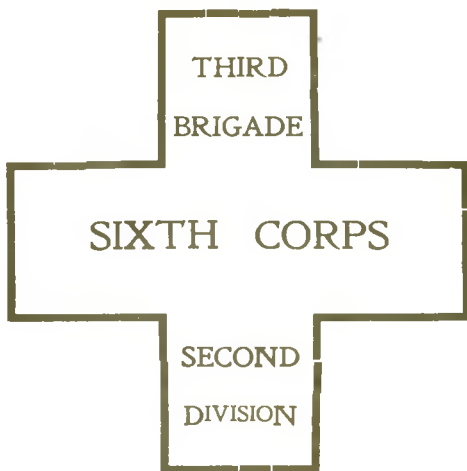


Battles

. . . of the . . .

Seventy-
Seventh
New York
State Foot
Volunteers

❁ BATTLES ❁
OF THE
SEVENTY-SEVENTH NEW YORK
STATE FOOT VOLUNTEERS



MUSTERED IN NOVEMBER 23, 1861,
MUSTERED OUT JUNE 27, 1865.

BY ONE OF THE BOYS.



To the Men who Carried
the Guns



Battles of the Seventy-Seventh New York State Foot Volunteers



FOUR decades have passed since the telegraph flashed over the land the tidings that the rebels "have fired on Fort Sumter." And the Charleston, South Carolina Courier of that date published "have made the proud flag of the stars and stripes, that never was lowered before to any nation on this earth, lowered in humility before the Palmetto and the Confederate flags."

Sunday, April 14th, 1861, after a bombardment of two days, which had begun a little after four o'clock in the morning of April 12th, rendering Fort Sumter untenable it was evacuated by Major Anderson and his small garrison of men who, after firing a salute of fifty guns, dressed in full uniform wearing their arms were formed into line and the fifer and drummer playing Yankee Doodle marched out, carrying with them the flag.

The shot at old glory was answered April 15th, by President Lincoln's proclamation calling for seventy-five thousand volunteers to suppress the rising rebellion. The next day, April 16th, a Mobile, Alabama paper published

"75,000 COFFINS WANTED."

'Proposals will be received to supply the confederacy with 75,000 black coffins.

Direct to Jeff Davis, Montgomery, Alabama."

We uns know now that they required many more than that number before their war of rebellion against the constituted authority of the United States was over. And notwithstanding

ing their boast that one southerner is equal to five northerners we will concede the valor of the soldiers of the rebellious states. At the same time let it be understood that the Confederate army fought not only for a lost cause, but for a wrong cause and for a wrong principle, invoked by Southern leaders for the purpose of continuing human slavery. For it is an indisputable fact that for many years prior to 1861 the politicians of the south had been making preparations for a revolt, for which the election and inauguration of Abraham Lincoln formed the excuse to begin

As a result of the call of April 15th, for volunteers, the Thirtieth Regiment, New York Infantry, was formed, Companies D, F and G from Saratoga Springs. As the writer, some days after the President's proclamation, was returning from his dinner on emerging from the "tunnel" from Putnam avenue into Broadway, he saw a crowd in front of the entrance to the Metropolitan Hall, (part of which is now the Farrington billiard room,) in the windows of which were many faces, and out of one of the windows a flag of the Union was flying. Curiosity caused him to go up into the hall which he found comfortably filled by young, middle-aged and old men. His inquiries were answered that a company was being raised for the war. On a table, on a platform, in the east end of the hall, an open book lay, into which were written the names of those offering to enlist. After the writer, hereof, had examined the names, he took up the pen and the name, Edward H. Fuller, was written. He then went out and up to his father's store, (then 206 Broadway, now the south half of the China store, in the French building, corner Broadway and Caroline street,) where he was clerk and book-keeper and said, "Father, I have enlisted." The company, then forming, became F of the Thirtieth Regiment, of which he was elected Second Sergeant. From various causes he did not go

On the 3d of May, 1861, President Lincoln issued a second call for troops, for three years unless sooner discharged. It

was under this call that the Seventy-seventh Regiment was raised. It being enlisted in the Fifteenth Congressional District, Counties of Essex, Fulton and Saratoga, and was organized at Saratoga Springs, where mustered into the United States service November 23d, 1861. Five days later, Thanksgiving Day, the regiment of eight hundred and ninety-eight men bade adieu to Camp Schuyler, where it had been initiated in the duties of a soldier, by Chef McMichael, marched to the station of the Rensselaer and Saratoga railroad, via of Mr. Beecher's Female Seminary, corner Spring and Circular streets, where he presented it with a National flag, the gift of the pupils. In New York City the next day the resident sons of Saratoga there provided a dinner and presented a silk banner, which had painted in oil on one side an engagement led by General Washington; on the reverse side the surrender of General Burgoyne, at Saratoga, October, 1777. The battle of Saratoga had been fought about one month previous from which two circumstances, in (17)77, the regiment got its number, Seventy-seventh, as numerically the application for authority to raise the regiment was forty-four. Sunday, December 1st, we reached Washington, going into camp on Meridian Hill, D. C., which was in the command of General Silas Casey, Army of the Potomac, where for weeks we were schooled in everything that helped to make a soldier, from reveille to tattoo.

