he did not receive any pension. The family moved later to Philadelphia, where Winters died on the 7th of August 1881 at the age of 53 years. In his death certificate his occupation is specified as a "dramatist", a writer and director

of plays. His wife Sophie moved after his death back to Brooklyn, where she applied in 1890 for a widow's pension. In her application she stated that she earns no more money besides the three Dollars weekly, that she receives as a laundress. After the approval by the army, she received a monthly pension of eight Dollars, which was increased in 1908 to sixteen Dollars. On the 13th of May 1911 she died at the age of 80 years in Brooklyn.

George Mindel from Frankfurt had been the Adjutant General of the First Division of the 3rd Army Corps during General Pope's Virginia campaign. After Pope's dismissal he had organized his 27th New Jersey regiment at Camp Frelinghuysen. When this regiment was discharged after the period of service expired in July 1863, he received a month later the command of *the new 33rd New Jersey Regiment.* This new command remained in service until the end of the war.

Mindel served for most of the time as brigade commander and was on the 13th of March 1865 promoted to Brigadier General (brevet) and immediately afterwards to Major General (brevet). For his earlier achievements in Williamsburg at the fifth of May 1862 he received after the war the Medal of Honor. As a captain and staff officer of *the 3rd Army Corps*, he had with a part of the 61st Pennsylvania Regiment broken through the enemy's lines and destroyed the Confederate artillery. Consequently he had succeeded in forcing the enemy to abandon the position.

Major Julius Parcus had been in Antietam so badly wounded, that he had to resign his commission. But after the wound had been healed, he decided to become a soldier again. He did not return to his old regiment, but enlisted on the 22nd of January 1864 as a private soldier *in the 3rd New Jersey Cavalry*. Here he was promoted to sergeant and served until the 1st of August 1865. After leaving the army he returned to Germany. His disability pension of $ 12 per month was mailed to him until his death on the 7th of April 1887 to his German address at Silberburgstraße 124 in Stuttgart.

Captain Friedrich (Fred) Schieferdecker, the company commander of "K" Company, returned after the war to his family in Albany, New York. He was a butcher by trade, just as his father before him. He and his wife Anna took over the meat business of his mother at 419 South Pearl Street. Upon his discharge from the army on September 29, 1864, he was promoted to (brevet) Major. He had been one of the founders of the regiment by recruiting a full company, who elected him to First Lieutenant, but he did not get his commission. He then enlisted as a Private on August 5, 1861 and was promoted throughout the course of the war, finally to Captain and Commander of Company "K " on March 24, 1863, with rank from October 18, 1862. Fred Schieferdecker was born in Unterschefflenz, Baden, Germany, on February 2, 1836. At the age of 11 he came with his parents and six siblings on the ship "Havre" to the United States. In July of 1857 he married Anna Rapp. The family had five children. Major Schieferdecker was active in the Republican Party and became in 1870 a Member of the Albany Board of Supervisors. In 1874 he was elected an assemblyman for the 1st District of the State of New York. Because of his injury, a rifle shot in his right arm, he received a monthly pension of $ 5, later 6 Dollars.

When he developed hearing problems in 1903 he received a pension of 10 Dollars, which was later raised to 13 Dollars. In one of his many affidavits to prove his deafness, he explains that "being duly sworn can mean that I have been compelled to sign my name by mark, for the reason of old age and having had a stroke of Paralysis, which occurred in January of 1904. I cannot even hold my walking cane in my hand, not alone a

pen to write my own name, hoping this affidavit will be sufficient in my claim." Major Schieferdecker (also called Schifferdecker) died on November 23, 1907 at the age of 71. He is buried at the Evangelical Protestant Church Cemetery in Albany, N. Y.

Captain Carl August Schloezer (also spelled Schlötzer and Schloetzer) had remained on duty despite the head wound he had received in Antietam on the 17th of September 1862. But on the 15th of March 1863 he had to leave the army because of this severe injury. He received a monthly pension of $ 15. Schloezer came from Munich and lived with his wife Maria, nee Fuhrmann, at 222 West 25th Street in New York City. Later moved the family to Utica, New York, where Captain Schlozer's health deteriorated as a result of his head injury. On the 25th of July 1871 began his treatments at the local mental hospital, which was then called "Lunatic Asylum". A second time he was sent there on the 14th of April 1873. He passed away on the 23rd of September 1873 at the age of 52 years.

