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# 169<sup>th</sup> New York Infantry Newsletter

December 2013

## The Time Traveler.

### Part VIII.

November 7<sup>th</sup>, 1863, was a banner day for the 169<sup>th</sup> N.Y., when Lieut.-Col. John McConihe was presented with a magnificent sword by Col. Clarence Buel on behalf of the citizens of Troy. Col. Buel would soon suffer a severe attack of typhoid fever which combined with the trauma from his wound at Suffolk, compelling him to resign his commission. The Gillmore medal was awarded to 18 men of the regiment for distinguished acts of bravery in front of the enemy or who had borne irreproachable names as soldiers. The year would end with the arrival in Troy of a recruiting detachment under Col. McConihe to replenish the ranks of the gallant 169<sup>th</sup>.



Presentation sword awarded to Lieutenant-Colonel John McConihe at Folly Island, South Carolina, on November 7<sup>th</sup>, 1863, by Colonel Clarence Buel on behalf of the citizens of Troy, New York  
Manufactured by Messrs. Ball & Black of New York  
Collection of the Rensselaer County Historical Society, Troy, New York

We begin our sojourn back in time to November 1<sup>st</sup>, 1863, with Priv. Theodore Schutt's report on the siege of Charleston, published in the *Troy Daily Press* on the 10<sup>th</sup>. Priv. Schutt was correct in his view that Confederate sand forts were not, as once believed, impervious to a sustained bombardment, which would be proven once again 16 months later in the U.S. naval bombardment of Fort Fisher, N.C.:



**General View of the Bombardment of Battery Gregg and Fort Wagner (September 5, 1863)**  
**William T. Crane (1830-1878)**  
**The Becker Collection, Boston College, Boston, Massachusetts**

"Sand batteries and sand forts, for the nonce, have proved, during the progress of this siege, their vast superiority over those of any other constructions ever yet tested in actual war, and hence where this material can be rendered available, it will, no doubt, henceforth be employed in the erection of field fortifications. But the assertion of Beauregard, and the loudmouthed boastings of the rebels at home, and more especially abroad, that their sand forts were utterly impregnable, and capable of standing any amount of milling, without exhibiting even external signs, to any extent, of the effects of such bombardment, have proved as false and shallow as the cause they are striving to invest with the dignity of a title; and now they can but acknowledge the humiliating fact that sand, as well as brick and mortar, has been obliged to succumb to the concentrated fire of our unapproachable Parrots. And with all their fine theories about sand forts scattered to the winds, we may look with no little degree of curiosity for the next presumptuous claim they will present to the world for superiority.



"Fort Johnson, although incapable at present of doing us any damage at long range, can neither be assaulted nor sapped and mined, for the very good reason that Johnson is on James Island, and we are all upon nearly every other Island in front of Charleston, except James; and furthermore, that any attempt to gain a permanent foothold upon that Island, with the force at present under the command of Gen. Gillmore, would prove futile. Fort Johnson will, therefore, and does, no doubt, im-



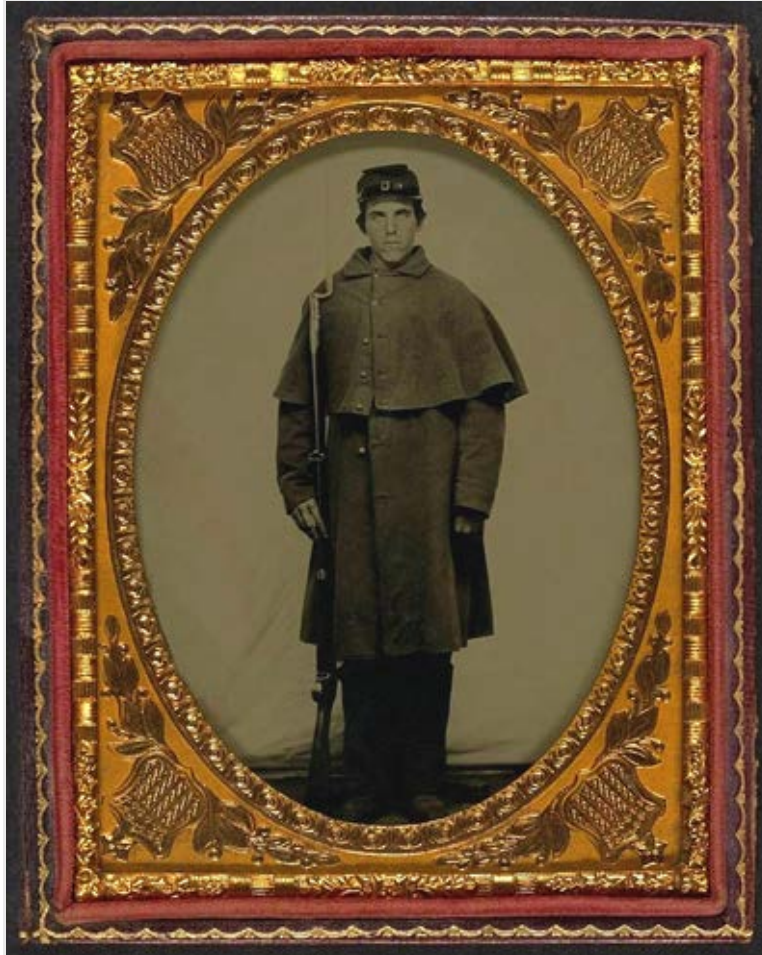
**Fort Johnson, photographed while under Confederate command. The vessel is probably the C.S.S. "Huntress" and Fort Sumter is seen in the upper left.**

prove every opportunity, day and night, to repair damages, and maintain her primitive status as a first class work, capable of annoying us to a greater or less extent, provided always that our gunners allow her to continue with impunity to make much repairs as are necessary to keep her in fighting trim. Whether the rebels can easily replace the guns they may lose, however, especially the Whitworths, is a matter of doubt, but if so it is evident that some other important point must be weakened in proportion as Johnston is strengthened.

"As for Sumter, that 'forlorn hope' of the rebellion – it is razed to the water's edge, and on Thursday night, so say persons direct from Morris Island, the enemy evacuated the ruins under cover of the darkness. Gen. Gillmore having thus effectually driven the rebels from their holes among the *débris* of Fort Sumter, will no doubt lose little or no time in erecting upon this most eligible site one or more of his most effective batteries. He will then have Sullivan's Island and its many batteries rather in his rear, his own forts and batteries of Morris Island on his left flank, and Charleston directly in front of him. Thus, Sullivan's Island will be quite incapable to the enemy except by land, while our guns, radiating at fair range to the three most vital points of the compass, can settle the question with the city of Charleston in a very short time.

"So far as my observation and knowledge extend, the navy is still doing nothing, but quietly looking on and taking notes of Gen. Gillmore's operations. With Sumter in our hands, what can possibly prevent the Monitors steaming up and taking possession of the bay I cannot define, except it be the fear of torpedoes, which have long proved to our timid Admiral a bug-bear of fearful proportions, and successfully scare him into a complacent spectator of the fight as conducted by Gen. Gillmore.

"Of Regimental matters nothing is transpiring of any particular importance. Preparations to guard against the inclemency of the coming sea-



**Union army infantry soldier wearing a U.S. regulation greatcoat**

son are still going on. New tents are being issued as fast as they can be obtained, warmer clothing, and every other article calculated to contribute in the least to our health and comfort.

"Although the Regiment is now without any Chaplain, its moral and religious element does not suffer in the least in consequence of this fact. – Col. Buel combines the essential attributes of not only a good Colonel, but a good Chaplain, when occasion demands it. Hence, the Sabbath is strictly observed so far as it can be, in the absence of all secular employments, while slated meetings are held at four o'clock, at which the Colonel conducts divine service, and if many of our regularly ordained ministers evinced so much genuine ardor and eloquence in the good cause as does our Colonel in his fervid appeals to his hearers, I doubt not the fruits of their labors would be more abundant. In view of the leading part Col. Buel has thus taken in promoting the religious welfare of his Regiment, and the example of his daily deportment among officers and men, the most salutary effects are beginning to be witnessed on all hands. Many who have never pretended to even respect the common claims which the gospel had upon them, are now quite regular attendants of the Sunday service, and in other ways evinces an awakened interest in their spiritual welfare. May the good work prosper.

"Heavy cannonading is still heard on Morris Island to-day. Important results may have been attained ere this reaches you, of which I hope to be able to speak in my next letter."



**Fort Sumter, Interior, Sunrise (December 9, 1864)**  
**Conrad Wise Chapman (1842-1910)**  
Collection of the Museum of the Confederacy, Richmond, Virginia

In an interesting story from the New York *Herald*, published by the Troy *Daily Times* on the 5<sup>th</sup>, describing the tactical advantages now held by Union forces at Charleston, Fort Sumter was likened to "the ruins of some old Moorish castle, which the busy fingers of time have gradually leveled to the earth":

"The batteries now pounding the fractured walls of Sumter are not those that began the work of destruction and left the gorge wall a mass of ruins some weeks since, but are new ones, constructed since we gained possession of Fort Wagner and Battery Gregg. It will not be regarded as contraband to state that General Gillmore has availed himself of the rebel works which fell into our hands to cover his men and guns and to turn them to his own use. Both Wagner and Gregg are now so altered and changed that they have become as valuable to us for offensive purposes as they were as defenses to the rebels. The faces of the works have been turned, and the people of Charleston and the garrisons of James and Sullivan's islands may now look into the mouths of our guns without the least trouble if they are curiously inclined. Beauregard would hardly recognize the batteries now, either as to their outline or armament. The old capacious bomb-proofs might be found affording better protection to Union soldiers than they did to the rebel garrisons, and in every way would that chieftain discover the improving touch of our engineers' skillful hands. Besides the rebel works, new ones have been constructed, which are practically as strong. In these are armaments such as the world never saw, and with which we may hold Charleston at our mercy. Time alone can develop their capabilities, and we can afford to await its revelations.

"This afternoon, the southwest face of Fort Sumter presents an appearance of demolition and ruin which promises the best results with twenty-four hours' more firing. At the corner, or angle, where the southwest face joins the gorge wall, a portion of the parapet still stands, though in a shattered and dilapidated condition. From that point to the



Scene of Fort Sumter before the war, from "Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter" (2012)  
Directed by Timur Bekmambetov

other angle, at the junction of the southeast and the channel faces, the parapet is entirely gone. The arches, with one or two exceptions, are entirely crushed in; the piers are knocked to pieces, and the top of the wall extends no higher, in places, than the second line of casemates. The line of ruins extends in a curve from the parapet of the gorge angle to within twenty feet of the base of the centre of the southeast face, and then gradually ascends in an irregular way, to the fragment of the parapet that stands like a small watch tower at the channel angle. The fort now resembles, at a distance, the ruins of some old Moorish castle, which the busy fingers of time have gradually leveled to the earth, leaving here and there its bastions to tower aloft, only to show how imposing and magnificent must have been the original structure when intact and unimpaired in all its parts. It is sad to contemplate the ruins of that compact and imposing work which once grandly lorded it over Charleston harbor, and frowned with its hundred guns upon foreign foes, holding the gates of the city securely under its ordnance, and threatening destruction and death to all hostile comers. It is now a mass of ruins, with the tattered, dirty rebel flag floating from a shattered rammer staff, on an obscure bastion, without a gun beneath it to utter defiance or repel a foe. The fort is but a symbol of the Confederacy. The veil hiding the shattered walls of the latter is not yet torn entirely away, but we have had glimpses of its cracked and crumbling walls, and shall yet see it tumble to the earth, as Fort Sumter now tumbles – an irregular pile of ruins.

"The rebels have continued to fire upon Morris Island, and since the commencement of the bombardment, have redoubled in intensity. The batteries near Fort Johnson and in the fort itself keep up a tolerably hot fire upon Gregg and Wagner, and Moultrie and Bee are not silent. *Not a single casualty has occurred from the enemy's fire since the bombardment began.* Our troops are so well-protected by their covers that they now feel perfectly safe, fire as hot as the rebels may. What their losses are we have no means of knowing; but probably they are not large, as our fire is directed mainly against Sumter."

The *Daily Times* article continued with a description from a correspondent of the *New-York Times* of a new magazine discovered at Fort Wagner:



Soldiers of the 54<sup>th</sup> Mass. in front of a bombproof at Fort Wagner following its capture (ca. September 7, 1863)

"On Sunday last, while Capt. Eaton, of the volunteer engineers, was examining the southeastern portion of Fort Wagner, preparatory to designing some alterations, he discovered a magazine, which until then had escaped the notice of any of our men. The magazine is located directly beneath the left bastion of the fort, in the form of a pit, and is reached by means of a stationary ladder. When found, its roof was covered with eight feet of sand, supposed to have been heaped up by shells thrown from our batteries. It contained an immense amount of ammunition, including cannon projectiles and prepared charges for rifled muskets. There was also stored away a vast quantity of a peculiar kind of incendiary shell, the combustible substance, other than the powder, consisting of a fluid which was readily ignited and burned with an unquenchable flame. To what use the rebels intended to apply them does not seem apparent, unless it was to fire the wooden vessels of the fleet. A portion of one side of the magazine was occupied with shelves containing several thousand sand-bags made from very white and strong material. Perhaps one and the chief cause of the rebels so precipitately evacuating the fort, was the fact of the sap building by the engineers heading directly for this magazine, which it would have penetrated if the workmen had been allowed to continue their labor one night more. A careful search was made for a fuse connecting the magazine with the outside world, but strange to relate, none could be found, which affords one instance at any rate, where the enemy abandoned his diabolical plan of murdering his adversary, who in legitimate warfare proved too much for him."