Sunday, February 15th, 1862, the order was received for the Seventy-seventh to join General William F. Smith's division, Fourth Corps, on the opposite side of the Potomac River. One hundred and thirty army wagons, drawn by teams of six mules each were required to carry our regimental baggage which later was carried by three wagons. About three o'clock the next afternoon we reached the division camp and with the Thirty-third and Forty-ninth New York and Seventh Maine formed the Third Brigade thereof, with Brigadier General John W. Davidson in command. During the night before several inches of snow had fallen so that the ground had

a clean white covering on it to greet us and remind us of home. By orders camp was changed about once a week until Sunday, March 23d, when we went aboard transports at Alexandria, Va., for the peninsular campaign.

Landing the next day near Fort Monroe we marched to a field between it and Newport News, Va., and made camp, from whence at 6 o'clock A. M., of the 26th. we marched to Warwick near where we were put in line of battle only to learn that the rebels had gone to Yorktown, which we besieged from April 5th to May 4th. Near Lee's Mills, April 5th Private Frank Jeffords, C Company, the first one in our regiment, was wounded, his leg having to be amputated in consequence and because of which he was discharged June 7th. The 16th we were in the engagement at Lee's Mills, and in the rebels attack on us the 26th without loss. In the reconnoissance of the 28th we lost two.

The powder of the Johnnies was far less effective than the malaria of the swamps from which we lost hundreds in the month of the siege which ended the night of May 3d, as the morning of the 4th showed that Yorktown had been evacuated by the enemy. And notwithstanding they went without a fight, many of our soldiers were wounded and killed by the torpedoes which the Johnnies had planted in various places, though not a man of our regiment was touched. Comrade Reid, B Company, was the last vidette on duty at Yorktown.

The early morning of the 5th skirmishing began and by night the battle of Williamsburg had been fought and won, while the Commander-in-Chief, McClellan, was superintending the shipment of troops to Yorktown. So the most important part was left to a subordinate while the minor part was under the eye of the General in command of the Army.

The 14th of May, 1862, the Sixth Corps was formed. Into it went our division, which became the second division and thereafter the Seventy-seventh was a part of the Third Brigade, Second Division, Sixth Corps, for which no seventy-seventher has ever been known to express regret. For the

records show that never was more glorious deeds, in war, done than by the Sixth Corps, which more frequently than any other Corps met the foe in battle, in which it almost always held the field as victors and never was routed.

On the 24th the regiment in the charge at Mechanicsville, Va., captured its first flag, that of a Georgia regiment.

General McClellan from his headquarters, in camp, near New Bridge, sent out an address, June 2d, in part as follows:

"Soldiers of the Army of the Potomac :

I have fulfilled a part of my promises. You are now face to face with the rebels, who are held at bay in front of their Capital. The final and decisive battle is at hand. * * * I ask of you now one last crowning effort. I shall be with you in this battle and share its dangers with you."

June 5th found us in the skirmish at Golding's Farm, and the 24th at Mechanicsville. The 25th the seven day's battle on the Peninsular began by our opening engagement at Oak Grove. In the afternoon of the 25th General McClellan was evidently not so sanguine as he telegraphed to the

"Secretary of War :

* * * The rebel force is about 200,000 * * *"

The 27th we were in the action at Garnett's farm and the 28th at Garnett's and Golding's farms. It was there that John Ham, D Company, on the picket line, fell, shot dead. It was there that two of our boys brought in the wounded Colonel Lamar, to be treated the same as our own. The 29th in the battle of Savage Station, on Richmond and Yorktown railroad. In the engagement at White Oak Swamp Bridge the 30th and July 1st the battle of Malvern Hill, which ended the seven days of fighting, and in our favor, though our loss was fifteen thousand eight hundred and forty-nine, and Richmond not taken ; for we had changed our base and was farther from it.

June 9th, the Twentieth New York, a regiment of Germans all of whom claimed to have served three years in the Prussian army, joined our Brigade.

The 3d of July in the skirmishing at Harrison's Landing, Turkey Bend and Gum Run Swamp. Then followed six weeks of camp life, during which period the Lieutenant Colonel, Chaplain, Quartermaster, Captains and Lieutenants resigned, and not a few enlisted men sighed for the privilege. The Major was dismissed. Adjutant French was promoted to Major and Lieutenant-Colonel, Captain N. S. Babcock of K Company was promoted to Major and each continued in the respective positions until their muster out December 13th, 1864.

August 16th we left camp to return to Alexandria which we reached the 24th, near where we stayed until the 29th, when marching orders caused us to leave only to get back to our old camp the night of Tuesday, September 3d. The night of the 6th we again left Alexandria and via of the Long Bridge entered Washington, passing out through Georgetown to Tarleytown and on to Jefferson where we arrived the 13th for our engagement at Crampton's Pass, South Mountain, in front of Burketsville, the 14th. Thence, the 17th, Captain Babcock commanding the regiment, into the battle royal of Antietam, (Creek, near Sharpsburg, Md..) where among others, Joseph Meurer, E Company, the color bearer, was killed. Scarcely was he down than the colors were taken up by other hands and carried forward. It was in this fight that Lieutenant Horton, B Company, was wounded, which caused him to exclaim: "The damned rebels, not satisfied with the steak in my haversack, they have taken a steak off of my round." The success of the Army of the Potomac at Antietam caused much enthusiasm in the loyal states particularly in the northern and eastern ones.

It was rumored that there existed a McClellan faction of about a dozen officers who formed a plot to countermarch to Washington to expel Secretary Stanton from the War Department, and force the President to change his policy of the war by abandoning all interference with the institution of slavery. Fitz John Porter's failure to go to General Pope's

assistance and General McClellan's failure to pursue the beaten Lee after the battle seemed to be a part of a conspiracy to stay the suppression of the rebellion so long as the anti-slavery men controlled the government.

