
169th New York Infantry Newsletter

August 2012

RECOVERED!

The lost gravestones of Sergeant Thomas Jessup, Co. A, and Sergeant Josiah Spaulding, Co. B, were recently excavated and re-mounted at the New Mount Ida Cemetery in Troy.



New Mount Ida Cemetery, Troy, New York

Dear All,

The New Mount Ida Cemetery, located at 230-250 Pinewoods Avenue in Troy, was established by the city in 1852 and contains graves dating from the Civil War to the Second World War. Over the past 160 years the cemetery has suffered from neglect and periodic vandalism, but recent efforts by volunteers to restore the grounds and its monuments have resulted in the discovery and cataloging of the graves of over 20 soldiers from the 169th N.Y.

Members of Col. George L. Willard Camp #154, S.U.V.C.W., in conjunction with neighborhood volunteers Alysia Hamilton and Cameron Smith, and a fraternity from the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, have been diligent in their efforts to rehabilitate the cemetery. Alysia contacted this

writer with a request for information about the men from the 169th, and I responded with detailed reports for several of them, with more to come.

Of special interest is the recent discovery by Alysia and Cameron of the stone markers at the graves of Sergeant Thomas Jessup, Co. A, and Sergeant Josiah Spaulding, Co. B. On September 25, 2011, Alysia wrote:



"A few months ago I remembered seeing just the top of a grave marker which was buried really deep in the ground by the front corner of the cemetery, along by the fence. I wanted to dig it out for awhile now, so Cameron starting digging it out, and sure enough, we hit a metal G.A.R. marker in front of it, buried in the ground, and it was a Civil War gravestone. It was really sunk deeply into the ground. Our neighbor Dave came over with some boards and helped us pry it out of the ground. It is the grave of Thomas Jessup, Co. A, 169th N. Y. Infantry. Cameron said if we just put it back in the ground with the dirt around it, it would sink again in a couple of years. We re-set it the correct way with some stone dust underneath it so it will not sink again. I placed a flag next to the gravestone."



October 8, 2011: "We had a great time today putting Thomas Jessup's gravestone back upright in the ground. The men put some material called stone dust under it so it won't sink underground again. It was really sunny and warm outside."

Sergeant Jessup enlisted in the 169th N.Y. in Troy as a private on August 22, 1862, and served throughout the entire period of the regiment's service, mustering out on July, 19, 1865, in Raleigh, N.C. Of the nine hundred and fifteen men enlisted and on the rolls at the first muster in 1862, less than one hundred and twenty returned home with the regiment at the close of its term of service. Wounded in battle at Foster's Plantation, Va., May 18, 1864, where he suffered a wound to the finger, and wounded in the magazine explosion at Fort Fisher, N.C., January 16, 1865, where his injuries were recorded as "slight," Sergeant Jessup fared better than most men in his regiment. In December of 1863, Thomas was decorated with the Gillmore Medal for gallant and meritorious conduct during the operations before Charleston, S.C.

The Gillmore Medal



The Troy Daily Times.

DECEMBER 14, 1863.

From the One Hundred and Sixty-ninth.

Correspondence of the Troy Daily Times.

FOLLY ISLAND, S. C., Dec. 4, 1863.

Soon after the fall of Wagner and Gregg, Gen. Gillmore issued an order, in which he proposed to give medals of honor to two per cent of the men of each regiment engaged in the trenches and approaches to those ugly rebel customers – the medals to be awarded to those who had either distinguished themselves by acts of bravery in front of the enemy, or who had borne irreproachable names as soldiers. The following enlisted men of the One Hundred and Sixty-ninth Regiment have been selected, as worthy of the honor proposed by the commanding General:

- Co. A – Sergeant Thos. Jessup, Private August Strassman.
- Co. B – Sergeant Michael Ryan.
- Co. C – Sergeant Geo. A. Willis, Private Geo. Broker.
- Co. D – Sergeant Bernard McGuire.
- Co. E – Sergeant John H. Williams, Sergeant W. W. Downs.
- Co. F – Corporal Geo. C. Wagner, Corporal John McLaughlin.
- Co. G – Sergeant Samuel C. Sargeant, Corporal J. D. Havens.
- Co. H – Sergeant Edgar Vanderzee, Corporal Alonzo Sliter.
- Co. I – Sergeant Geo. Campbell, Corporal Marshall Dillon.