Wagoner Robert Whitcomb, Co. D, citing a shortage of New York papers at Folly Island in a letter to his parents on the 3<sup>d</sup>, complained he was fairly uninformed as far as the latest siege operations at Charleston were concerned:

"Father, there is no news here, only they keep firing all the time and we don't know what it amounts to until we get a New York paper. I suppose it don't look very reasonable to you that we could be in sight of



**A Veteran on Furlough**  
Published in "Harper's Weekly" (February 6<sup>th</sup>, 1864)

the works and not know anything about it, but it is so. There was a charge made on Sumter last Saturday night in which our folks got repulsed, but our regiment knew nothing of it until we got the New York papers.

"Father, I think I shall be home before long, and when I come I can tell you some war stories that will make your hair stand up. The chances are that we shan't move from here this winter, for it is a long, tedious job that we have got on hand here. But I guess we will fetch them after awhile.

"Father, when I am out riding on the beach or in my office writing, or any other place, I am thinking of the day that I bid you all farewell. To-night I am here in my tent, all alone, but I hope to soon be in Sandy Hill again. Our time is passing off slowly and if I have good health and good luck, I shall see you all again someday.

I get along very well and so does brother [Serg't. George M. Whitcomb, Co. D]. We are both very fleshy for us. I weigh most as much as I did a year ago, and I have been down to 140 pounds this summer and now it is 160. But I expect to reach 180 this winter if we don't get where there is any women. I haven't seen one in over three months and I hope I never shall until I can see a New York State woman.

"Father, I was telling George to-night at supper that it would be a joke if I should be home to help father kill hogs this fall, and he laughed and said he thought so, too. But my chances are good now, but don't look for me until I get there.

"I sit here as unconcerned as if I was in some village church, while within my sight the cannons are roaring and sending forth their deadly missiles. And it sounds like the Fourth of July, but we have got so used to them that we don't mind them now.

"I would like to know how you voted to-day. I hope it was not copper."

Robert was referring to the Copperheads, a vocal group of Democrats in the North who opposed the Civil War, wanting an immediate peace settlement with the





**Bronze Civil War memorial plaque (dedicated August, 1930)  
William Gordon Huff (1903-1993)  
Bennington Museum, Bennington, Vermont**

Confederates. Republicans started calling anti-war Democrats "Copperheads," likening them to the rattlesnake. The Peace Democrats accepted the label, but for them the copper "head" was the likeness of Liberty, which they cut from copper pennies and proudly wore as badges.

In his letter on the 3<sup>d</sup>, Corp. Alfred C. Carmon, Co. H, voiced the same thoughts to his sister as did Priv. Whitcomb, among other things:

"I received your kind letter that you sent by mail last night while we were out on picket, and the one that you sent by Vandersee on Sunday [1<sup>st</sup> Serg't. Edgar Vanderzee, Co. H]. In your letter that you sent by mail, you asked where Harm Joshlin was [Private Harmon Joslin, Co. H]. He is with the regiment now, and I guess that he will get his discharge before a great while. His discharge has gone to headquarters for approval and the doctor tells him that he will get his discharge. You said that his folks had not heard from him in a great while. Harm has not had a letter from home in three or four months, until Vanderzee brought one down for him.

"I had to stop writing last night to go on dress parade, so I did not have time to finish my letter, so I will finish it this morning. The weather is quite warm down here yet, but the nights are getting to be quite cool. There is nothing of any importance going on down here at present. I suppose that General Gillmore is getting ready for operations as fast as possible, but I don't think that he is in any great hurry.

"I never had better health than at present. I don't suppose that I can finish the letter this morning, for we have got to go on drill before a great while, but I will finish my letter as soon as we get through drill.

"We have got through drill at last. You spoke about those pants. It would be of no use to save them, for I could not get them on if I was home now, so do just what you want to with them. Speaking about girls makes me wish that I could see some – Sand Lake girls especially! There is only one girl around here that I know of, and that is a wench



that is a cook up at the 112<sup>th</sup> N.Y., so you can imagine how lonesome it is down here.

"There is nothing going on down here and we can't get any papers – only once in a great while. So all that we have to amuse us is drills and dress parades. It is not so very sickly down here now. Most of them that are sick were sick when they came on the island. There is not near as many sick as there were some time ago. There has not a man died in our regiment in over a month.

"I haven't heard anything about Dick Horton or Ben Bentley going home on a furlough, [Serg't. Richard J. Horton and Corp. Benjamin F. Bentley, Co. H], but I expect that there will be someone out of our company that will be going home before a great while, but when, I don't know.

"I don't know whether I could get anymore to eat than my rations, but I am getting a little flesh now. When we came on this island I was pretty poor as to what I was when we were in Suffolk. When we came here, I did not weigh only 130. Now I weigh about 160, so I think that I can stand it, as our duty is not near as hard as it used to be. We don't have to lay out anymore of nights, nor go to Morris Island. We have not had to go to Morris Island in over a month.

"Tell Hellie [Helen Carmon] that she can send me a Bible if she wants to, for I haven't any now. I lost mine when we were up on the Peninsula, and haven't had any since, nor I don't know where I could get any down here.

"We haven't got any chaplain now. [Chaplain Joel W. Eaton] left the regiment about two months ago, but he wasn't good for anything when he was here, so I don't think that it was a very great loss when he went away, for he did not know enough to preach a sermon. So he had a book of sermons which he used to read out of, perhaps once in two weeks, and sometimes, not once a month.

"Our band has got so that they can play pretty good, but there is a gay old band at Gillmore's headquarters. They can beat any band that I have heard since I have been in the service!"

Alfred's criticism of Rev. Eaton would seem to be unfair, since the chaplain lost his health at Folly Island and was discharged for disability on August 20, 1863. Rev. Eaton was educated at the Bakersfield Academy in Vermont and the School of Theology at Boston University, and was a minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Rutland, Vt., before joining the Troy Methodist Conference in 1857. He received his Doctorate in Theology from Wesleyan University in 1881 and served for twenty-six years. Rev. Eaton was presiding elder of the Cambridge, Albany, and Plattsburg districts, and was pastor of Ashgrove Methodist Episcopal Church in Albany at the time of his death in 1912.



**Rev. Joel W. Eaton, one of the oldest and best-known members of the Troy Methodist Conference by the time of his death**

Col. McConihe, expressing his feelings of fatigue with the military, described the regiment's camp routine to his friend John Newton in a letter on the 4<sup>th</sup>:

"Yours of the 18<sup>th</sup> September came some time ago, and yours of the 17<sup>th</sup> ult. came this morning. Mrs. Newton's letter of the 11<sup>th</sup> ult. also remains unanswered, but assure your good wife and be assured yourself that the writing mood will soon again seize upon me, and I shall inflict on you, two good souls, long dissertations upon the sere and yellow leaf of time and life, and my extreme proneness to have the dumps will pass off, just like Mrs. Newton's. At times I get awfully sick of the military and wish I had an hour, a day, a week, and a month, all my own, and beyond the reach of General Orders No. ~ ; a month wherein I could be free and wander about as I wished. Then again, I would not ask to be relieved, and I could not get away at this time, without interfering with the plans of the colonel, who goes north about the 20<sup>th</sup> to marry a Miss Laura Davis of Burnt Hills, Saratoga County. The major is detached and in command at Pawnee Landing, and thus I cannot get away.

"So I am determined to be contented, to await my time and not think of anything but the most comfortable way to pass the hours on this sandy, ocean-bound island. I enjoy my comfortable quarters, and am almost praying for the rainy season, (think of a soldier out-of-doors, praying for a rainy season in such beautiful weather as this), in order that I may occupy my tent and not be called out every few hours to



**Camp sentry, Rappahannock Station, Va. (January 18, 1864)**

**Edwin Austin Forbes (1839-1895)**

**Collection of the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.**

drill, to inspect, to superintend, and to attend to the thousand and one sunshiny duties. But, alas, John, how cruel to wish this – to wish for rain to soak the lonely picket-guard or the thousands of soldiers, daily and nightly, rain or sunshine, cold or hot, exposed and on duty – I don't wish it, John. This is most beautiful weather – no wind; the sun shines warmly, the atmosphere is as warm as a Northern summer, the trees are covered with an everlasting green, with but a sprinkling of autumn's



U.S. military ambulance traversing Folly Island, South Carolina (ca. July or August, 1863)

brilliant colors as now seen at the North; indeed, the greenness of the deep green magnolia tree and of the fantastic, lighter green of the palmetto, looks more pleasing, more inviting, more charming, than when the burning rays of a midsummer's sun pour upon these sands.

The weather *Rasselas* descanted [discussed at length], in ecstasies about in the happy valley, could not compare with an October day upon the beach, close to the trees, on this, Folly Island.\* All nature is serene, but Man makes this glorious panorama a perfect pandemonium of noises. Numerous guns are, (have been for a week), belching away constantly, startling the ear with their continuous roll of artillery thunder; buglers are sounding round about in the contiguous artillery camps; General Gillmore's band is plainly within reach, both when they play for delectation and when they practice for (my) detestation; our band plays and practices; our drum corps (12 drums in terribly good, noisy order) startle the camp from its repose by *Mary Over the Water*, and other drum corps are heard near and far; one playing *When this Cruel War is Over*; another, *John Brown*; and in the distance, the rub-a-dub-dub of a distant drummer. So daylight is received in camp, and all day long the instruments, drums, and bugles are sounding continuously, and occasionally all at a time.

"At 4 A.M. we are called; at 6 A.M. the drums sound reveille; at 7 our bugler sounds the breakfast call; at 7½ he sounds the surgeon's call; at 8 the drums sound guard-mounting; at 9 the drums beat company drill, at 12 the bugle announces dinner; during the afternoon, according to the tide, the drums call to battalion drill; at 5 P.M. dress parade, after which the bugle sounds supper; at 7 P.M., (three times a week), it blows 'officers' recitations;' then at 8 is heard the tattoo on drums; and at 8:30 P.M. the bugle gaily says, "put out the lights and go to bed." But, John,

[Note: \*A reference to *The History of Rasselas, Prince of Abissinia* (1759) by Samuel Johnson.]



**Sounding Reveille (1865)**  
**Winslow Homer (1836-1910)**

**Collection of the Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum, New York**

what are all these noises to you, one who quietly moves about his business without the flourish of trumpets or the beating of drums, and who in his leisure moments (for you, not I,) have such quiet ways that you can say 'but the beating of my own heart was the only sound I heard.'

"Ah, what would we not give if the Temple of Janus enclosed in its sealed gates all trumpets, drums, and implements of war! I believe I would 'file' away even that magnificent testimonial sword which my friends in Troy have sent me and which is daily expected. Yes, peace established, I would sheath my sword smartly and lay it aside for others, (for my children, if I should ever have any), to wear, besides myself. I do not believe I should care to look upon myself, done up in oil, with martial air, breathed on canvas, as you so elegantly (should I say facetiously?) describe me in your last letter. No, John, I should rather desire to see my plain portrait, clothed in 'John Chinaman' garments, the position not of a warrior 'charging even at the cannon's mouth,' but in a sitting posture, (at ease, feet on railing of back porch at No. 67 McFarland Street), with, (instead of that elegant sword, suspended beneath the picture), the veritable John M. Newton, painted on the canvas (smoking his pipe, book in hand, not reading, but eyes wandering among the leaves of the grape vine, piercing even to the slender wire,) and nearby, Mrs. Newton, broom in hand, sweeping off from the said porch a poor fly, who in passing from the parlor to the yard, had been choked to death by one of those meditative, overwhelming puffs from Mr. Newton's pipe. Mrs. Newton should have on a spotless white apron, as well as a big disgust, because that poor fly did not survive long enough to have dropped elsewhere than on her cleanly-swept porch.



Niagara Falls (1857)  
 Frederic Edwin Church (1826-1900)  
 Collection of the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

"Now don't you think that would make a pretty picture, prettier than that which you suggest? Such a scene would sensate the artistical world; it would excel Church's painting of *Niagara* in lofty grandeur; it would combine the most truthful and pleasing scenes of this 'terrible' war; *a wounded soldier* – arm in sling – devoid of martial appearance, sitting beside a literary, happy, pensive, smoking husband with a neat, tidy, cheerful, merry-looking wife, moving about in search of a bit of soot. Oh what a painting that would be! The very names I have mentioned would immortalize any canvas; but the figures, so painted, our portraits, so comfortable, so contented, (how they would *draw*, or rather, *paint!*) *'Young America'* (man and wife) 'during the great rebellion of '61, '62, '63, &c.:' what a *title* for a painting, and who will get up this domestic and warlike scene for us? What say you?

"I wish you both could look in upon us on the occasion of the presentation of that sword, which is expected to-morrow. *A John* was the prime mover in it [John B. Kellogg], and it is said to be a magnificent testimonial worthy of the donors – too grand for the recipient. Many in the regiment, (home on furlough), have seen it and pronounce it very beautiful, and as costing over \$400. It is a real costly testimonial from John, Tim, Mose, Frank, Rufus, Martin I., and others."