Captain Jacob Roemer had been promoted to Brevet Major during the last days of the siege of Petersburg. Shortly before his discharge from the volunteer army offered him his commanders a transfer to the regular army, which happened very rarely. Jacob Roemer declined and went back to his shoe store in Flushing, New York. Immediately after the war his comrades from the battery encouraged him to write down his memories of those four years of Civil War. It was not until 1895, when he accepted these proposals.

He completed his manuscript in spite of failing health. He himself did not see the resulting small book of 317 pages. His descendants had it published and printed in 1897 by the local newspaper, the "Flushing Journal". This story of the 34th New York Battery of light field artillery is today hopelessly out of print and only available on microfilm. Jacob Roemer was a member of the veterans organization, "George Huntsman, Post no. 50, Grand Army of the Republic". The members of this Post elected him in 1872 as Commander (President), a function he held until 1882. Twice elected him the citizens of Flushing to the Town Council. In 1896 he died at the age of 78 years of uremia.

Sergeant Ludwig (Louis) Gaebel and Corporal Johann Ludwig Heupel came both from Landau and lived at the outbreak of the war in Washington (DC). Together with Joseph Gerhardt and his son Ernst, they had both joined the regiment. Following the discharge of the older officers in September and October 1864, they had been promoted to captain and second lieutenant. Both served as officers until the war ended.

Captain Gaebel even stayed on as a soldier after the Civil War had ended. From the 11th of January 1868 until the 22nd of July 1869 he served as quartermaster and sergeant in a formation of disabled soldiers, *the 45th U. S. Infantry Regiment* in New York City. Then he took up his residence in Louisville, Kentucky. Because of his injuries he could no longer practice his trade as a mechanic. The government gave him a position as a mail carrier. From the army he received a monthly pension of $ 6. When he passed away in 1906 at the age of 65 years, the pension payments were continued for his wife Louisa, later increased to $ 12. Louisa Gaebel died on the 4th of February 1914.

Lieutenant Ludwig Heupel went back to Washington and served until his retirement as secretary and treasurer of the "Georgetown Gas Light Company." Because of his injuries he first received a monthly pension of $ 12. When the Congress granted in 1907 more generous payments for the surviving veterans, his pension was increased to $ 25 and after the 12th of July 1915 even to $ 30. When he on the 18th of May 1920, three months after his eightieth birthday died, he was one of the last survivors of the regiment.

Sergeant Julius Berndt of the “A” Company is one of the few retirees who have left us an almost complete life-story. He had been born on the 7th of March 1832 in Leipzig. In the spring of 1852 he immigrated to America. The first three years he lived in New York City. Then he returned to Leipzig and married on the 16th of July 1859 Amelia Hahn. With her he came back to America and took up residence in Baltimore. For the next two years he worked as a cigar-roller. Unfortunately, the marriage was not very happy. When the Civil War broke out and the country needed soldiers, he went with a group of Turners to New York City. Along with his friends he joined on the 29th of July 1861 the 46th New York Infantry. He was not very tall, only five foot and one inch, but they promoted him to corporal, still later to sergeant.

On the march from Maryland to Virginia in November of 1862, he was suffering from diarrhea and had to spent two weeks in the hospital, then once again in December. After his three-year enlistment was up, he signed on again on the 4th of January 1864 for another three years. On the 9th of July 1865 he was discharged from the army. He went back to Baltimore, but not to his wife Amelia. He believed that she had found another partner. To hide his shame, he was telling his friends, Amelie had died during his absence. Sergeant Berndt went on a pilgrimage, and earned his living by doing odd jobs.