Co. K – Sergeant Jas. H. Straight, Corporal J. White.

The selections were made by the several company commanders, assisted by Lieut.-Col. McConihe, and I but echo the sentiments of the whole regiment when I say that every one of those named is worthy of the medal as a brave man and good soldier.

The New-York Times.

MARCH 30, 1864.

DEPARTMENT OF THE SOUTH.

Affairs at Hilton Head and Beaufort – Medals of Honor, &c.

MEDALS OF HONOR.

[From the Palmetto Herald.]

The Hilton Head and Beaufort papers of March 24, have the following items:

It will be remembered that after the reduction of Fort Wagner and the demolition of Fort Sumter, last Fall, Gen. GILLMORE announced that medals of honor would be presented to such enlisted men as had especially distinguished themselves by gallant conduct during the siege. They have been struck, and samples are already here, though the entire number will scarcely be ready for delivery sooner than two or three weeks. There are about five hundred candidates for the honor, each of whom will have his name neatly engraved on the buckle to which the medal is attached. The medal itself is of bronze, about the size of the silver dollar of blessed memory, and bears upon its obverse in bold relief, a very accurate representation of Fort Sumter at the termination of the first bombardment, taken from an original drawing by Mr. W. T. CRANE, with the legend "Fort Sumter, Aug. 23, 1863," the whole encircled by a border of stars. Upon the reverse in this inscription, in raised letters: "For gallant and meritorious conduct. Presented by Q. A. GILLMORE, Major-General." The name of Gen. GILLMORE is a facsimile of his autograph. The medals are beautiful in design, and are very neatly and carefully made. They come from the establishment of BALL, BLACK & Co., New-York City.

On July 7 Alysia wrote:



"Cameron and I were wandering around the New Mount Ida Cemetery this afternoon with my dog and we happened to notice a tiny piece of stone that was not covered by grass. We dug some of the dirt off of it, and sure enough, it was a Civil War marker that has been buried for who knows how long. I thought I would send you the photos. It's in really great shape, and hopefully it will clean up more when it rains. I plan on getting a flag to place next to the marker. The stone is for a Sergeant Josiah Spalding from the 169th Regiment."



July 9, 2012: "We scrubbed down his stone with some water and gave him a flag."

Sergeant Josiah Spaulding also enlisted in the 169th N.Y. in Troy as a private, on September 2, 1862. He came close to being killed during the Confederate siege of Suffolk, Va., April 24, 1863, but miraculously escaped injury, according to dispatches. He was not as fortunate, however, during the Confederate bombardment of Dutch Gap, Va., on the James River, August 13, 1864, where he suffered severe injuries to his leg and shoulder. He was absent in a hospital at the mustering-out of his regiment at the end of the war, and was pensioned in 1867 at \$6.00 per month for injuries received in the lumbar region of his back.

The Troy Daily Times.

APRIL 29, 1863.

From the One Hundred and Sixty-ninth.

Correspondence of the Troy Daily Times.

SUFFOLK, Va., April 25.

Yesterday, our little regiment had its first fight, and gallantly did it sustain itself. We were in the advance, supporting the Fourth regular battery, Capt. Follett, (brother-in-law of W. C. Buell, of Troy,) and were pushed forward in the face of a most destructive and terrible fire. Federal batteries in rear of us plied their fires over the heads of our men, and Rebel batteries in front of us swept their shot and shell into our ranks and over our heads, and altogether it was a scene to try the souls of the stoutest and bravest men.

...

Sergeant Spaulding, of Co. B, had his accoutrements shot completely off of him, and a private from a Connecticut regiment, standing behind Capt. Wood, was blown to pieces by a shell. It is impossible to understand how it was that more of our men were not killed and wounded, except that the fire of the enemy was directed over their heads and fell to the rear of them.

The Troy Daily Press.

AUGUST 18, 1864.

☞ CASUALTIES IN THE 169TH REGIMENT. —

A letter received in this city, yesterday, contains the following list of killed and wounded in the action of August 13th:

Killed. — Lieut. Norman J. Crippen, E; Sergt. Wm. H. Shinnars, B; Joseph Corps, I; Martin Kavern, C.