Col. McConihe's friends in Troy, including John L. Flagg, Timothy S. Banker, Moses Warren, Franklin J. Parmenter, Rufus M. Townsend, and Martin I. Townsend, all members of the Rensselaer County Bar, were major donors behind the gift of his presentation sword. The suggestion of a painting depicting him with his sword appeared in a letter from John Newton on October 17<sup>th</sup>:

"Yours of the 6<sup>th</sup> inst. has just arrived, together with a Troy paper containing an account of your Presentation Sword. The thought immediately occurred to me that John Kellogg had a hand in that gift. I shouldn't wonder if he started the idea. I suppose after awhile, when you return from the war, you will have your picture painted – you standing in the foreground, waving that same sword, striding on over bloody corpses, right into the mouth of a cannon belching forth flame and iron, while behind you at a long distance, 'comes the long line, gleaming on' of fiery patriots of lesser military rank! The portrait should



**John Marshall Newton**

be full-length and, of course, owing to the very high ceilings of present days, there will yet be room to hang the blade under it. I would do that, John, and in the meantime, while you are in the midst of such bloody scenes, you can arrange in your own mind a very effective tableau. I will, at anytime you call upon me, give you my assistance!"

The *Daily Times* first reported on the acquisition of the presentation sword in an article on September 24<sup>th</sup>: "An elegant sword, one of the most magnificent we ever saw, has just been procured for Lieut.-Col. John McConihe, of the One Hundred and Sixty-ninth Regiment, by his friends in Troy. It will be on exhibition in Cusack's window for a short time. It is in exceedingly good taste – the hilt of solid silver, set with jewels, contrasting finely with the gold scabbard. It is appropriately inscribed, and will no doubt be highly prized by its recipient. We believe it cost nearly four hundred dollars." The *Daily Press* provided additional details in an article on the 26<sup>th</sup>:

"A MAGNIFICENT TESTIMONIAL TO LIEUT.-COL. JOHN McCONIHE. – One of the most beautiful as well as costly testimonials ever presented to a military officer in this section of the State, is about to be forwarded to our gallant fellow townsman, Lieutenant-Colonel JOHN McCONIHE, of the One Hundred and Sixty-ninth regiment. It consists of an elaborately wrought Sword and scabbards, with Passants, straps, belts, &c., all of which were gotten up regardless of expense. – The testimonial is from the friends and admirers of the gentleman in this city, and it is as creditable to them as it is complimentary to him for whom it is intended. The hilt is of solid silver, while the principal scabbard (there are two – one for parade and the other for field use) is decorated with





twenty-three jewels, all neatly and substantially set. The blade is of the finest make, and is also beautifully decorated. The Passants, Belts, &c., are of the most substantial and beautiful manufacture. The entire outfit is arranged in a handsome rosewood case.

"On the Sword is the following inscription:

PRESENTED TO LIEUT.-COL. JOHN McCONIHE, 169<sup>th</sup>  
Regiment N. Y. S. V., by Citizens of Troy,  
N. Y., (his native place,) as a token of their  
personal esteem, and of their high apprecia-  
tion of his gallantry, and Military ability,  
as displayed throughout the campaigns  
in Missouri, in 1861. On the bloody  
field of Shiloah, Tenn., where he  
was seriously wounded, April 7,  
1862; In the action of the  
Edenton Road, Va., April  
24, 1863, and at the  
siege of Charleston, S.  
C., during the Sum-  
mer and Fall of  
1863.

"On the reverse are the words addressed by Lieut.-Col. McC. (then Captain) to his company at the battle of Shiloah:

"COME ON BOYS."  
"SHILOAH,"  
"APRIL 7, 1862."

"The testimonial will be forwarded to Folly Island, in a few days. Its entire cost is about four hundred dollars."

Accounts of the presentation ceremonies were reported by New York City newspapers in addition to the three major daily papers in Troy. We begin with a letter, presented in its entirety, from Priv. Schutt, published by the *Daily Press*:

## The Troy Daily Press.

NOVEMBER 16, 1863.

### Interesting Letter from the One Hundred and Sixty-Ninth – Presentation of the Sword to Lieutenant-Colonel McConihe.

CAMP 169<sup>th</sup> REGIMENT,  
FOLLY ISLAND, NEAR CHARLESTON, S. C.,  
Nov. 11<sup>th</sup>, 1863.

#### AN AGREEABLE INCIDENT – HONOR TO THE BRAVE.

*Editors Daily Press:*

One of the most agreeable incidents in the history of this regiment occurred on Saturday, 7<sup>th</sup> inst. It was one, too, that will be cherished in the memory of every member of the 169<sup>th</sup> with feelings of just pride, in view of the substantial tribute of honor it paid to one of our commanding officers. It was the occasion of a sword presentation, in which Lieut.-Col. John McConihe bore the conspicuous honor of being the recipient. The presentation speech was made by Col. Buel, and was a most happy effort, eliciting the spontaneous plaudits of the highly distinguished auditory present.

#### THE HOUR FOR THE PRESENTATION.

was fixed at four o'clock, P.M., after the regiment had been drawn up in line for dress parade. Accordingly, at that hour the line was formed, as usual, with the regimental band of the 103<sup>d</sup> N. Y. V. resting on the right, whose services had been secured for the occasion, from the fact that our own band is at present without a leader, and is hardly up to the standard once accorded it for excellence while the regiment was quartered at Washington.

#### APPEARANCE OF THE REGIMENT.

The line, as thus formed, with the men at support arms, presented a splendid appearance, and must have made a most favorable impression upon the minds of the high military notables who honored the occasion with their presence. Cols. Buel and McConihe soon made their appearance upon the ground, accompanied by some fifty or more invited and voluntary guests and spectators.

#### THE SWORD,

shrined in a handsome black walnut case, was borne by a guard of honor, consisting of a Sergeant and four privates, detailed from the ranks of Company A for that purpose, who took position with their valuable charge upon the right of the regiment until the command "In place, rest," was given by Col. Buel, when they advanced and took position on the Colonel's right, and awaited the given moment to deliver the magnificent gift into the hands for which it was intended. As the sword has already been minutely described by the Troy PRESS, it would be useless to essay a description at this time.



**Full-length rear view of standing officer (ca. 1861-'65)  
Alfred Rudolph Waud (1828-1891)  
Collection of the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.**

Col. Buel at once took his position in front of the regiment, which, after the order of "Guide post," was brought to the position of open order by Acting Adjutant Clark Smith, when the

#### **PRESENTATION CEREMONY**

was immediately commenced, Col. McConihe taking his position in front of Col. Buel, and with uncovered head, listened with feelings of lively interest and evident emotion, to the reading of the letter accompanying the sword, and the eloquent speech of our Colonel.

#### **THE LETTER,**

which contains over one hundred signatures, comprising the names of our most eminent citizens at home, is as follows:

TROY, N. Y., Oct. 10, 1863.

LIEUT.-COL. JOHN MCCONIHE –

DEAR SIR – You will please accept from us, your fellow townsmen, the sword, sash, belt, and passants accompanying this letter, as a token of our personal friendship and esteem; of our admiration of your noble qualities, both of the head and heart; of our appreciation of your fortitude and endurance, as displayed in the long and fatiguing marches during the campaign in Missouri in 1861; of the alacrity with which you left a sick bed to participate in the bloody field of Shiloh, of your courage and ability, as displayed on that fiercely contested field, where you were severely wounded; and of those continual evidences of courage and high military capacity, evinced by you at the action on the Edenton Road, and during the pending siege of Charleston.

We trust this sword to you, feeling confident that it will never be drawn in an unjust cause, and that it will never be sheathed until the glory and power of our country shall be fully vindicated in this contest for the suppression of an unholy rebellion.

Yours very sincerely, &c.

### **SPEECH OF COL. BUEL.**

The presentation speech of Col. Buel was as follows, and prompted demonstrative marks of approbation from the highly enlightened and patriotic auditors in attendance:

LIEUT.-COL. MCCONIHE – SIR: – The agreeable duty has been assigned to me of confiding to you on behalf of your fellow-townsmen, a most elegant testimonial of their friendship and esteem for yourself personally, and of their admiration of your high soldierly qualities; and I accept the trust with more unalloyed satisfaction, for the reason that my close association with you in duty for more than a year past, has assured me that you are well worthy of this noble tribute, and of the gratifying sentiments with which it is accompanied.

This beautiful sword, with its accompanying insignia, are the spontaneous offering of your friends and fellow townsmen of Troy, New York, your native city where your character and services are best known and appreciated, and where your career is watched with most cordial interest and friendly pride. And here, in passing, I may be allowed to say that it is a peculiar honor to be the recipient of any meritorious token from the citizens of Troy, a city of which it is only a modest encomium to say that it has been surpassed by none other, in the proportion of men and means which it has contributed to the country during the existing rebellion – a city from which no less than five complete regiments have gone forth since the commencement of the war, and which must have sent almost an equal number in the way of recruits to these and other regiments in the field, and one, which, alone in the State of New York, has, by voluntary enlistments, obtained a total exemption from the operation of the recent draft.

The letter which accompanies this splendid testimonial, is signed by more than a hundred names, among which I recognize those of many of the oldest, most honorable and influential citizens of Troy. And when you take home to your heart the sentiments which that letter expresses, you will, I know, cherish it as a treasure not even secondary to the elegant token which it so fittingly accompanies.

With your permission, I will read it, not only as expressing the most gratifying sentiments on the part of the donors, but as affording the most appropriate terms in which I can discharge the grateful duty they have assigned to me: (Here Col. Buel read the letter.)

And here, sir, I might very well bring my remarks to a close, for I can add nothing to the appropriateness of the language I have just read. You will allow me to say, however, that the feelings it breathes forth are cordially shared by myself, and by the officers and men of the regiment in which you hold an honorable command.

It is surely unnecessary to direct attention to the beauty and exquisite finish of the sword itself, or to the elegance and completeness of the insignia with which it is accompanied. They speak for themselves, and are all as they should be –



**Reenactment of the Battle of Shiloh at Michie, Tennessee (2012)**

chaste, elegant and substantial – alike fitted to shine in the gay tournament and to do good service on the field of glory – the useful and the beautiful harmoniously blended in the form most agreeable to the eye of the soldier. Its inscriptions, too, are equally appropriate – one of them your own cheering cry to your brave men on the bloody battle field of Shiloh, "Come on boys!" and the residue a modest mention of some of your services during the past three years.

And now, sir, I present to you, in the names and on the behalf of the donors, your former fellow townsmen, this magnificent sword and these elegant trappings, adding, in conclusion, a single sentiment taken from one of the choicest gems of poetry, which I heartily apply to the sword now entrusted to your keeping:

The sword – a name of dread; yet when  
 Upon the Freeman's thigh 'tis bound –  
 While for his altar and his hearth,  
 While for the land that gave him birth,  
 The War drums roll, the trumpets sound,  
 How sacred is it then!"

\* \* \* \* \*

Whenever for the truth and right  
 It flashes in the van of fight.

\* \* \* \* \*

Still, where'er the battle cry  
 Is Liberty – when men do stand  
 For justice and their native land.  
 Then Heaven bless the SWORD!



An officer of infantry, U. S. V. (ca. 1862-'64)  
Edwin Austin Forbes (1839-1895)  
Collection of the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

#### **LIEUT.-COL. McCONIHE'S RESPONSE.**

*Colonel and Fellow Soldiers.* – I am indeed overwhelmed at the reception of this magnificent testimonial in recognition of my humble services, freely rendered in the cause of my country since the outbreak of this rebellion. I have not adequate speech to properly express my great gratitude for this mark of esteem from my friends at home. – Through you, sir, I thank them; and here, in the presence of this assembled concourse of our Republic's Defenders, with my hand upon this jeweled hilt, I pledge myself, I swear, never to draw my sword but to uphold the glorious fabric of our Government, as handed down to us by our fathers, and never to sheath it, so long as my country accepts my services, and until this war discloses an honorable peace, based upon free institutions, reunited sovereignties, and an entirety of States. – Although, sir, I would much prefer to grasp the hand of friendship in my native city, yet this generous gift of those whose familiar names you have just read, many of whom have been my intimate associates through life, and all of whom I have delighted to esteem and honor, points to another duty. Such incidents as this in a soldier's life, nerve and cheer him in his many trials, and I acknowledge to a sense of pride at being the recipient of so proud and generous a testimonial. It shall be my only aim to preserve its bright blade unsullied, and I trust my course in the future, as in the

past, will receive the approbation and sanction of its generous donors and my friends generally.

I cannot conclude these few remarks of appreciative gratitude without expressing my unfaltering belief in the complete preservation of this Union, and an honorable and successful termination of the war. Last Spring, while this regiment was doing duty in the city of Washington, I often had occasion to admire the stateliness and grandeur of the Capitol Buildings. As I looked upon the magnificent proportions of the unfinished dome surmounting that house of marble, alive with busy artisans working the massive blocks of marble, piece by piece, to its completion, while the corridors and halls below were swarming with the wisdom of the Republic, assembled and engaged in devising means to carry on the war and preserve the life of the Republic, I felt reassured of the completion of our liberties and the preservation of our country. You, my fellow soldiers, are the artisans at work upon the dome of our country's liberties, and beneath that starry banner your valiant arms shall cement these States, State by State, until the fabric of our Government shall spread over all our people the mantle of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

At the conclusion of this most happy response, Lieut.-Col. McConihe assumed his position as commander of the regiment (as I stated in my previous letter, Col. Buel being temporarily detached as presiding officer of a General Court Martial,) having, however, first donned the sword and its appurtenances, when the ceremonies of the Dress Parade were concluded, the 103<sup>d</sup> performing its *role* most admirably, discoursing euphony of the first order, and to which hundreds of grateful ears listened, as with martial step it marched down and up the line.