After the battle we went into camp at Williamsport, where we stayed until the 23d, and where the men who had enlisted in August with Major French and Captain Caw, while they were on recruiting service, joined the regiment. Thence to Bakersville and Hagerstown, near which we encamped. While at the latter place new Company K, of ninety-two men, with John R. Rockwell, Captain; William H. Fursman, First Lieutenant; Cyrus F. Rich, Second Lieutenant; joined us.

Monday, November 3d, we crossed the Potomac river on pontoon bridges, near Berlin, Md., where we had camped over Sunday, and went again on the secession soil of Virginia. At Warrenton, Wednesday, November 11th, Major General George B. McClellan, who had been ordered to his home in Trenton, N. J., for further orders, bade a personal farewell to the Army of the Potomac. It was said that the Commander of the Confederates, General Lee, on learning that General McClellan had been superceded remarked that he "regretted to part with General McClellan, for we seemed to understand each other. They may continue to make changes until they put in some one whom I don't understand."

Major General Ambrose E. Burnside, the Commander of the Ninth Corps, reluctantly accepted the assignment to the command succeeding McClellan. He organized the Army of the Potomac into three grand divisions, right, center and left. Major General Franklin was put in command of the left division, in which was the Sixth Corps, with Major General Smith ("Baldy" Smith, as the boys not infrequently called him,) commanding, Brigadier General A. P. Howe commanding our division, and Brigadier General Vinton commanding our brigade.

Sunday, the 15th, the Army started for Richmond via of Fredericksburg. Through somebody's blundering the pon-

toous had not left Washington when the advance of our army reached the Rappahaunock river near Fredericksburg. As they did not arrive until December 10th, the enemy had about three weeks advice of the contemplated advance and consequently were prepared to receive us. Winter had earnestly begun ; the water along shore was frozen so that the pontoon boats had to be pushed over the ice a few feet to get into the water. The enemy were in no mood for a peaceful laying of the bridge as they wounded and killed many of our men before the six bridges were finally laid at different points, four of which were in front of Fredericksburg, over which the army marched the 11th and 12th and by which it returned Monday night the 15th (with twelve thousand six hundred and fifty-three less men) and the bridges taken up. At one of the bridges the regiment was in line of battle on the north side to protect the engineers with orders not to fire unless the enemy fired first. "A good order, have to wait until one is dead before he can fire his gun," remarked Gray of B Company. As some confederate cavalrymen were so indiscreet as to charge the men at the boats, two guns of a battery were quickly put in position, loaded and fired, and so accurate were they aimed that some of the cavalrymen were sent to earth ; the others wheeled about and went back as fast as their horses could carry them. Our brigade commander, General Vinton, was wounded on the 13th, when Brigadier General Thomas H. (or as he was frequently called "Beau") Neill succeeded him.

After the battle of Fredericksburg, which through no fault of General Burnside was not in his favor, we went into camp at White Oak Church, Va. From which we marched January 20th, 1863, a beautiful morning not unlike an Indian summer day, to which we returned within seventy-two hours through mud, which was like clay, into which we sank at least ankle deep at every step. Immediately after this General Burnside at his own request was relieved.

January 26th, Major General Joseph Hooker, the former commander of the Fifth Corps was assigned to the command of the Army of the Potomac, shortly after which each corps was given a distinguishing badge. First divisions thereof, red, second divisions, white, and third divisions, blue in color. Our Corps received that plain and simple emblem, the Greek Cross, of which we Sixth Corpser are so proud. It was while in this camp that Surgeon Augustus Campbell (who had succeeded Surgeon John L. Perry, resigned February 1st, 1862) resigned February, 1863, and was succeeded by Assistant Surgeon George T. Stevens. It was while in this camp that our Brigadier General Neill, instituted the brigade dress parade, which undoubtedly helped us when we got into actual business. It was while in this camp that General Sedgwick was assigned to the command of the Sixth Corps. And it was in this camp that we stayed so long that some newspapers guyed us with, "All Quiet on the Potomac," published almost daily, prominently in one of their columns. Though they did not publish :

"All quiet along the Potomac," they say,
 Except now and then a stray picket
 Is shot, as he walks on his beat to and fro,
 By a rifleman hid in the thicket.
 'Tis nothing—a private or two now and then
 Will not count in the news of a battle ;
 Not an officer lost—only one of the men,
 Moaning out, all alone, the death rattle."

With only eight days rations, about high noon, Tuesday, April 28th, we left this camp, which in the previous three days had been thoroughly policed, trees, which had been got after much labor, set out in the company streets and around regimental headquarters as if we were to remain all summer, and from which fifty-three went forth never to return.

Sunday morning, May 3d, as we were marching along the Fredericksburg pike, not a cloud to hide the bright, blue sky, the birds singing merrily, some "bumble-bee" sounds fell on our ears about eight o'clock, and our peaceful march was

rudely interrupted. Shortly after, with Lieutenant Colonel French riding his white-faced horse, waving his sword and shouting "Come on Boys." we were in the charge of Marye's Heights, which were taken. Our regiment captured many small arms, two cannon, many prisoners, among whom was the Colonel of the 18th Mississippi and its colors. And where we received the commendation of our Division Commander, General Howe :

"Noble Seventy-seventh, you have covered yourselves with glory."