From Baltimore he went first to Cincinnati, where he remained for three months. In St. Louis he found work as a laborer and held this job for two years. Then he went on to Fort Leavenworth in Kansas. Next followed a stay in Washington (DC), then in Richmond, Norfolk and Lynchburg (Virginia), Parkersburg and Wheeling (West Virginia). Everywhere he stopped only a few months. All of these cities were railroad centers, in easy reach for a tramp by train. In Pennsylvania, he visited Schulkill, Lehigh and Berks County, all for only a short time. Once more he came to Cincinnati and St. Louis. When he reached Belleville in Pennsylvania, it was 1875. He was working on the farm of the family of David and Enoch Zoog. Here he decided to stay and apply for his disability pension. It was not until 1898, when more generous provisions were adopted, that he received a reply. Meanwhile, Amelia also had applied for a widow's pension in Baltimore. She thought her husband had since died and now it would be her money. The pension board had to determine who should be the rightful recipient. The extensive records are preserved today and tell the story of Sergeant Julius Berndt. He got his pension of eight dollars per month. The supposed widow went away empty-handed. The officials suggested that he should go back to her to Baltimore, but he refused, although she had borne him three children, one girl and two boys.

Lieutenant Philip Betz was a sign-painter by trade. With its accurate handwriting he had written the regiment's diaries. When he lived after the war with his family in New York City, the painting of billboards would have been a lucrative occupation. With his crippled hands he could not think of anything like it. When he applied for a disability pension, the doctors certified him "rheumatoid arthritis". First, he received four dollars a month. When he was 65 years old and asked for an increase, they gave him $ 24. Philip Betz died in New York City in March of 1897 at the age of 70 years.

Sergeant Julius Arndt was a trained and skilled painter. On the 28th of November 1858 he had married Mathilde Grundmann in his native Silesia. Soon after the marriage had the couple immigrated to America. In September 1861 was Arndt among the first who had joint *the 46th New York Regiment*. He was promoted to sergeant and due to a leg injury on the 28th of July 1862 discharged as incapacitated. Starting from the day of his

release, he received a monthly pension of eight dollars. He moved with his family to Saginaw (Michigan) where he stayed for several years. Due to his injured leg he could not find work in his profession. In 1870 he decided to go back to Silesia with his family, where he set up a commercial painting business. His pension was in the meantime raised to twelve dollars. When he died at the age of sixty years in Schoenau, the registrar at the city reported that the homeowner and master-painter Gustav Franz Julius Arndt, residing in Schoenau, born in Goldberg, had passed away on the 10th of April 1889. The value of his estate had been estimated by the court as 6,000 German Marks. His wife Mathilde Arndt received a widow's pension of twelve dollars, which was mailed to her every month by the American Consulate in Breslau. She died on the 4th of March 1914 in Schoenau at the river Katzbach.

Carl Marzioch came from Posen, where he had been born in July of 1824. Here he had married his wife Anna on the 8th of July 1841 at the Evangelical Lutheran St. Paul's Church. At the founding of *the 46th New York Infantry* in August of 1861 he had been with the age of 37 years one of the oldest. As a former noncommissioned officer of the Prussian army, he was promoted quickly. He had started as a sergeant and was promoted after four weeks to sergeant-major and then to lieutenant. In May 1862 he led the "F" company as a captain. During the Mississippi Campaign he suffered from malaria, eye diseases, and general weakness. Now unfit for service, he asked for his discharge, which was granted on the 1st of July 1863. Only for eleven months he remained at home. At the 31st of May 1864 he enlisted as a sergeant in the also *German 7th New York Regiment*. After a serious leg injury in the battle near Reams Station on the 25th of August 1864, he became for the second time disabled. He had to be discharged on the 3rd of June 1865. He lived first as a civilian in Rondout, New York, later in Danbury, Connecticut. In June of 1865 he received a monthly pension of four Dollars.

Chapter 34
Epilogue

Regimental histories of the Civil War were usually written by the soldiers, who had kept a diary or could remember exactly what had happened during their time of service. Other regiments such as *the 9th Ohio* had turned over all their information to a well-known author, who then did the work for them. Another possibility was, to assign the different periods of time to the most literate members of the regiment and trust each of them to write several chapters.

This way they had four or five authors, who later composed their respective portions and joined them together into a book. The *45th Pennsylvania and the 37th Ohio Regiments* for example had chosen this method. These authors had to present their

sections at a regimental reunion long after the war, where they were discussed and submitted for approval by the meeting.