#### **THE DISTINGUISHED PERSONAGES PRESENT.**

Among the distinguished officers who honored the occasion with their presence, I noticed the following: Brig.-Gen. Vogdes, commanding Division, and north end of Folly Island; Brig.-Gen. Foster, commanding Brigade; Brig.-Gen. John W. Turner, Gen. Gillmore's Chief of Staff; Act. Brig.-Gen. L. H. S. Fairchild, 89<sup>th</sup> N. Y. V., and their brilliant staff; Col. C. J. Dobbs, and Lieut.-Col. Wilson, 13<sup>th</sup> Ind.; Capt. McHenry, A. A. Gen. Vogdes' staff; Capt. P. A. Davis, A. A. Gen. Foster's staff, and many others, to your correspondent unknown.

The press was represented by Osbern and Lawyer, of the N. Y. *Herald*; Whitmore, of the N. Y. *Times*; Crane, (artist), of Frank Leslie's *Illustrated*, and Shepard, of the N. Y. *Tribune*.

#### **GOOD CHEER AND GOOD FEELING.**

Immediately after the dismissal of the parade, such of the officers and spectators as felt inclined, adjourned to Lieut.-Col. McConihe's quarters, where the best of good cheer had been provided for all who chose to partake of the Colonel's liberal hospitalities and eminent good feeling, and the interchange of friendly sentiment characterized the evening's intercourse.

#### **THE EXCELLENT BAND**

of the 103<sup>d</sup> in the meantime collected in front of the Colonel's quarters, and gave full scope to their talent as first-class musicians, keeping the whole regiment, as well as large bodies of eager listeners from other regiments, spellbound, as it were, for an hour and a half.

#### **THE PRIVATES NOT FORGOTTEN.**

During the evening whiskey rations were issued to all hands, and cheers for the Lieut.-Colonel, as well as the Colonel, were given on every side.



**Moonlit Seascape (1891)**  
**Thomas Moran (1837-1926)**  
**Private Collection**

### **ENTHUSIASM AND SONG-SINGING.**

Enthusiasm and the best of feeling prevailed, throughout the regiment. Song-singing, cheering, and other demonstrations of an enthusiastic character, were indulged in until "tap," when the camp again assumed its garb of wonted quiet.

### **THE OCCASION**

was one long to be remembered by all who witnessed the presentation, and more especially by the officers and privates of the 169<sup>th</sup>.

### **THE BOMBARDMENT.**

The bombardment of Sumter and the other Rebel works still continues. Little progress is being made, however. I hope to have something to chronicle in the way of news in my next letter.

Yours, truly,

T. S.

The *Daily Press* published the following remarks about Priv. Schutt's letter the next day: "Our exceedingly interesting and well-written letter from the One Hundred and Sixty-ninth Regiment, published yesterday, met with a large sale. Our correspondent, 'T. S.,' promises to keep us well-posted on regimental mail."

We next proceed with a description of the presentation ceremonies from Capt. Nathaniel C. Wood, Co. B, also in its entirety, published in the *Troy Daily Whig*:

## **The Troy Daily Whig.**

NOVEMBER 17, 1863.

☞ **THE ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTY-NINTH BEFORE CHARLESTON.** - The following is from our correspondent:





ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTY-NINTH REGIMENT,  
FOLLY ISLAND, S. C., NOV. 7.

The arrival of Lieut.-Col. McConihe's sword, belt, sash and passants, and the presentation – events largely looked for by us all, – have just transpired. They were received at headquarters during last evening, and, as news of all kinds (except a news-paper) travels fast, in the army, everybody soon learned the fact, and was on the "tip toe of expectation," in which unnatural position they remained until the afternoon of to-day, when the presentation took place, in the presence of the regiment, and the most imposing and largest assembly of press attachés and military dignitaries ever gathered together on the island. Nature was in her most gracious humor. The sea was calm, and all its clear depths seemed paved with azure, and studded with soft-hued jewels; so clearly reflected was heaven's blue enamel, with its massive clouds of pearl. The winds slumbered and only their wakeful children – the breezes – played about – the rough trunk and sharp spikes of the palmetto looked less stubborn and defiant than usual, and I verily believe the magnolias would have bloomed, had timely notice been given them. In other words, everybody, from the proud possessor of the star, to the humblest "private in the rear rank," was in the best of spirits.

The regiment, at "parade rest," seemed a line of statues. Each brass had been polished by a careful hand, the accoutrements outshone varnished leather; and the barrel of each musket gleamed like burnished silver in the sunlight. The crest directly in our front, crowded with distinguished spectators, the insignia of rank glistening from manly shoulders, gay uniforms and shapely figures, faces "bearded like a pard," and browned by exposure, – formed a most striking picture, with the blue expanse of ocean in perspective.

Col. Buel, taking his position in front of this group, addressed the Lieut.-Colonel in the following words:

*Lieut.-Col. McConihe* – Sir: The agreeable duty has been assigned to me of confiding to you, on behalf of your fellow-townsmen, a most elegant testimonial of their friendship and esteem for yourself personally, and of their admiration of your high soldierly qualities; and I accept the trust, with more unalloyed satisfaction, for the reason that my close association with you in duty, for more than a year past, has assured me that you are well worthy of this noble tribute, and of the gratifying sentiments with which it is accompanied. This beautiful sword, with its accompanying insignia, is the spontaneous offering of your friends and fellow townsmen of Troy, N. Y. – your native city,

where your character and services are best known and appreciated, and where your course is watched with most cordial interest and friendly pride. And here, in passing, I may be allowed to say that it is a peculiar honor to be the recipient of any meritorious token from the citizens of Troy, a city of which it is only a modest encomium to say that it has been surpassed by none other, in the proportion of men and means which it has contributed to the country during the existing rebellion; a city from which no less than five complete regiments have gone forth since the commencement of the war, and which must have sent almost an equal number in the way of recruits to these and other regiments in the field, and one, which, alone in the State of New York, has, by voluntary enlistments, obtained a total exemption from the operation of the recent draft. – The letter which accompanies this splendid testimonial, is signed by more than a hundred names, among which I recognize those of many of the oldest, most honorable and influential citizens of Troy. And when you take home to your heart the sentiments which that letter expresses, you will, I know, cherish it as a treasure not even secondary to the elegant token which it so fittingly accompanies. With your permission, I will read it, not only as expressing the most gratifying sentiments on the part of the donors, but as affording the most appropriate terms in which I can discharge the grateful duty they have assigned to me.

TROY, Oct. 10, 1863.

*Lieut.-Col. John McConihe* – Dear Sir: You will please accept from us, your fellow-townsmen, the sword, sash, belt and passants accompanying this letter, as a token of our personal friendship and esteem; of our admiration of your noble qualities, both of the head and heart; of our appreciation of your fortitude and endurance, as displayed in the long and fatiguing marches during the campaign in Missouri in 1861; of the alacrity with which you left a sick bed to participate in the bloody field of Shiloh, of your courage and ability, as displayed on that fiercely contested field, where you were severely wounded; and of those continual evidences of courage and high military capacity given by you at the action on the Edenton Road, and during the pending siege of Charleston.

We trust this sword to you, feeling confident that it will never be drawn in an unjust cause, and that it will never be sheathed until the glory and power of our country shall be fully vindicated in this contest for the suppression of an unholy rebellion.

Very respectfully yours,

JOHN B. KELLOGG,

JOHN A. GRISWOLD,

And over one hundred others.

And here, sir, I might very well bring my remarks to a close, for I can add nothing to the appropriateness of the language I have just read. – You will allow me to say, however, that the feelings it breathes forth are cordially shared by myself, and the officers and men of the regiment in which you hold an honorable command.

It is surely unnecessary to direct attention to the beauty and exquisite finish of the sword itself, or to the elegance and completeness of the insignia with which it is accompanied. They speak for themselves, and are, as they should be, chaste, elegant and substantial – alike fitted to shine in the tournament, and to do good service on the field of glory – the useful and the beautiful harmoniously blended, in the form most agreeable to the eye of a soldier. Its inscriptions, too, are equally appropriate – one of them your own cheering cry to your brave men on the field of Shiloh – "Come on Boys!" – and the residue, a modest mention of some of your services during the past three years.

And now, sir, I present to you, in the names and on behalf of the donors, your fellow-townsmen, this magnificent sword and these elegant trappings; adding, in conclusion, a single sentiment taken from one of the choicest gems of poetry, which I heartily apply to the sword now entrusted to your keeping:

The sword – a name of dread, yet when  
Upon the Freeman's thigh 'tis bound,  
While, for his altar and his hearth, –



**Assembled officers (ca. 1861-'65)**  
**Alfred Rudolph Waud (1828-1891)**  
**Collection of the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.**

While, for the land that gave him birth,  
 The war-drums roll – the trumpets sound,  
 How sacred is it then."

\* \* \* \* \*

Whenever, for the truth and right  
 It flashes in the van of fight.

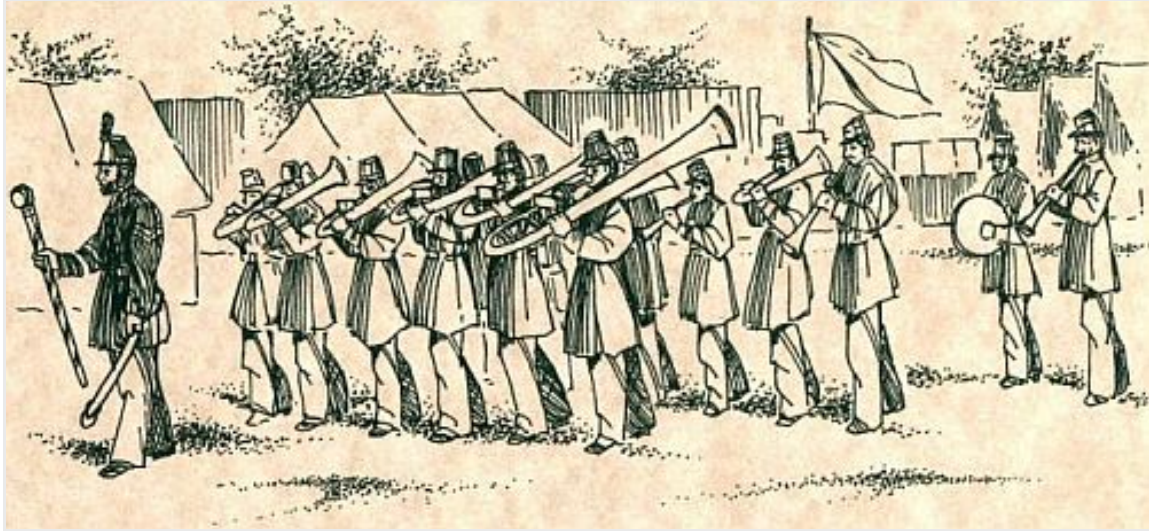
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Still, still, when e'er the battle cry  
 Is Liberty; when men do stand  
 For justice, and their native land. –  
 Then Heaven bless the Sword!

Lieut.-Col. McConihe expressed his thanks in a few terse remarks, at the conclusion of which, the officers proceeded at once to regimental headquarters, where a table heavily laden with refreshments awaited them.

Those, in the benighted regions of civil life, who suppose Folly Island to be an unproductive waste, and barren of all facilities for obtaining the luxuries of life, would have been agreeably surprised at the very acceptable repast provided. Had they seen Generals and humble Captains and Lieutenants hide their faces behind huge tumblers and gaze the while at each other's distorted visages through the bottoms, – had they witnessed the sudden reappearance of those same visages, no longer distorted, but radiant with good humor, and expressing in every feature entire approval of the whole arrangement, – they would have envied each guest, and wished as heartily as did everyone present, "Long life to Lieut.-Col. John McConihe, whose sword will never rust, so long as there is a just cause to be defended."

Gen. Vogdes, commander of our division, the graceful and accomplished Gen. R. S. Foster, our brigade commander, each accompanied by the officers of his staff; Gen. Gillmore's staff, and scores of others honored the occasion. The regimental band of the One Hundred and



Third New York, which discoursed acceptable music during the ceremony, now added to the pleasure of the entertainment with its choicest gems.

In the evening, the enlisted men were agreeably entertained, and the sword and insignia will be on exhibition to-morrow and the next day, for their especial benefit.

It is unnecessary for me to add, that the sentiments so well expressed by Col. Buel, found an echo in the hearts of all. It is a tribute as deserved, as it was timely, and will ever be proudly cherished by the recipient. The ceremony and concluding entertainment, most happily conducted, are hours to be singled out from the monotonous days of a campaign, and pleasantly remembered, and like oases in a desert waste, – seldom occurring, are never forgotten.

N. W.

Col. McConihe's letter to Lavinia Newton on November 9<sup>th</sup> provides additional details about the presentation ceremonies and the reception held afterwards:

"Your excellent letter of the 31<sup>st</sup> ult. is at hand and I have read it and re-read it sitting by my cheerful fire, blazing from my ample fireplace, and have concluded everything is so quiet, and I am so serenely disposed towards all mankind and womankind, that I will, this very night, write a reply to a good, *kind* woman. There, you can see what kind of a mood your letter put me in, and I can assure you I never would have thought of writing to anyone except you and John on such a night as this, when to be dreaming over the fitful blaze and listening to the continuous boiler-pounding – (that's just what it sounds like to me now – it has lost all its beauty and belching noise) of the distant artillery, would be seemingly more delightful and certainly more lazy.