The regiment lost eighty-three, among whom was Captain Luther M. Wheeler, Company C, who died about two o'clock P. M. in a barn in a field to the right of the pike on which we were marching towards Fredericksburg a few hours previous, and where comrade Fuller, also of C, who had been wounded saw him. It was here that Charley McNaughton of Company K parted with his arm. Private Erskine Branch, D Company, who may be seen almost daily on his peg leg walking the streets of Saratoga Springs, had his leg taken off. The next day, the 4th, we were in it again at Salem Church, from whence we returned to camp again at White Oak Church where we remained until Friday morning, June 5th, when we again took to the road. After a march of several hours we halted near a ridge near the river until about five o'clock when the regiment was ordered into line and every number one man handed his rifle to number two man to hold while number one helped the engineers unload the pontoons. A correspondent wrote his paper :

"The point for laying the bridges was just below the mouth of Deep Run at the identical spot where we had crossed twice before. Howe's splendid division of the fighting Sixth Corps was selected for the work of crossing."

Before night Sergeant Rex Havens, A Company, fell, shot through the head. The night of the 13th we withdrew from Fredericksburg, in the vicinity of which we had been since crossing, for Lee was reported as travelling north. We en-

tered on a most insufferable march ; the ground was as dry as our powder, the air so scorching and the rays of the sun so hot that many fell exhausted, but on we went and at noon of the 19th reached Fairfax Court House, thence to Bristol Station. After nearly a week's duty in its vicinity, Saturday night, the 26th, the corps resumed the march and by ten o'clock crossed the Potomac river, at Edward's Ferry, into Maryland, for General Lee and his army were investing in Keystone State stock. Thence through the north-west part of Montgomery and Howard counties, into Carroll county at Mount Airy Station, near where we stayed for the night. The next day, the 29th, we marched through Westminster, reaching Manchester at night, where we remained until the next night. In the last four days we had done considerable marching, having covered one hundred miles. Each soldier carrying rifle, knapsack and contents, accoutrements, haversack containing rations and sixty rounds of cartridges—over fifty pounds.

When General Hooker was relieved at his own request, the 28th, because his superiors in Washington would not grant his request for the ten thousand troops stationed on Bolivar Heights, Harper's Ferry, Major General Meade, the Commander of the Fifth Corps, was put in command, and his request for the troops denied General Hooker was immediately granted.

July 1st about ten o'clock at night we began a march which was to outdo any march we had done, and by which about five o'clock, p. m., July 2d—having stopped in the morning only long enough to make coffee for breakfast—we reached the Gettysburg battlefield. Four miles more did we march before reaching the position assigned us. From this march of thirty-eight miles the Sixth Corps got the name of Sedgwick's Cavalry.

General Neill with his brigade was ordered to report to General Slocum, of the Twelfth Corps, who was in command on the right, who placed us in support of the Twelfth Corps

Artillery. One of the most trying positions to real courage a regiment can be placed in, is in taking a fire without being able to return it.

A writer of Major General Slocum said :

“A most impressive incident of the battle of Gettysburg to me was Slocum’s own battle on the 3d day of July, 1863. For five anxious hours Slocum commanded the field on our right. That dreadful struggle went on until Ewell, with Early’s and Edward Johnson’s large divisions, was forced to give up.”

On the 3d that most desperate charge of the Confederates on the left, led by General Pickett was repulsed and victory surely perched on the banners of the Army of the Potomac.

Gettysburg is called one of the great battles of the world. It was without doubt the high tide of the rebellion which receded from that date.

The 5th we started after the defeated and retreating enemy and overtaking them at Fairfield had a skirmish with their rear guard. Again the 7th at Antietam and Marsh Run, Md. Again the 10th to 13th near Funkstown and Hagerstown and on the 14th at Williamsport, which closed the summer campaign. At Berlin, Md., Sunday the 19th, the bands playing “Oh ! carry me back to Ole Virginy,” we recrossed the Potomac river on pontoon bridges and were once more in Virginia.

Though we had many sights of the enemy in the weeks that followed, even offering them battle, to fight in the open field, of which offer no notice was taken. It was not until October 16th that we caught them in a skirmish at Chantilly.

As the result of the engagement November 7th at Rappahannock Station, eight cannon, two thousand rifles, four battle flags, and sixteen hundred prisoners were taken. Our loss was about three hundred in killed and wounded. On the 26th we crossed the Rapidan River at Jacob’s Ford at midnight, after a few minutes rest for coffee an hour previous, the first we had had since morning, having been on the road since sun-

rise. This was the beginning of the Mine Run campaign which ended December 2d, without an engagement. The weather had grown extremely cold the last of the campaign during which some of the regiment were frozen on the picket line. At Germania Ford December 1st we had our last skirmish with the Johnnies for 1863.

Our corps went into camp near Brandy Station, though it was spiritless; soon after which the general order of the War Department was received, offering to those soldiers who, having served two years had a year or less to serve, bounty, release from the time yet to serve, and a furlough for thirty-five days. The furlough about two hundred and twenty-five of the regiment took advantage of and visited home.

General U. S. Grant who had been so successful in the South-west was, on the third of March, 1864, ordered to Washington. On the 9th President Lincoln handed him his commission as Lieutenant-General, they then met for the first time. Thirteen months thereafter the war was ended. General Grant was assigned to the command of the Armies of the United States "with headquarters at Washington and with Lieutenant General Grant in the field." General Grant made his headquarters in the field with the Army of the Potomac, from whence near Culpepper, Va., he issued the order for the Army of the Potomac to move. In compliance with which, Tuesday, May 3d, 1864, the movement began and thereafter we were not out of business until the end.