Any additional facts could then be added. Such records produced by the members themselves are certainly the most accurate. Unfortunately, very few of these war time narratives were written in this manner. But a hundred years later or more, when an increased interest in the Civil War developed, the descendants of the veterans began their own researches and brought many interesting regimental histories to light

How then is such a story told for which there are no longer any living witnesses available? A narrative like this regimental history had to be reconstructed exclusively from the remaining documents of the army. The National Archives in Washington, D. C., are a vast and priceless source of such papers. From the records of the regiment were especially the 80 pages of the Order Book helpful. They were written in the German language and in chronological order. They showed the daily activities, incidents, transfers, arrests, promotions and discharges. The handwriting was not done in Latin, but in the old German "Sütterli", which is no longer taught in school. A sample page is included in this booklet. The regiment had permission to speak and command in German. Fifty sets of the officers and soldiers pension records were copied at the Archives, which tell us about their lives after they had left the army.

The "Official Records" of the army are available in 128 volumes and can be found at all major libraries. They are also available on a CD-ROM. The index of the "Records" leads us to the numerous reports of skirmishes and battles, where the regiment had been involved. The soldiers themselves left us hardly any private reports behind, not even where they had spent their time during this war. But they had a "sister regiment" from the first to the last day of the hostilities.

It was *the 50th Pennsylvania*, which had produced a Regimental History, written by Lieutenant Lewis Crater. Wherever the 50th Pennsylvania went, there was also *the 46th New York* with them. The regimental commander of *the 50th Pennsylvania* was Colonel Benjamin Christ, who also led the brigade and commanded both regiments. His reports in the "Official Records" usually tell us of both regiments.

Very helpful was also the "History of *the 9th Army Corps*", by the Reverend Augustus Woodbury, written already in 1867. Woodbury had been a friend of General Burnside. During the entire war he had always been close to him. His book has never been re-issued. Critics accuse him of having glorified his friend Burnside, where no glory was justified.

This may be true, but here doesn't count Burnside, but the many details Woodbury reports about the common soldiers. I found this book especially useful. Wilhelm Kaufmann's book, "The Germans in the American Civil War" was especially valuable for the biographical details of the officers (in English by Dr. Don Heinrich Tolzmann). I thank Joseph M. Overfield for permitting me to quote from the letters of his ancestor George Parks. His grandfather had a grocery store on Grant Street in the city of Buffalo.

The family's name had originally been Oberfeld. George Parks had been a soldier in *the 24th New York Cavalry* Regiment, which had fought from January until October 1864 alongside t*he 46th New York infantry*. Because of the close connection of *the 8th Battalion of the Washington DC Militia* to the foundation of *the 46th New York Regiment*,

it was necessary to draw up a list of those members. This list is here enclosed in the appendices. It is the only such list available and has never been printed before.

I am grateful to Fred Bauman, the librarian at the Library of Congress, for making me copies of the private letters of General Horace Porter. Consul General Dr. Cornell Metternich I owe thanks for the photo of his great granduncle, Lt.-Colonel Germain Metternich, and the pages from the book "Germain Metternich, a German freedom fighter."

The first hours of the second battle of Manassas and the assault of Marye's Heights in Fredericksburg I have quoted exactly with the same words as described by Carl Schurz in his “Reminiscences.” Mrs. Leanne Garland of the Abraham Lincoln Library in Harrogate (Tennessee) I owe thanks for the pictures of *the 8th Battalion* and the newspaper article from 1916 from the Washington Sunday Star. I am also indebted to Arlie Beckendorf and Delwin Maas for the information about Captain Alphons Servière and his descendants, as well as the photos of his family.

I thank my wife, Luisa, for evaluating the regimental papers at the National Archives and the patience while visiting the battlefields of Manassas, Sharpsburg, Antietam, Fredericksburg, Wilderness, Cold Harbor, Vicksburg and Petersburg.

I am indebted to Linda Stewart for inspiring me to translate this regimental history into English, which really should have been done a long time ago. Many more descendants are now able to read about their forebears’ role in the *46th New York Infantry*. Linda is the great great granddaughter of Captain and Brevet-Major Frederick Schieferdecker, the Commander of *Company K of the 46th New York*. I am also grateful to her for helping and editing the finished manuscript.