"There's Billy [future Medal of Honor recipient Priv. William H. Freeman, Co. B] with Mrs. Newton's slippers in hand, saying, 'Colonel, will you put these on and let me have your boots to black?' and I look at my watch and find it 10:10 P.M. But with letter before me and slippers in mind, I certainly can get up sufficient inspiration to say a few words to my two good friends at Cincinnati.

"And here let me say I have just thought I would send my magnificent testimonial sword out to you, to Mr. and Mrs. Newton, to examine and admire before I returned it home. And so I shall, but this is a digression. What a funny digression too! But I have been thinking about



Staff of the New York "Herald" in the field (1863)

swords all day, and John must watch the New York papers to get a full account of the presentation ceremonies. At all events, I will send you a copy of the speeches as soon as they get around in print. My speech was entirely extempore, and if the reporters of the *Herald*, *Times*, and *Tribune* did not take notes, it will be lost to posterity.

"But to give you an account of the ceremonies... The sword arrived Friday night and was presented at 4 P.M. Saturday. The line was formed as at dress parade, and the splendid band of the 2<sup>d</sup> Brigade was present and discoursed most excellent music. After the battalion had been formed, the volunteers and invited guests marched down from our headquarters with the colonel and myself, and we took our assigned place. The ranks were opened, the band played down the line and back, and the battalion saluted and was turned over to Colonel Buel by the adjutant. The colonel brought them to a parade rest, when the sword was brought up from the left, along the front to the center, in charge of a sergeant and four men, and at the same time, I moved down from the right, along the front to the center, and up to the colonel. The colonel then unlocked the case and proceeded to read his address, which, when you read it you will say, barring the flattery to myself, is very beautiful and chaste. I replied and the sword was buckled on, when I took the command (the colonel being on detached service and I in command of the regiment) and finished the parade.

"There was a host of officers present: four brigadiers, numerous colonels, and innumerable line officers. After the presentation, we all moved back to our headquarters and proceeded to be sociable, while the aforesaid band discoursed most eloquent music outside, over a huge whiskey and brandy punch bowl, and in the immediate vicinity of fine brandies, whiskeys, and wines. Ale, porter, and champagne cider were immense in the immediate vicinity. Everybody drank all they wanted, and one by one, like falling leaves in autumn, they dropped off, and it was late when I lay myself down on my bunk. The only sound I heard was a serenading party outside singing *The Sword of Bunker Hill*, but I was even too tired to think of my own jeweled falchion, to say nothing of those good old days of Bunker Hill!



Celebration of the battle of Bunker Hill, near the camp of the 5<sup>th</sup> Mass. in Virginia,  
by the Charlestown companies of that regiment (June 17, 1861)  
Alfred Rudolph Waud (1828-1891)  
Collection of the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

### THE SWORD OF BUNKER HILL

---

BY WILLIAM ROSS WALLACE.  
(1819-1889)

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He lay upon his dying bed;  
His eyes were growing dim,  
When with a feeble voice he called  
His weeping son to him:  
Weep not, my boy! The vet'ran said,  
I bow to Heav'ns high will,  
But quickly from yon antlers bring  
The Sword of Bunker Hill.  
But quickly from yon antlers bring  
The Sword of Bunker Hill.

The sword was brought, the soldier's eye  
Lit with a sudden flame;  
And as he grasped the ancient blade,  
He murmured Warren's name;  
Then said My boy, I leave you gold  
But what is richer still,  
I leave you, mark me, mark me now,  
The Sword of Bunker Hill.  
I leave you, mark me, mark me now,  
The Sword of Bunker Hill.

Tw'as on that dread immortal day,  
I dared the Briton's hand,

A captain raised this blade on me  
I tore it from his hand;  
And while the glorious battle raged,  
It lighted freedom's will  
For, boy, the God of freedom bless'd  
The Sword of Bunker Hill.  
For, boy, the God of freedom bless'd  
The Sword of Bunker Hill.

O keep the sword, his accents broke  
A smile and he was dead;  
His wrinkled hand still grasped the blade  
Upon that dying bed.  
The son is gone; the sword remains,  
It's glory growing still;  
And eighty millions bless the sire,  
The Sword of Bunker Hill.  
And eighty millions bless the sire,  
The Sword of Bunker Hill.

"Well, to sum it all up, the presentation ceremonies of that splendid sword were as cheerful and happy as the sword is splendid. Everything passed off charmingly and without an unpleasant incident. Even Lt. Lyon [1<sup>st</sup> Lieut. William H. Lyon, Co. H] could not get vexed at anything, and when he ran into a post *en route* to his quarters, was heard to exclaim, 'Why, of course!' and was seen to smile in the dark, his bright countenance becoming phosphorescent when it came in contact with the live oak.

"I will simply say, Mrs. Newton, I am pleased with the sword and shall give you an opportunity to see it. I shall send it to Troy via Cincinnati, just for your benefit, and on such condition as I shall impose on you and John, which you must promise honestly to obey. I will write the conditions when I send it.

Morning, November 10, 1863.

"It was very cold last night and there was quite a heavy frost, but the frost was not as heavy as the cannonading, which was kept up by both sides all night. It does not usually trouble me much, but last night I noticed it, as it was most too cold to sleep soundly. At daylight I arose and started a fire in my fireplace. Long before daylight, the whole camp was out – too cold to sleep. Anything unusual – like a sudden cold night or a heavy gale – arouses a camp and men swarm about more like bees, suddenly disturbed, than like human beings. But I hope we shall not have much cold weather.

"Colonel Buel goes home next week to be married – he will be gone over a month. The colonel is a splendid gentleman and I wish him all happiness in his marital relations. Thus another of my friends is lost to the Bachelor Club. Alas, the old members have nearly all passed away and become husbands. But then they are happier and I only envy them.

"I am very much obliged to you for that little gem, *Antony & Cleopatra*. It is beautiful and I perused it with great satisfaction. I thought that paper female – called a nun – was Cleopatra, and imagined she looked sad. But then the idea of such a thing as that Sister – why, Mrs. Newton, I have laughed a hundred times while contemplating that paper – odd, funnily. No one but you would ever think of such a funny thing. How neat and yet easily gotten-up. I wondered if it was emblematical of all Sisters, and then I raised the hood, tenderly, but no bright eye



**Barbara Frietchie calling to General Stonewell Jackson during the American Civil War**  
**James Edwin McConnell (1903-1995)**  
**Private Collection**

shown or rosy lip pouted from beneath its sacred precinct. All was blank and I knew it was Folly Island.

"Those pieces of poetry which you enclosed in one of your letters I admired very much, especially *Barbara Frietchie*. She was indeed a patriotic woman, but she did no more than thousands of other brave women have done in this war. Mrs. Barbara threw the good old flag to the breeze in the presence of Rebel hordes, while many a mother has thrown her only and darling son to the storm of hostile bullets. But woman is as courageous as man in her way and in her sphere, and she will endure longer and sacrifice more than man. But Mrs. Barbara was a brave woman, and I wish all men and women were like Dame Barbara. You are just as good, as brave, and as patriotic as she, and I think more of you for writing me once a week, those real good, readable and sensible letters, than I would if you should rush out to Mt. Vernon and swing our country's flag right over John Morgan's gang. Such things are well enough in poetry, but for everyday prose, it was found not to pay, and the Spartan daughters, after the demise of the Spartan mothers, ceased 'to set' their young men on, and gave more attention to domestic matters and less to public affairs. A good letter from a friend is invaluable, and without the pleasure of receiving letters from and writing to you, I should indeed feel lonesome and forsaken. I write three times as much to you and John as to anyone else, and by this alone you may know how I prize our correspondence."

John Newton would later write in his memoir of the colonel: "The gift of the sword alluded to in the above letter (Nov. 9<sup>th</sup>), coming as it did from old and cherished friends in Troy, was very gratefully received by him, for it was an evidence to him fighting in the trenches and how his friends at home regarded his efforts. In a letter to his mother, he speaks of his great pleasure at the present, as follows:

"The whole affair was very grand and in keeping with the magnificence of the testimonial. Not an unpleasant incident occurred and all





were happy. Everything conspired to make the whole charming, and it was one of those happy meetings in which all participating seemed to enjoy heartily. I felt overwhelmingly honored at the reception of so elegant a present, and was pleased to have it so highly honored by the presence at its presentation of such a galaxy of military and such happy, good feeling. The whole affair has indeed been to me the happiest of my life."

Col. John's description of the festivities in his letter to his friend and benefactor John Kellogg was evocative of the beautiful autumn setting:

"The sword arrived here on Friday evening, and was presented Saturday evening at Dress Parade. A grander and more successful affair has seldom taken place anywhere, and certainly not on Folly Island. Parade was at 4 o'clock P.M., when volunteers and invited guests commenced arriving. Generals Turner, (Chief of Artillery), Vogdes, Commanding Division, and Foster, Commanding Brigade, with their staffs, Colonels Dobbs, Mann, Wilson, Captain Hamilton, 3<sup>d</sup> Artillery, (Regulars), Captain Cruso, Engineers Corps, and an innumerable number of line officers, including those of the 169<sup>th</sup>, and the inevitable reporters of the *Herald*, *Times*, and *Tribune* were present, and all seemed to enjoy themselves, from the beginning to the end.

"The road leading from the beach to headquarters had been lined on either side with trees of a beautiful green shade, peculiar to this region. Acting Brigadier-General Fairchild, Commanding 2<sup>d</sup> Brigade, sent down his most superior band, the best band in this Department, and composed of some twenty-four most accomplished and selected musicians, and they discoursed most elegant music to the delight of all. After the line was formed on the first ridge, back of the beach, we all left headquarters and took up our places as at parade, the guests back and to the right of the Colonel. He brought it to 'Parade Rest' when the sword in the box was brought up from the left, along the front to the center,

under an escort of four men and a Sergeant. I, at the same time, came from the right, down to the front and center, and took my place opposite the Colonel, with the escort holding the box, standing on the Colonel's right. Colonel Buel then read a most beautiful address, barring, of course, its flattery and personal (of me) mention, which I, of course, *modestly* responded to. The sword was then buckled on and I took command of the regiment and finished the parade.



"It was a most charming Southern October day, and there was nothing but what was done in style, taste, and according to the military. The regiment looked fine, boots blacked, brasses cleaned, and guns glittering with the side-long rays of the setting sun. Parade over, (and I with sword on), the officers marched back to headquarters, and while the band was playing outside, the guests were imbibing whiskey punch and brandy punch, Bourbon whiskey and common whiskey, Madeira wine and sherry wine, port wine and Champagne, cider wine and ale and porter. There was an abundance of it all and it was good.



**Still Life with Bread, Cheese, Apple and Red Wine, by Julian Merrow-Smith**

"There was a table with plates of excellent eating apples, which was replenished as often as emptied, and there was good cheese, crackers, and cigars. Generals and Colonels, Colonels and Captains, Majors, Generals, Colonels, Captains, and Lieutenants all drank of the punch,



the brandy, the wine, the ale and the porter, ate of the apples, the cheese, the crackers, and smoked the cigars. They stayed, seemed cheerful and pleasant, and all was well-behaved, not an unpleasant incident happened. They all went away with a pleasant shake of the hand and a look betokening, 'Farewell, be happy and merry, and may all my heartfelt wishes for you be fulfilled.'

"Colonel Buel and Major Alden did their best to entertain all and joined in the general glee. I issued a ration of whiskey,  $\frac{1}{2}$  gill [two shots], to the whole regiment, and thus the happy climax was reached and all seemed happy.

"At some time during the night, quiet reigned and the last thing I heard when wearied and sleepy, I lay down upon my bunk, was a volunteer choir outside singing, 'The Sword of Bunker Hill,' but I was singing in my own heart, *my own Falchion*, and how could I ever in any way repay, acknowledge, or express my gratitude at so grand a testimonial. The sword pleased all beyond my fondest anticipations, and even the reporters said, 'they liked it better than any presentation sword they ever saw.' General Turner said it was elegant, General Foster said it was truly a magnificent gift, and General Vogdes said to General Foster, 'General, I wonder if somebody don't give me a sword, I never had any.' That was 'Old Vog,' (as we jocularly call him), and it came from his heart, as he admires all pretty things.