Thursday morning, May 5th, the ball was put in motion and the Wilderness battle was opened it continuing almost uninterruptedly day and night to the 7th, late in the morning of which it became evident that Lee's army was withdrawing. The first meeting of Grant and Lee was not against the former, though our loss was over seventeen thousand men. Our Division Commander, General George W. Getty was wounded. General Neill, of our brigade, succeeded to the command and Colonel Bidwell, of the Forty-ninth New York, to the command of the brigade. The fighting had been almost entirely

by Infantrymen. Major Babcock was in command of the regiment. It was in the fight of the 5th that Michael Lamley (re-enlisted) and William Van Saulisbury (re-enlisted) were killed. It was in the fight of the 6th that Charles Burnham (re-enlisted) Walter Dwyer, George Deal, William H. Sexton, (re-enlisted) Samuel S. Craig, (re-enlisted) James Emperor, (re-enlisted) Lewis Smith, (re-enlisted) were killed. It was in the fight on the 6th that Private James G. Scott, D Company, lost both his legs below the knees. On the night of the 6th it was necessary that experienced troops should protect the right. Our brigade was put in the position with our regiment the right of the brigade, and the Sixty-first Pennsylvania at right angles to it to guard the flank and rear. About ten o'clock low tones, urging men forward, were heard which disclosed a dark line approaching the Pennsylvanians front. Nearer it came until only about ten feet away when "Fire" rang out on the Pennsylvanians line, and the fire sent the foe back leaving many of their men lying on the ground. About an hour later another dark line was discovered advancing in front of our breastworks. When only a few feet away a sheet of flame suddenly blazed along our entire brigade line, causing the advancing foe to waver and then those who could to turn and run back. And the attempt to surprise the old Sixth Corps was checked by the Third Brigade of the Second Division.

Any of the previous commanders of the Army of the Potomac would have been content to rest awhile as had been their custom. Not so he who now commanded the armies of the United States with headquarters with the Army of the Potomac in the field, for he was a soldier who did not do that kind of work, and of whom General Robert E. Lee said to his lieutenants "at last the Army of the Potomac has a head," who immediately began at Spotsylvania the flank movements, (withdrawing the corps that held his right flank and marching it behind the others while they maintained their position, which was repeated all summer from the Wilderness to the

James) which the world has since admired. And which proves General Grant the peer of any general in the world. And we were developing others of the same kind.

Then followed the battle of Spotsylvania Court House by the opening engagement at Piney Branch Church Sunday the 8th, followed by Landrou farm the 10th, and the Salient the 12th. In which there was hand to hand fighting over the breastworks and over which men were sometimes pulled and made prisoners. A Georgian officer was seized by the collar by a huge Wisconsin colonel, who jerked him in a twinkling out of the jurisdiction of the Confederacy into that of the United States.

Fred Keenholtz, of B Company, after firing two hundred and eighty-five rounds, got up on the breastworks to have guns handed him to fire ; but his temerity cost him his life.

The morning of the 9th General Sedgwick, "Uncle John," as he was affectionately called, was shot through the head by a rebel sharp shooter. Brigadier General H. G. Wright succeeded to the command of the corps.

About five o'clock in the afternoon of the 10th, twelve picked regiments, one of which was the Seventy-seventh, of the Corps were ordered to remove everything that could in any way retard their movements, with Colonel Upton in command, made a charge, scaling the enemies works, capturing their first line of rifle pits, more than one thousand prisoners and several cannons, and for which Upton was made a Brigadier General.

The morning of the 11th General Grant sent to the Secretary of War his famous dispatch :

"We have now ended the sixth day of very heavy fighting. The result to this time is much in our favor. * * *I propose to fight it out on this line if it takes all summer.*"

Then followed the battle of North Anna, the 22d to 26th ; Tolopotomy the 27th-30th, Cold Harbor the 31st-June 12th.

It was in the charge of the 10th that William B. Carpenter Captain of E Company, and W. F. Lyon, Second Lieutenant of A Company, were killed. Seth Deyoe, Captain D Company, lost his eye, and Gardner Perry his right forearm. And in the fight at the Salient, the 12th, that Orrin P. Rugg, Captain of G Company was killed. The 21st, while on the picket line at Spottsylvania Court House, Private Aaron B. Quivey, C Company, was killed. Comrade Quivey enlisted October 8th, 1861, as private in C Company; June 5th, 1862, was promoted to Commissary Sergeant and discharged in March, 1863. After nearly a year of rest and recuperation, his country needing soldiers, he again enlisted in C Company January 4th, 1864. During the month of May, 1864, the regiment lost one hundred and eighty-three men.

General Halleck proposed that the Army of the Potomac should invest Richmond on the north, but General Grant determined to move once more by the flank and swing his army across the James river, for it was Lee's army that Grant was after. It was a hazardous movement to take the army of one hundred thousand men with all its paraphernalia from the line of trenches within a short distance of the enemy, march fifty miles, cross two rivers and get into position threatening the Confederate Capital. But Grant did it. And it is said that the Confederate General Ewell said "That there is not much use in our fighting longer, now that General Grant has swung his army across the James." By midnight of the 16th the rear guard of the Sixth Corps crossed and the Army of the Potomac was over with its base the James River for the investment of Petersburg (June, 1864 to April 2d, 1865, when it fell) in the assault of which we were the 17th, 19th; and in the Welton railroad engagement the 21st, 23d.