Wounded. — Assistant Surgeon Austin Mandeville, arm and face, seriously; Lieut. Wm. M. Swartwout, G, arm amputated; Hospital Steward Bernard Blair, G, head, severely; Corp. Chas. L. Knox, A, face,

slightly; Jeremiah McMahon, A, severely; John Hughes, G, head, severely; Corp. Minturn Knowlton, H, thigh, severely; Michael Riley, H, side, severely; Ferdinand Stritzman, H, slightly; Ludwig Stritzman, H, head, slightly; Thos. O'Brian, I, arm, slightly; Serg. James H. Straight, K, arm, slightly; [Serg. Josiah Spaulding, B, leg and shoulder, severely](#); John Riley, C, side, severely; Geo. C. Spicer, E, side and head, severely; Corp. John McLaughlin, F, back slightly; John King, F, thigh, severely.



**Grave of Corporal Michael Delker, Co. G
New Mount Ida Cemetery, Troy, N.Y.**

Col. George L. Willard Camp #154, S.U.V.C.W., was featured in a story in the *Albany Times Union* last year for their efforts in obtaining a replacement gravestone for Corporal Michael Delker, Co. G. Corporal Delker died on June 10, 1864, from a wound to the shoulder which he suffered during the Federal assault at Cold Harbor, Va., on June 1st.

- Honors for Civil War soldier: <http://www.timesunion.com/local/article/Honors-for-Civil-War-soldier-2161921.php>

Research on the graves of soldiers from the 169th N.Y. has been going on for several years now, and I've accumulated a small yet respectable and growing collection of photographs of their gravestones so far, which are available for viewing in the following MS PowerPoint document:

- 169th N.Y.V. - Soldiers' Graves: <http://www.mediafire.com/view/?15x5hpkifecp999>

Special thanks go out to Margot Dudewicz, great-great-granddaughter of Private Samuel McBath, Co. F, for her photographs taken at Andersonville National Cemetery, and Mark Bodnar, President of the Town of Colonie Historical Society, Colonie, N.Y., for his photographs taken at Albany Rural Cemetery.

The thought has occurred to this writer that my subscribers may wish to know the identities of soldiers of whom I have been in contact with their descendents, kin, or other interested parties. Below is a list of these men who are not forgotten:

Staff and Field Officers
Brigadier-General Alonzo Alden
Colonel and Brevet Brigadier-General John McConihe
Lieutenant-Colonel and Brevet Colonel James A. Colvin
Lieutenant-Colonel William E. Kisselburgh
Co. A
Sergeant Henry A. Slack
Private William H. Bailey
Private Charles H. Manning
Private Elbert A. Prouty
Co. B
2 ^d Lieutenant Michael Holmes
Corporal Charles Madden
Private Anson B. Cranson
Private William H. Freeman
Private Otis B. Strong
Co. C
Corporal David Keller
Private William H. Crandall
Private Michael Cullen
Private Matthew D. Dwyer
Private Joseph A. Rogers
Private Green Tilley
Co. D
Sergeant Patrick Conoly
Co. E
1 st Lieutenant and Brevet Captain Edgar F. Vanderzee
Private Patrick Brennan
Private George Coon
Private Joseph Elm
Private Duncan McNeil
Co. F
Sergeant James B. Randall
Private Richard Baker
Private Samuel McBath
Private Robert McBath
Private Nathaniel W. Robinson
Private George W. Secore
Co. G
1 st Sergeant Patrick J. Aylmer
Private Frederick H. Brandt
Private Irad L. Garside
Private John Haley
Private Robert B. Leffingwell
Musician Henry R. Leffingwell

Co. H
Sergeant John Murray
Sergeant Marcus Peck
Corporal William Claxton
Corporal William F. Hakes
Private Thomas Carr
Co. I
Captain Michael Murnane
Corporal Francis A. Hope
Private Horace Avery
Private John Shaughnessy
Private Prosper Spenard
Co. K
Corporal James E. Barr
Private Stephen Aberton
Private Ernest Burnaman
Private Francis Delaire
Private James M. Shove

Cheers,

- Steve Wiezbicki

Steven M. Wiezbicki
 2733 Amber Waves Lane
 Fort Collins, CO 80528
 970.689.3526
smw107@columbia.edu
smw700@hotmail.com

http://dmna.ny.gov/historic/reghist/civil/infantry/169thInf/169thInfCWN_Wiezbicki.htm
<http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~nyrensse/169ny2.htm>