"But, John, you will personally take unto yourself, and for me, to impart to those generous hearts who have so munificently honored me by this most beautiful testimonial, all of gratitude and all of honor, all of pride and all of delight, which this sword, this gift, coming as it has and from those it does, has engrafted on my heart and found partial, only partial, expression in words. You can tell them that it was a charming day and a happy moment on Folly Island, when that sword was formally given into my possession. All day Sunday it was on exhibition near the guardhouse, and the eagerness with which all rushed to see it, (and many came from other regiments to see it), was ample testimony of its beauty and magnificence. It all, sword, sash, (most splendid), belt, passants, and sword knot, came in good order, and has been worn for the last time, (I wore it all Sunday evening at parade), while in the field. It is too elegant – too grand – for a soldier, and when all have seen it, I shall box it up, sword, sash, belt, and passants, and send it home for careful safekeeping. It shall never fall into the hands of the enemy, even if I do, which I hope will never happen. Tell them all – all those who joined in this testimonial – that I replied to Colonel



Hilt featuring the Goddess of Liberty



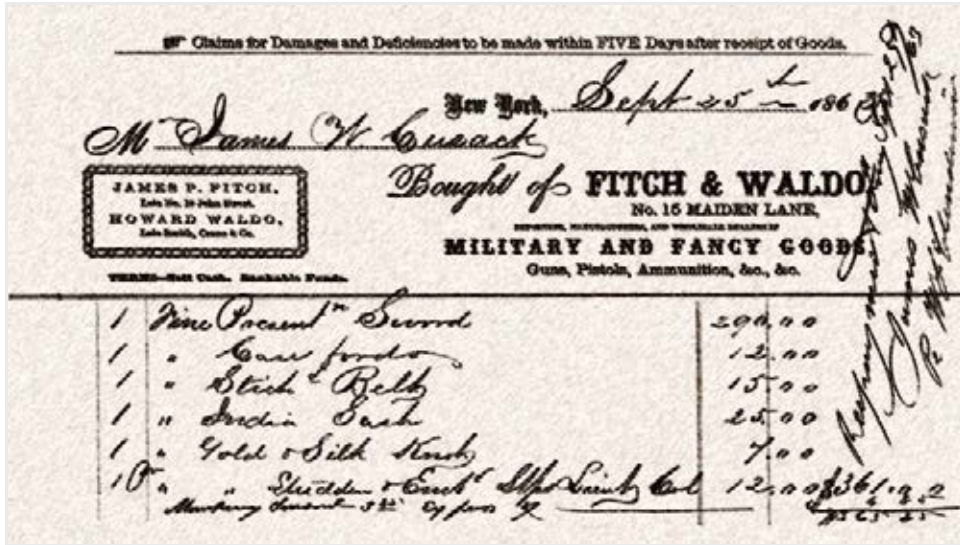
Details of parade scabbard



Sash



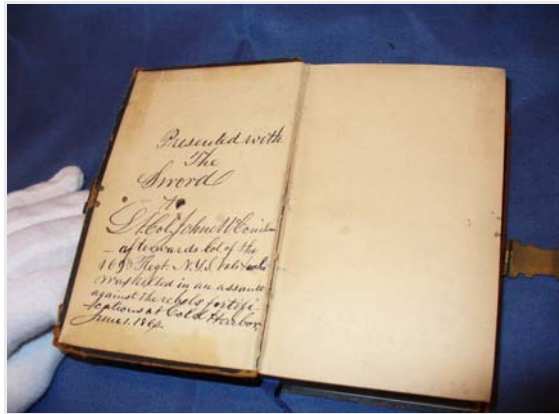
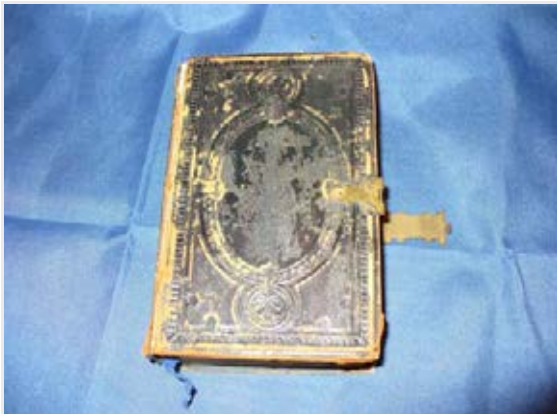
Sword belt and straps



Receipt for the presentation sword and accoutrements from Fitch & Waldo of New York City Collection of the Schaffer Library, Union College, Schenectady, New York



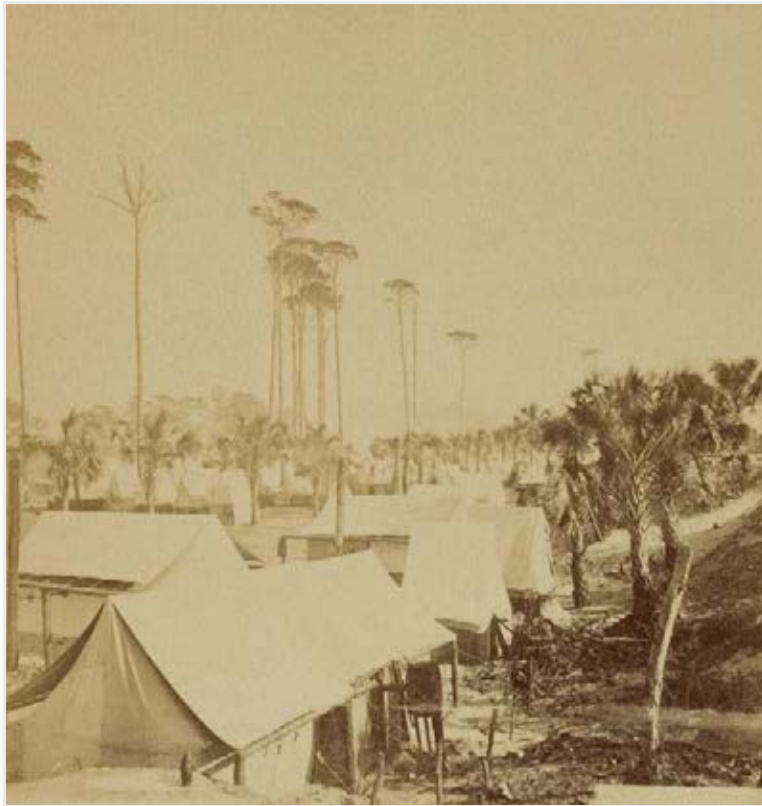
Presentation sword, field scabbard, and accoutrements in rosewood case, having a total estimated value of \$35-40,000, as of the date of this newsletter



Bible presented with the sword to Lieut.-Col. McConihe

Buel's beautiful presentation address as I felt, and not as mere words. Assure them that down here on this sandy island, the testimonial was fully appreciated, and honorably and becomingly received. It was a proud day for me, John, and although it will not make me proud or vain, yet it will spur me to try and prove that I am worthy of the esteem of my friends and ready to do my duty at all times. I ask no other reward but that of 'well done,' and with my profoundest regards to your good self, to the Messrs. Townsends, to Mose and Tim, and all inquiring friends, I remain, as ever, your sincere admirer and friend."

Corp. James B. Randall, Co. F, discussed several topics in a letter to his sister in early November, including the "good time" had by the men during the presentation ceremonies, as well as an update on the siege and the price of groceries at Folly Island. Only a fragment of the letter survives:



**General Gillmore's headquarters, Folly Island, South Carolina (ca. 1863)**

"I think that it is a good plan to get more men into the field, for it has got to be stopped by fighting and the sooner the better for all concerned. You think General Gillmore is slow, but give him time and the city of Charleston, and all the surrounding country, will be in his possession ere the noted General Lee will know it.

"The Rebs have James Island strongly fortified and it will have to be taken from them by inches, I think, and we are planting heavy guns on Long Island to shell James Island with. Fort Sumter has had to take another bombarding for a few days past; also the batteries on Sullivan's Island. Then we will have a good land force to act with the navy and the 'Greek fire' which has caused the Reb generals so much trouble.

"I suppose that you have the election returns by this time. How does the Empire State speak this fall?"



Christmas Furlough – Christmas, 1863  
 Published in "Harper's Weekly" (December 26<sup>th</sup>, 1863)

"I cannot say whether I will come home this winter or not. If I was to come, it might not pay, for it is a good ways to go. One of our men is a going this week. He is to be gone 30 days; then another is to go, but who, I cannot tell. But I would like to come home and be there through the holidays. I think I could enjoy myself very well. I think if I was to be at home, I would not have to pay five cents apiece for little hard apples. I have paid as much as 10 cents for one large apple. We can get sweet potatoes by paying 8 cents and northern potatoes by paying 6 cents per lb. We do not get anyhardtack; lately we get soft bread. We have a large bakery on the island.

"I must give you a little sketch of a good time we had in camp. On Saturday afternoon last, the regiment was drawn up in line of battle and General Vogdes and staff, General Foster and staff, and numerous other officers appeared in front with Colonel Buel, the latter bearing a splendid sword which was presented to our Lieut.-Colonel. It was from the citizens of Troy, in honor to him for his bravery on the battlefield of Shiloh in '61, I think, where he was severely wounded by a minié ball while in the act of leading his company up to a charge. He was in front of them and cried to his men "to come on," which is engraved on the sword. Its value is \$1,000. It is a nice thing and the right man has got it also."

Corp Alfred C. Carmon, Co. H, had similar things to discuss with his sister in a letter on the 11<sup>th</sup>. On account of the improved rations for the regiment, he wrote the Clemmence boys "are so fat that they can't hardly see out of their eyes!"

"Harm Joshlin is a going to start for home to-day or to-morrow, and I thought that I would send a few lines by him. It has been quite cold here for the few last days, but it is getting to be a little more comfortable. I



**Soldiers formed in line behind their stacked arms**

suppose that it is pretty cold up there now. Have you had any snow yet?

"I heard that the captain was coming back [Capt. William H. Wickes, Co. H]. If you get this before he starts, just send me a pair of buckskin gloves, for it is cold enough to wear gloves, and we have to get up at four o'clock in the morning and form a line. Then the companies are marched to their company streets and stack arms until daylight. But we are having it easy here now, compared to what we were a having a while ago. All that we have to do is to go on picket once in twelve days and have drill once a day. The drill call has been sounded, and I suppose that we will have to go and drill pretty soon, and I will have to stop writing for the present.

"We have just had our dinner. We had fresh beef soup with all the fixings in. We have got a very good cook now. He knows how to cook, but I suppose that he will go home on a furlough one of these days. I have eaten so much dinner that I cannot take any comfort in writing. It is so short a time since I wrote my last letter that there is no news to write.

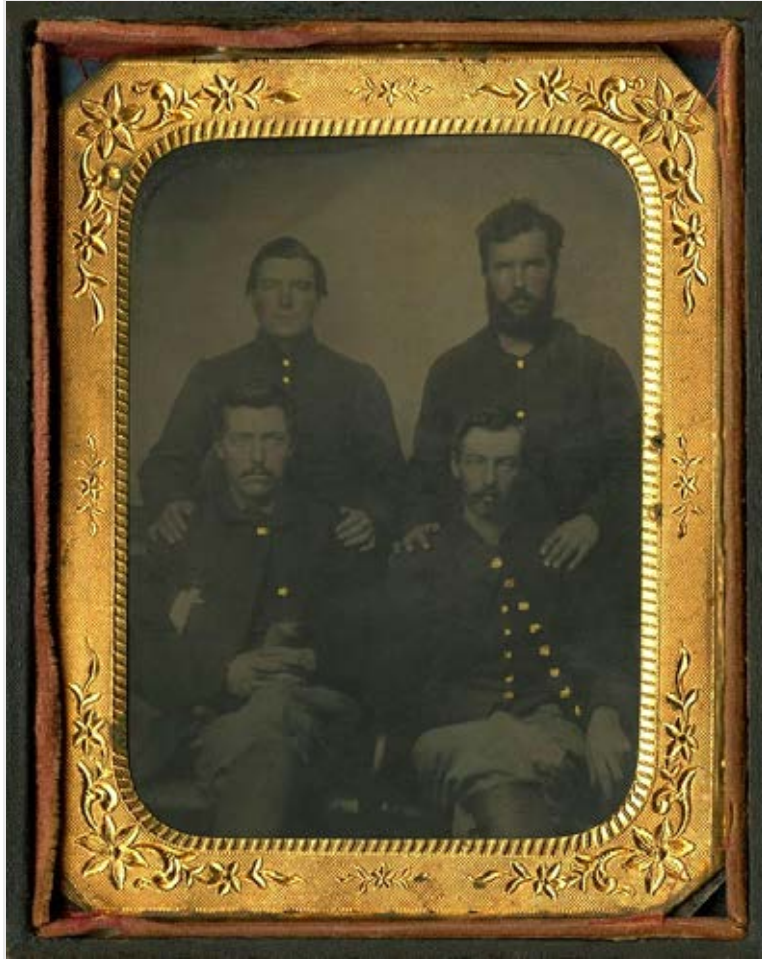
"We had a holiday last Saturday. The lieutenant-colonel had a sword presented to him by the citizens of Troy. It was a most splendid sword. The hilt was of solid silver. The scabbard was also of silver. The bands were of gold with some kind of stones set in them. The sword was valued at four hundred dollars.

"There is nothing going on down here that we can hear of. If there is anything done down here, the Troy papers will have a hold of it before anybody down here knows anything about it.

"Butter is plenty down here at 60 cents per pound, sweet potatoes at ten cents a pound. We can get plenty of apples here for five cents apiece. We cannot buy anything down here less than five cents.

"We have had battalion drill this afternoon. It is so lonesome down here that we don't know what to do. We can't get anything to read here of any kind. Where we have been before, we could always get plenty





of Bible tracts, but even them are scarce here. My Bible is gone, so I have not got anything to read.

"Most of the boys are at work fixing up their winter quarters, but we have got ours fixed up, so we have nothing more to do. Saturday, I suppose that we will have to go on picket, but I would as soon go on picket as to stay in camp, and a little rather, because we can get all of the clams and oysters out there that we want, when we want any. All that we have to do is to go down by the river and pick them up!

"I have a great appetite. I want to eat almost all of the time. Mint Knowlton is well [Corp. Minturn S. Knowlton, Co. H], and as fat as you please! You had ought to see the Clemmence boys [Priv. Nelson Clemmence and Priv. William Clemmence, Jr., Co. H]. They are so fat that they can't hardly see out of their eyes! There has neither one of them had a letter from home in over a month. Billy was telling me that he did not know whether his folks were alive or not.

"What is a going to be the doings there through the holidays? I would like to be up there Christmas Eve, to go to a good ball somewheres, but I don't suppose that I shall. But I think that if I can get a furlough this winter that I shall do it, but there is not much of a sight for me to get one very soon.