It was on the 21st that a shell visited Company A, by which three of its members, each of whose names began with James, lost their right leg above the knee. Each ultimately recovered and lived for several years. James Allen and James Barnes are dead. James Lawrence is a well-to-do citizen of Nebraska.

Soon after the investment of Petersburg began whereby Richmond was threatened in that it kept General Lee and his army on the defensive in their neighborhood. General Lee hoping to draw General Grant and his army away or at least enough of it so that he could attack it with successful results, sent General Early and his corps towards Washington. So soon as General Grant learned it, he concluded to send some troops to intercept General Early.

So on the evening of July 9th the Sixth Corps was ordered to City Point, which it reached at daylight after a night's march. By noon of the 10th the corps was on board transports, the Seventy-seventh on a little steamer, labeled "Escort," on the river James, down which we steamed into the Potomac river, and at two o'clock in the afternoon of the 11th reached the wharf at Sixth street, Washington. The Nineteenth Corps had arrived in the morning, at an adjoining wharf, from New Orleans. Disembarking columns was formed, "Forward, March" was given and up Seventh street we marched out to the north of the city, which before our arrival was in a panic, for Rebel General Jubal Early was knocking at the door, but he had concluded to wait until the morrow to enter. Now, Jubal Early had been educated at West Point, consequently he knew that to-morrow never comes. Most welcome greetings fell on our ears from the people: "Why, it is the Sixth Corps." "Soldiers who took Marye's Heights."

Says the Cannoneer :

"An old Aunty, black as the ace of spades, and so old that her wool made a white border for her ebony face, came up to me as I sat on my mare by the road side, waiting for the bugle to sound. Bidwell's (the 7th Maine, 61st Pennsylvania, 43d, 49th 77th and 122d New York, the Third) Brigade, with the Vermonters closely following, was passing our battery. It is useless to attempt a description of those troops. No one who did not see them can even faintly appreciate their appearance. Rugged, swarthy faces, tanned by the hot sun and blackened by many a battle smoke, their baggage tied up in their blank-

ets, rolled round and carried over their shoulder, dusty haversacks, old canteens, battered cartridge boxes filled until the covers would not shut, bright rifles at right or left shoulder shift, their socks pulled up over their trousers legs and their stout shoes sounding a steady tramp, tramp, tramp, to the beat of drum, as they marched along the hard macadam road. When this old Aunty saw those veterans passing she came to me and asked in a voice quivering with emotion:

"Young Mastah, Honey, is you all de Six' Co'?"

"Yes, Aunty, we are all the Sixth Corps."

"Fo' God, Mastah Honey, how bu'ful yo' all is. We's safe now. 'Cause everybody said there is nothin' to stan' again Mas' Jubal's ole rebel sogers, ef dey kum in. But, de Six' Co' am pow'ful different. Praise de good an' merciful Lawd fo' de Six' Co'."

It was a great day for the chivalric Bidwell and his invincible brigade, to be head of the column, to go forth to battle under the eyes of Father Abraham himself."

Yes the Greek cross was recognized and as its wearers marched up Seventh street, excitement was allayed and confidence restored. The next day, the 12th, under the eye of President Lincoln, for he was at Fort Stevens, while we again met and defeated "Mas' Jubal's ole rebel sogers." And there Matthew Love, Andrew J. Downen, Jacob Frey, Andrew Manning, Alvarado Moury, Ambrose Matott and William Ruhle were killed. In the battle ground National Cemetery there, now called Brightwood, D. C., all but Love are buried.

The Sixth Corps which from its formation had been in the Army of the Potomac, was on the 5th of August, 1864, transferred to the Middle Military Division, just created, of which Major General Philip H. Sheridan was put in command, and under whom it was to gain new laurels.

Friday evening, August 5th at Monococcy Junction we entered cars for Harper's Ferry which we reached the next morning. At Halltown on the heights beyond General Sheridan established his line of battle. Wednesday the 10th, we started for our march up the Shenandoah Valley. Through Charlestown, where John Brown (who on the night of October 16th, 1859, seized the Arsenal at Harper's Ferry, was cap-

tured the 18th) was tried October 27th and executed December 2d, 1859, we passed with every band and drum corps playing and the soldiers singing

"John Brown's body lies a mouldering in the grave,
His soul goes marching on."

Sunday the 21st, the Second Division successfully resisted the attack of the Confederates on the road between Harper's Ferry and Winchester, after which we returned to Halltown. Thence about the 24th to Berryville from which early in the morning of September 13th we reconnoitered to Opequan and at Abraham's Creek, Berryville and Winchester Pike had actions with Early's troops and then returned to camp.

The 15th General Grant visited General Sheridan who so confidently stated what he proposed to do and could do with his troops that General Grant's compliance was given in two words—"Go in." So Monday morning, September 19th, long before 'sun up' we left camp to be victors before night in the battle of Opequan, the first of a series of fights which showed General Sheridan to be a good commander, from whose troops the rebels went whirling through Winchester. Following them up we caught them at Fisher's Hill where on the 22d we again engaged Early, doing him up again. Early's command included the Stonewall Jackson Corps. Sixteen pieces of artillery, nine flags, many small arms, and over seven thousand confederates were captured at Winchester and Fisher's Hill.