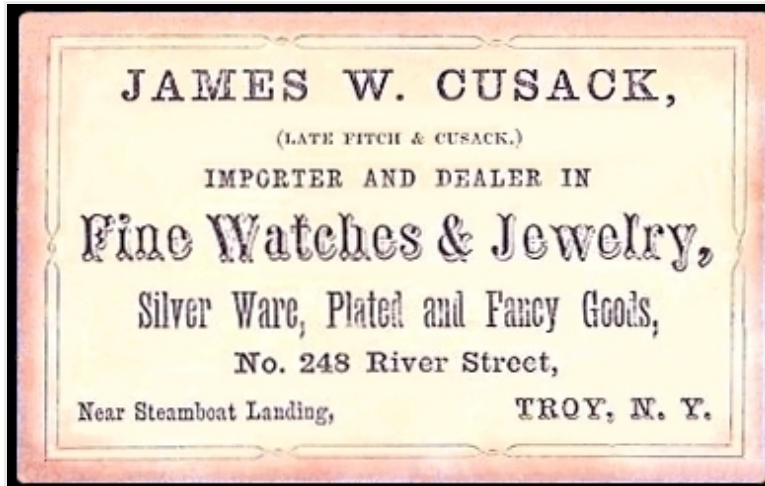
"I won't have time to write a great while longer, because it is almost time for dress parade. Our second lieutenant has got his discharge [2<sup>d</sup> Lieut. Julio B. Benjamin, Co. H]. He has been sick for some time, and our first lieutenant has not been on duty for about a month [1<sup>st</sup> Lieut.



**The Consecration, 1861 (1865)**  
**George Cochran Lambdin (1830-1896)**  
**Collection of the Indianapolis Museum of Art**

William H. Lyon, Co. H]. He got a wrestling with some of the officers and had his ankle thrown out-of-joint "

Swords were also presented to Capt. Wood and 2<sup>d</sup> Lieut. Charles Dumary, Co. D, by their friends. The *Daily Press* reported on the 23<sup>d</sup>: "The friends of Captain Nat. Wood, of the One Hundred and Sixty-ninth Regiment, have purchased a beautiful sword, which they intend to present him. It may be seen at Cusack's." On the 24<sup>th</sup>: "The friends of Lieut. Charles Dumary, of the 169<sup>th</sup> Regiment, have purchased a beautiful sword which they intend to present to him, previous to his departure for Folly Island. The weapon, which is a beautiful one, was gotten up by Mr. J. W. Cusack."



Trade Card from James W. Cusack's jewelry store (ca. 1866-'71)

*Cusack's jewelry store was located at 200 River Street during the war, where Lieut.-Col. John McConihe's presentation sword was kept on display before being forwarded to Folly Island.*



James W. Cusack

*Mr. Cusack served as captain of Co. G, 24<sup>th</sup> N.Y.S.N.G., during the war, and held the same rank in the Troy Citizens' Corps.*

On the 25<sup>th</sup>: "The Presentation sword to Lieut. Chas. Dumary, will take place at 'Higgins' Academy,' No. 68 Congress street, this evening." And on December 15<sup>th</sup>: "The Beautiful Sword recently gotten up by Cusack, as a present to Captain Nat. Wood, has been forwarded to Folly Island. It is a gift from the members of Capt. Wood's Company, (B,) and not from home friends, as stated in the PRESS some time since."

Priv. Schutt's letter of the 18<sup>th</sup>, published in the *Daily Press* ten days later, gives an account of the on-going bombardment of Fort Sumter, expecting the work to fall within "a very few days longer, at the furthest," to be followed by an amphibious landing of Federal troops at Charleston shortly thereafter:

"Our Morris Island batteries are still vigorously pummeling Sumter and the rebel works generally. There is no abatement in the fury of the



**Fort Putnam, the former Confederate Battery Gregg (ca. 1863)**

bombardment during the day, and a sufficiently rapid fire is kept up at night to prevent the enemy making any material headway at repairs. I am assured that everything goes well on Morris Island, and that the effects of the bombardment are all that could be desired. So far as the enemy's fire is concerned, it is perfectly abortive, and rarely occasions any accident to our forces, while it has not the slightest effect in decreasing the efficiency of our works. Every day now increases the certainty of the speedy fall of Charleston. No doubt a dogged resistance will be kept up until the last moment, as in the case of Sumter; but as soon as the time arrives for the gunboats to pass into the harbor, and take a raking position within a few hundred yards of the city, a few hours must then decide whether Charleston is to be surrendered unscathed into our hands, or whether it is to be reduced to ashes and we are to effect a landing upon its blackened wharves under the protection of the navy, and occupy the site of this modern Gomorrah in spite of them. With a foothold once gained upon the mainland, a few hours would suffice to entrench ourselves so that dislodgment would be impossible; and, a permanent footing once gained, a steady advance into the interior would follow as a matter of course.

"It would appear that the immunity which the city has lately enjoyed from Gen. Gillmore's liquid fire messengers, has so far restored the confidence of the inhabitants that many of them have again returned to their deserted hearths, and that something of the old routine of life, miserable as it was, is again noticeable in the streets of Charleston. Hence when, the other day, one of our shots killed thirteen men within the ruins of Sumter, the *Charleston Courier* says: –

This painful news reached the city at an early hour Saturday morning, and created a general feeling of sadness and depression in the community. The brave and gallant men, so suddenly cut off, were mostly all natives and residents of this city, and their deaths have brought mourning to a large number of households, and distressed relatives and friends. The bodies were brought to



Interior view of Fort Putnam (ca. 1865)

the city Saturday evening, and taken possession of by their respective families. On Saturday afternoon the funerals took place from the various residences of the deceased, followed by large crowds of sorrowing relatives and sympathizing friends. The scene in Tradd street, where the funeral processions followed in succession, was peculiar and painful to witness. The bereaved families lived side by side.'

"The *Courier* also says:

'The stubborn and gallant endurance of Maj. Elliott, and the brave indomitable garrison now engaged in the sacred duty of holding and defending the fort, has won for them a glorious name, and will furnish another illustrious page in the future history of the defense of Fort Sumter, and the harbor and city of Charleston. Notwithstanding the terrible and constant fire from his monitors and land batteries, with missiles of every conceivable invention, size and power, showered like hail from Parrott, Dahlgren rifled guns and mortars, upon the fortress and its garrison, the enemy has been foiled in his object, and is still unsuccessful in his designs.'

"Why the rebel military authorities will persist in garrisoning the ruins of Sumter, which can have nothing more important for its object than the keeping of their flag flying over the *débris*, and the catering to a false and unholy pride, is singular. While the stubborn resistance may evince a certain spirit of bravery, it also shows that the garrison is being sacrificed day by day for no other reason than to satisfy the simple vanity of a humbled people, who thus impiously challenge the wrath of



**Entrance to Fort Sumter (1863)  
John Gadsby Chapman (1808-1889)**

**Collection of the Museum of the Confederacy, Richmond, Virginia**

Heaven and the scorn of civilization. But even the vainglorious satisfaction of retaining a garrison within the ruined fort, upon which fact they lay so much stress, and refer to in such a boastful language, will not much longer be allowed them. A very few days longer, at the furthest, must see our forces in possession of what remains of this once imposing work, and the enemy may then gloat over the fact of their lost in life to their hearts' content, for the very foolish reason of keeping a small white and red flag flying over the ruins.

"The rebels have made preparations to give our ironclads a warm reception when they shall finally succeed in passing the obstructions in the channel and steaming up the bay. New forts and batteries are constantly rising, as if by magic from the ground, in front of and about the city. Many houses and a tall lookout have been removed or torn down, to make room for these works. I have little faith, however, that these new batteries will prove very formidable auxiliaries to the works already existing upon James Island and vicinity.

"Aside from the activity which now characterizes the bombardment, little else of interest is transpiring in this Department.

"From General Orders No. 100, published on Dress Parade, on Sunday afternoon, 15<sup>th</sup> inst., I quote two paragraphs:

'I. Capt. D. H. Buel, (nephew of Col. Clarence Buel,) and 1<sup>st</sup> Lieut. G. W. McKee, U. S. Ordnance Department, are hereby announced as Assistants to the Chief of Ordnance of the Department, and will be obeyed and respected accordingly.

'IV. Hereafter, until further orders, all sentinels of Guards in this Department when on post, will wear their overcoats between sundown and sunrise.'

"There is considerable dissatisfaction among the colored troops on this Island, growing out of the equivocating manner in which the government is dealing with them. The North Carolina troops, for instance, have not received a coat of money since they have been in the service, now over six months, nor can they even get sufficient clothes



**Company of Colored troops in platoon formation**

to make them comfortable. They, as well as the Massachusetts regiment, entered for thirteen dollars per month, the same as received by the white soldiers, and refuse to accept anything else. This action on their part has no doubt contributed to the inconveniences they are now experiencing for the lack of money and clothing, and until this important point is definitely settled by the War Department, it will continue to be a source of vexatious trouble and annoyance. Of regimental matters there is nothing of interest transpiring. The health of the regiment continues to improve under the influence of a cool, bracing atmosphere. Company and battalion drill are the order of the day, outside from guard and picket duties."

Another letter from Priv. Schutt, penned the following day, addressed the urgent need for the government to send additional troops by transferring them to theatre from less strategic operations, if necessary. Once again, Theodore took issue with the comparative inactivity by the navy:

"If ever a people and its soldiers were kept bubbling up and down in the seething, molten mass which now glows at 'white heat,' in the crucible of fate, that people and its soldiers are those of the United States of America. This language may savor somewhat of bitterness of spirit, of disappointed hopes, of dampened ardor, of waning confidence, or of sanguine expectations, all too suddenly blighted at the moment of realization. It may indicate the real or apparent presence of all these misfortunes; and I ask if there is not some reason, in all candor, to experience the oppressive weight which hangs like a nightmare incubus upon the vital energies of our governmental policy? I speak by the oracle of experience, – experience and observation force conviction, and conviction opens the oracular pages from which the most unpretending seer may read the signs of passing destiny.

"In proportion as this war has assumed colossal dimensions geographically, with accumulated strength and intensity of feeling, physically, on the part of the insurgents, notwithstanding the gigantic armies and



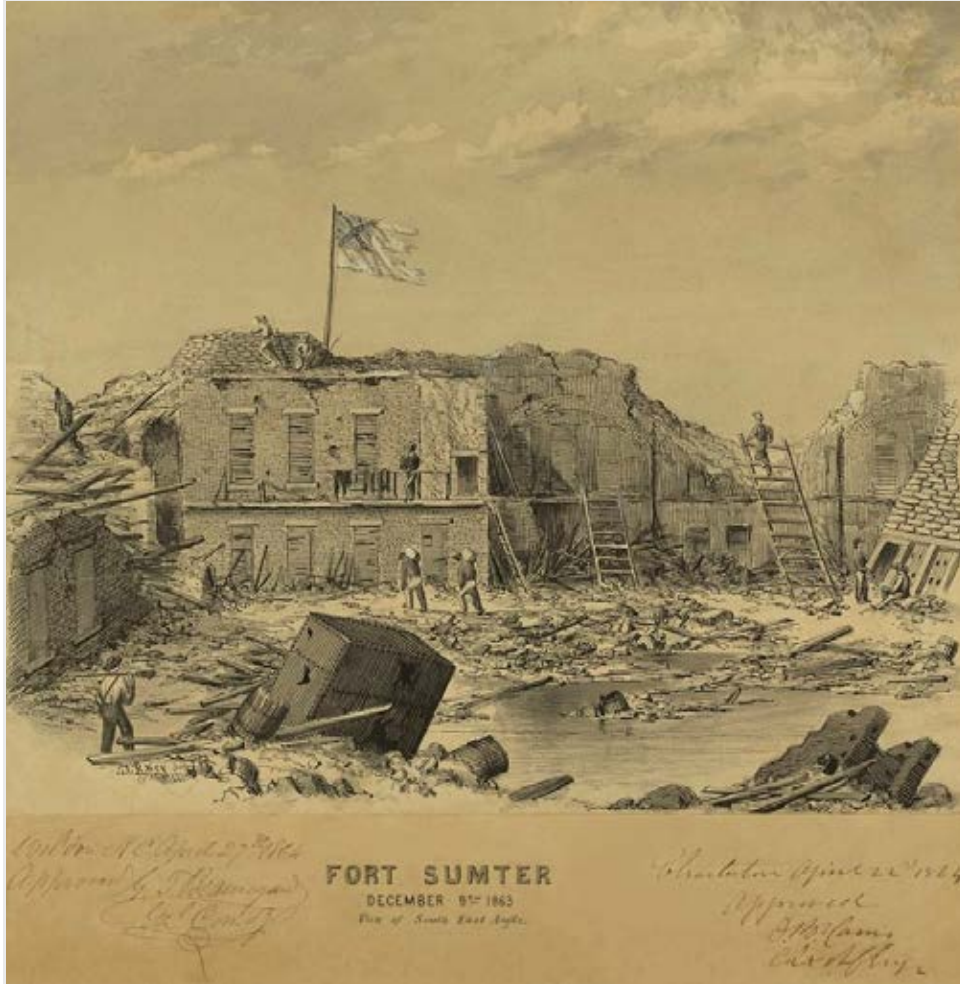
**First Reading of the Emancipation Proclamation of President Lincoln (1864)**  
**Francis Bicknell Carpenter (1830-1900)**  
**United States Capitol, Washington, D.C.**

*Depicted from left to right: Edwin M. Stanton, secretary of war; Salmon P. Chase, secretary of the treasury; President Lincoln; Gideon Welles, secretary of the navy; Caleb B. Smith, secretary of the interior (standing); William H. Seward, secretary of state (seated); Montgomery Blair, postmaster general; and Edward Bates, attorney general.*

lavish expenditure of treasure and human life on the part of the loyal North, results have fallen far short of the most moderate expectations, and have in no view compensated for the means employed. We look in vain for any acceptable solution of a question so nearly concerning the interests, lives and happiness of a great people. And if it is a matter of so serious moment to the whole North, who are yet pursuing the peaceful occupations of commerce, manufactures, and the mechanical arts, while all the internal machinery of self-government, suffrage, professional predilection, with every phase of social and political intercourse remaining materially unchanged, flowing in the same peaceful channels, as in years gone by, – must it not be one of intense, and even greater moment to the soldiers in the field, the men whom honest patriotism has offered the sacrifice of life abroad, and the associations and ties of kindred and friends at home, for the purpose of wiping the stain of disgrace from our escutcheon, demonstrating the priceless value set upon our principles of blood-bought liberty, sustaining the glory of our flag, and upholding the executive supremacy of Constitutional law, as vested in the office of the President of the United States?