Marching and counter marching October 10th found the Seventy-seventh provost guard of Front Royal. On the 15th General Sheridan went to Washington leaving our Corps Commander, General Wright in command. Early's army had been reinforced by Longstreet's Corps, for as General Sheridan's army was proving to the authorities at Richmond a constant menace to the safety of Lee's army its destruction was necessary, which Early's army was to do. Soon after midnight, October 19th, firing was heard, its faintness noting it to be quite distant no attention was given to it by our Corps. It was not many hours ere we realized that Early was really

attempting the destruction of Sheridan's army. Under the cover of a dense fog the confederates had executed a flank movement so successfully as to surprise the Eighth and Nineteenth Corps which doubled up on the Sixth Corps, the Second Division of which checked the Early advance. The Third Brigade having the key to the road, charged in turn causing the enemy to break and run. General Bidwell was killed, leaving Lieut. Colonel French to command the brigade, and it is not necessary to tell the men of the Seventy-seventh that he who had led us so long and so often on other fields was equal to the emergency. It was said that General Early had been informed that the Sixth Corps had been sent to Washington, but before noon of the 19th he positively knew that the wearers of the greek cross were present for duty, having fought them uninterruptedly from 7 to 9 A. M.

It was about ten o'clock that General Sheridan arrived, after a hard ride from Winchester, twenty miles away, from which he had started with a body guard of two hundred and seventy-five men, only thirty of whom were with him when he reached the battlefield in the rear of the Second Division. After some inquiries of Colonel French, he passed on where his presence was felt, for the presence of the Commanding General, "Little Phil," was certainly a host, inspiring fresh zeal to the soldiers as he rode among them. Sixth Corps men now prepared their breakfast. All things being ready at three o'clock, P. M., General Sheridan gave the order for an advance. The right of the army started, shortly after which the three divisions of the Sixth Corps on the double quick charged the Confederates, who yielded and ending in their complete rout. And the battle of Cedar Creek was ours. The regiment lost thirty-six, among whom were four color bearers, Second Lieutenant Gilbert Thomas, of C, Adjutant, Second Lieutenant William J. Tabor, of K, and Captain Martin Lennon and First Lieutenant John W. Belding, of I.

John Horrigan, G Company, who enlisted September 26th, 1861, it is said, said on October 19th, 1864: "My time is out

November 23d. I am old soldier enough to keep out of battle for thirty-five days." But while John was proposing there was ONE disposing. John was among those killed at Cedar Creek, October 19th, 1864.

Second Lieutenant Worden, of C, became Adjutant which position he held until his muster out, December 13th, 1864. After remaining along Cedar Creek for a few days, while the Cavalry scouted for any remnants of Early's army, we marched back to Kernstown, near Winchester, and went into camp.

The Confederate General, Jubal Early, in an address to his army, October 22d. said in part :

"Soldiers of the Army of the Valley :

I had hoped to have congratulated you on the splendid victory won by you in the morning of the 19th, at Belle Grove, on Cedar Creek, when you surprised and routed two corps of Sheridan's Army. * * * But I have the mortification of announcing to you that by your subsequent misconduct, (when you discovered the Sixth Corps in your front,) all the benefits of that victory were lost, and a serious disaster incurred."

As the term of the three years men who did not re-enlist was about ended, they were ordered to be sent home. Fourteen officers and one hundred and five men of the Seventy-seventh, after a most affectionate farewell to their remaining comrades, left camp November 19th for Saratoga Springs, where they met a hearty reception and were honorably discharged December 13th, 1864. The four hundred and fifty-five left on the rolls were formed into a battalion of five companies with David J. Caw in command as Lieutenant Colonel.

The Sixth Corps was recalled to Petersburg, December 9th, and it was soon again in the Army of the Potomac. Near the Weldon railroad the Seventy-seventh erected comfortable huts for a winter's stay.

In the early spring General Lee took the initiative, for what proved to be his last campaign, by making an attack Saturday, March 25, 1865, and thereby cutting out more work

for the fighting Sixth. The Third Brigade, of the Second Division, successfully executed the order to take and hold a rebel line near the Squirrel Level road ; in doing which it lost several men, among whom were Captain Sumner Oakley and Lieutenant Stephen H. Pierce of the Seventy-seventh.

Plans having been completed, Sunday morning, April 2d, a little before four o'clock, though it was not daylight, the signal gun was fired for the charge, in echelon, which proved to be the wedge which opened the home of the Confederacy. The Forty-ninth and Seventy-seventh New York were the point of the wedge of our (Third) brigade in making the charge, as the result of which Petersburg fell, and a few hours later Richmond was hastily evacuated. Into it at eight o'clock the next morning, Monday, April 3d, General Weitzell's command of colored troops were the first to enter, and the soldiers from Massachusetts, one from E and one from H Company of the Fourth Massachusetts Cavalry, were the first to raise the flag of the Free over the Capitol.

Near Sailor's Creek the enemy made a stand. Late in the morning of the 6th we had another engagement capturing men, (among whom were five General officers), guns, flags, wagons and ambulances. After which General Sheridan dispatched to General Grant

"The enemy made a stand at the intersection of the Burke's station road with the road on which they were retreating. I attacked them with two divisions of the Sixth Corps and routed them."

Then on to Appomattox, where Sunday, April 9th, General R. E. Lee, who on February 1st had been appointed to command all the Confederate armies, with the army of Northern Virginia, surrendered to Lieutenant General U. S. Grant and the Army of the Potomac, and the war of the rebellion was virtually over, and the Confederacy crumbled quicker in 1865 than it had risen in 1861. It seemed like an empty shell, which when broken into fell to pieces, having no stability.

Exactly four years after the evacuation of Fort Sumter, April 14, 1865, Anderson, a Major General, at high twelve raised the same flag again at Fort Sumter, without its having lost one star. And April 14th, 1865, about nine o'clock at night in Ford's Theatre, in the National Capitol, the President, Abraham Lincoln, by an assassin's bullet, was shot in the head from behind, dying the next morning at twenty-two minutes after seven o'clock, by which act the loyal states rejoicing, were instantly turned into mourning and sorrow.

May 10th, the Confederacy's fleeing President, Jefferson Davis, was captured near Irwinsville, Georgia, supposedly on his way to a sea port. But, "We'll hang Jeff Davis to a sour apple tree," was executed only in song. He lived for several years, dying December 6, 1889, an unreconstructed rebel. There was not one capital punishment for rebellion, though less than six years previous the Virginians hung John Brown for his act against their Commonwealth.

May 13th, 1865, at Palmetto Ranch, Texas, the last battle of the war of the rebellion was fought, the last volley in which was fired by a colored regiment of United States soldiers.

After the grand review May 23d and 24th, the Seventy-seventh, the Bemis Heights Battalion, New York State Infantry Volunteers, was mustered out June 27th, 1865, after three years, seven months and four days service.

According to the Muster out rolls of December 13th, 1864, 898 men were enrolled in 1861.

499 men enlisted thereafter and up to November 19th, 1864, when the one hundred and twenty-one men who did not re-enlist returned to Saratoga Springs to be discharged because of the expiration of the term of service for which they were mustered in November 23d, 1861.

Of the 1861 men there were left on the rolls of those who re-enlisted, 178.

Of the men who enlisted after 1861 and up to November 19th, 1864, when the one hundred and twenty-one whose term

of service was about ended had farewell to their comrades to remain, there were left on the rolls 277. So that there were 455 men left on the rolls to continue the Bemis Heights Battalion, which instead of being a formation of ten companies as theretofore was thereafter a formation of five companies.

123 men joined after November 19th, 1864 and up to final muster out and disbandment June 27th, 1865, when the war of the rebellion was over.

1520 men mustered in in the Seventy-seventh New York Infantry Volunteers, the Bemis Heights Battalion, from November 23d, 1861 to June 27th, 1865. Of whom it lost by death two hundred and eighty-six.

Out of two hundred and thirty-one New York State Volunteer, (twenty-one Cavalry, fifteen Artillery, three Engineer and one hundred and eighty-four Infantry) regiments, the loss by capture, wounded and death is reported less in one hundred and sixty-four than in the Seventy-seventh wherein the casualties were (sixty-five captured, two hundred and ninety-four wounded, two hundred and eighty-six died) six hundred and forty-five.

As a recognition of meritorious conduct Congress passed an Act which became a law March 3d, 1863, for brevetting officers. Lieutenant Colonel Winsor B. French was breveted as Brigadier General and Second Lieutenant George H. Gillis as Captain from March 13th, 1865. On the recommendation of the division Commander Major General George W. Getty, April 20th, 1865. Lieutenant Colonel David J. Caw, to be Colonel by brevet for distinguished gallantry in the first assault where he commanded and led the first line to the successful entrance into the enemy's main line of works; and Captain Isaac D. Clapp to be Major by brevet for gallantry in the first assault of April 2d, 1865. The New York Legislature passed an Act for brevetting officers and men which became a law April 28th, 1865, whereby the following named of our regiment received brevets. First Lieutenants, Frank Thomas, Charles D. Thurber and Noble D. Hammond as

Captains ; Second Lieutenant William F. Lyon as First Lieutenant ; Sergeant Oscar F. Lockwood and Hospital Steward Alexander P. Waldron as Second Lieutenants.

On the 17th of April, 1865, the rebel flags captured by the Sixth Corps were presented to Major General Meade, when he said :

"Officers and Soldiers of the Sixth Corps :

I thank you very much for these numerous proofs of your valor, captured during the recent campaign. I do not wish to make any invidious distinction between your own and the other corps of this army, but candor compels me to say that in my opinion, the decisive movement in this campaign, which resulted in the capture of the Army of Northern Virginia, was the gallant charge of the Sixth Corps, on the morning of the 2d of April, 1865."

Of the Sixth Corps the Cannoneer says :

"I don't know why it is so, but there was a contagion of battle, an epidemic of victory, in the Sixth Corps, that I never felt in any other. On the defensive it was a rock, in attack a hurricane. The presence of that Corps on any field meant that there was to be fighting. It was never known to be on hand for any other business.

In regimental losses Colonel W. F. Fox says : The Seventy-seventh Regiment New York Infantry Volunteers was also a fighting regiment and sustained a loss in officers above the average. The loss in officers in its Brigade was without a parallel in the war. The five regiments (7th Maine, 43d, 49th, and 77th New York, and 61st Pennsylvania) losing 72 officers killed in action.

Our Flag Forever



Frank L. Stanton



She's up there—Old Glory—where lightnings are sped ;
She dazzles the nations with ripples of red
And she'll wave for us living, or droop o'er us dead—
The flag of our country forever !

She's up there—Old Glory—how bright the stars stream ;
And the stripes like red signals of liberty gleam !
And we dare for her, living, or dream the last dream,
'Neath the flag of our country forever !

She's up there—Old Glory—no tyrant dealt scars,
No blur on her brightness, no stain on her stars ;
The blood of brave heroes hath crimsoned her bars,
She's the flag of our country forever !