"I am not in a position to criticize the policy of a government which claims from me only exalted feelings of love and veneration, by reason of the glory that hallows its past, and the illustrious names it has handed down to us for the emulation of our latest posterity; but I do hold to certain opinions, which at times shape themselves into theories, crude it may be, but not without some shadow of common sense and judgement to dictate them.





**Fort Sumter, December 9<sup>th</sup> 1863, View of South East Angle (January 7, 1864)**  
**John Ross Key (1832-1920)**  
 Collection of the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

*The above drawing was approved and signed by Gen. Beauregard and the commandant of the fort's garrison.*

"This department and the siege of Charleston, still in progress, furnish not an unapt illustration of the manner in which the war is being conducted. Much has been done here; in fact one of the greatest triumphs of the war, so far as it goes, has been achieved in the capture of Morris Island and the reduction of its forts; but here the work, so well begun, has stopped, and a temporary suspension of all material progress ensues. *Ad interim*, the enemy has ample time, and improves it, too, to profit by the lessons taught thus far during the siege, strengthens his works at vital points, erects new lines of defenses, and is even permitted to render Sumter quite as impregnable as it was before a shot had been directed upon it, and although that work is now literally *battered down*, it yet flaunts the rebel battle rag in our faces, and still a formidable force burrows somewhere amid its ruins during the night, to repel the assault they are daily anticipating.

"The known necessity for a large land force to operate in conjunction with the Navy, should have stimulated the War Department to furnish the needed troops, even to the extent of abandoning less important positions. I say less important positions, because strategically considered, perhaps, we hold no place in the Confederacy of less importance



**Charleston City and Bay (1864)**  
**John Gadsby Chapman (1808-1889)**  
Collection of the Museum of the Confederacy, Richmond, Virginia

than Charleston itself. It is the moral effect the capture of the city would have, not only in rebeldom, but throughout Europe and at home. It is this *desideratum* alone which invests the siege of Charleston with more than ordinary interest and importance, and which calls for the most energetic action on the part of the Government to supply every deficiency that may exist for the earnest prosecution of the work, and its early completion.

"The great drawback, thus far, to the more successful prosecution of the siege, with the means at disposal of Gen. Gillmore, has been the comparative inactivity of the Navy, which though it has accomplished wonders in some localities, has signally failed to sustain the enviable reputation won for it in other fields of operation during the progress of this war. There is, however, ample scope and opportunity to redeem its character for enterprise and efficiency in this department, and I hope it will improve them.

"I wrote you in my last letter that Sumter was apparently quite demolished, and that, by report, they had evacuated the no longer tenable pile. This was believed to be true at the time, but the subsequent appearance of the rebel flag upon the ruins, shortly after daylight on the morning of the 28<sup>th</sup> ult., effectually dispelled these vagaries, and *they haven't evacuated yet*, nor will they, probably, until an assault is made, which will most likely occur within a week at furthest. There is a regiment now upon this island daily practicing with scaling ladders, 'paddling their light canoes,' &c., preparatory to this event. An important and effective weapon with which it is proposed to arm this storming party has not yet arrived, and I am assured that this alone is the reason of delay.

"By order of Gen. Gillmore, and in honor of some of the brave men who have fallen upon Morris Island during the progress of the siege, the following names will hereafter be adopted for the works named: The work at Cumming's Point will be known as Fort Putnam; that next



**Federal garrison at dress parade, Fort Strong, the former Confederate Fort Wagner (April, 1865)**

to it (new battery) as Battery Chatfield; Fort Wagner as Fort Strong; the new work near the south end of Morris Island as Fort Shaw; that on Oyster Point as Battery Purviance; and that on the north end of Folly Island as Fort Green.

"Gen. Gillmore has also published his intention of awarding Medals of Honor to a limited number of enlisted men for gallant and meritorious conduct on the field and in the trenches during operations in front of Charleston. The number of medals will not exceed three per cent of the aggregate strength of the regiments, companies, and detachments that have been on active duty during the siege. Candidates for these honors will be nominated by company officers, acting for their respective companies in the capacity of a Board. – The recommendations of these Boards are to be forwarded to Post Commanders, through the usual channels, accompanied by remarks of approval or disapproval by the intermediate Commanders. – These lists will be examined and pronounced upon by Boards convened by Post Commanders, composed exclusively of field officers, and then forwarded to Gen. Gillmore's headquarters.

"Of course the 169<sup>th</sup> will be awarded its proportion of these medals of honor, as our regiment has been more conspicuous for vigilant and fearless performance of duty under the concentrated fire of the enemy's guns, day and night, than the brave representatives of Troy, and Rensselaer generally. Where all have done so well, however, the work

of discrimination will be one of peculiar delicacy, and will, no doubt, prove of little benefit as a means to encourage valor and gallant bearing before and under the fire of the enemy. Nothing, in my opinion, but a universal award of such medals, except in cases where men have proved cowardly or unworthy of the honor, could possibly do justice to the brave soldiers who have taken an active part in the fatigues, privations and dangers of the siege. As it is, petty jealousies, if not feelings of real discouragement, will be engendered in the minds of those who, knowing they have done their whole duty, are equally if not more entitled to the honor than the favored candidates. From remarks which I have already heard expressed among the privates, I feel assured that when our brave men will be encouraged, many will feel a sense of humiliation and a prideful distrust that their courage has been questioned. It is a natural feeling, but yet in view of the facts a foolish one, which none but the most thoughtless will indulge in.



**Large gun at Fort Putnam, Cumming's Point, Morris Island (ca. 1865)**

"On Tuesday, 27<sup>th</sup> ult., one of the guns on the Cumming's Point Battery was directed against the walls of the city, and several shells, charged with Greek fire, were thrown in the neighborhood of St. Michael's Church. Some say the gun was trained to take effect upon the church, but that is undoubtedly an erroneous statement. What damage was done is conjectural only. Nothing more than a few experimental shots were probably intended, while it served to convince the rebels that we still entertained some idea of paying our respects to their city.

"Many of the troops heretofore quartered on Morris Island, are being transferred to this island, probably with a view of going into winter quarters, for which Folly Island is an especially desirable location, being plentifully supplied with fuel, timber, and passably good water.

"Of regimental matters, our daily routine of duties are not materially changed, except it be an immunity from crossing the island and lying

under arms all night, which exemption from an onerous duty was procured through the urgent intercessions of our Colonel with the General commanding. Although called out at four o'clock every morning, we remain under arms only a few minutes, form in regimental line, march back to our company streets, stack arms, and retire to our tents until reveille.



**The Midnight Court Martial (1909)**

**Howard Pyle (1853-1911)**

**Published in Harper's Monthly Magazine (September, 1909)**

"Equally at home at the bar, or on the bench, as he is in the field, our brave Colonel has been called to preside at a General Court Martial, convened at Gen. Vogdes' Headquarters, for the trial of all cases coming within its jurisdiction. The following named officers constitute the Court:

'Col. Clarence Buel, One Hundred and Sixty-ninth N. Y. V., President; Capt. T. E. Lord, Third N. Y. V., Judge Advocate.

'Maj. Morrison, 103<sup>d</sup> N. Y. V.; Capt. Bebee, 13<sup>th</sup> Ind.; Capt. Grant, 54<sup>th</sup> (Colored) Mass.; Capt. Lee, 89<sup>th</sup> N. Y. V.; Lieut. Terry, 55<sup>th</sup> (Colored) Mass.; Capt. Lay, Capt. Stephenson.'

"During the session of this court the immediate command of the regiment will again devolve upon Lieut.-Col. McConihe; and the evidence once given of his eminent fitness for this responsible position, lends the amplest assurance that the best interests and discipline of the regiment are confided to capable hands, and that its affairs will be administered with that marked faithfulness and distinguished ability which has heretofore characterized his command of this organization.

"The general health of the regiment is improving. I hope to be able to chronicle something more important in my next letter in the way of news?"



In his letter to Lavinia Newton on the 15<sup>th</sup>, John McConihe expressed a desire to return to civilian life, possibly in light of the prospect that Col. Buel, who had fallen ill with an as yet undiagnosed case of typhoid fever, would be compelled to leave the service:

"The great objection I have to military life lies not in its hardships or its dangers, but its entire lack of domesticity – the deprivation of ladies' and children's society. Here we are, for instance, a host of men beneath canvas on a sandy island of the sea. Our daily routine is faithfully performed, yet we do not return home and smile with those awaiting our arrival to smile with us, or to play with those younger and less hardened to the world's contact than we, looking for us to join in their frolic. No, when the bugle has sounded 'put out the lights and go to bed,' we extinguish our solitary candle and literally 'turn in.' So it is, day-in and day-out; days, weeks, and years, yet the same bugle blows us to bed and blows us out of bed, blows us to danger and blows us to parade. Is it at all singular that I get nauseated with everything military and sigh to be out of the army? But I cannot see how I can get out just yet. How would I at this stage of my existence? I shall hold on yet awhile and bear my lot. Don't think I am really unhappy, for I am not, and don't, above all things, think I borrow trouble to myself. No, Mrs. Newton, I attend to my duties with as little annoyance as can be imagined and I have not gotten into a *rage* but twice, to my recollection, since I came out with the regiment. On both occasions it was necessary, and I believe I would *get mad* under the same circumstances at any future



The Adams Express Company's Office  
Published in "The Soldier in Our Civil War," Vol. I (1890)

time. But to philosophize, it don't pay to get very mad; it is very uncomfortable.

"I appeared this evening, for the last time at present, in all my beautiful trappings: new suit of clothing, with that handsome sword, sash, belt and straps; and have re-packed it in the box, which will, I hope, be taken north on the next steamer and expressed at New York for Troy via Cincinnati. I merely send it for you and John, Mr. Graham, Harry, and Mr. Potter to look at it. I want you and John to see it, and that is the reason why I send it out to you, and I do not know how else you will ever be able to gaze on it. I trust you will appreciate my motive in sending it thus, and after you have looked at it, you will send it to father at Troy. Please don't retain it over 48 hours. I will issue *my orders* more minutely and place them inside the box for your guidance. But one point above all others, *one* I demand and *order* to be scrupulously and faithfully observed, is that the sword pay its own way. I shall have the express paid from New York to Cincinnati, and put a note inside with sword to pay express from Cincinnati to Troy. Now, as this is my affair and my own scheme, you will neither of you raise any question as to the manner in which it shall be done. John will take the money, pay the express, and if any change is leftover, put it inside with the sword and send all home. I shall send it by the colonel, if he gets well enough to superintend it, this week, and if not, I shall await a favorable opportunity. I will write John notifying him of its being sent by the same steamer I send it. Of course, John may ask Judge Nelson and such others as he pleases to look at it, provided they care to. I would like to have Nelson see it, as he was very kind to me while I was in Cincinnati. You will not care to keep it more than two or three days,



I think. I am proud of it. I know you have good taste and I want you to see the gift. Have I said enough explanatory?

"Colonel Buel is very sick again – was taken down with a fever on Thursday last and is quite low to-day. Poor fellow – I pity him. He has had a hard time this year and fate seems to pursue him. I, nor the surgeons, do not think he can stand anymore field work – his wound shattered his nerves and he is very slim and weak. I do not think he will remain with the regiment and would not be surprised if he resigned this week, and before going north. He is to be married early next month and I have his leave of absence ready, whenever he is able to travel. I have been acting as a nurse and his cook. He seems very grateful for what I do, and I am pleased to do anything I can. There are so few people who know how to do things for sick gentlemen. He says, 'When he fixes anything for me, I know it is clean.' I have learned how to make farina, arrowroot, and several other sick dishes. Just think of 'Betty' in the kitchen. But, Mrs. Newton, the colonel is a nice man, a whole-souled, high-principled gentleman, and I would not hesitate to do anything, even to cook for him.

"The major is absent from the regiment on detached service, and will not probably rejoin it while we remain here.

"But there is little else but camp duties to attend to; no long marches and sleepless nights, no weary days over in those unhealthy, *noisy* trenches on Morris, no midnight 'rounds' of the trenches with the air filled with bursting shells. No, we drill, we fatigue, we picket, but I sleep nights and am not too tired to sleep.

"Actually, Mrs. Newton, when returning from Hanover Junction last summer, I was so worn out I could not sleep, and for three nights and two days I was wide awake. The third day, we reached the White House





**Studies of Soldiers (ca. 1863-'65)**

**Winslow Homer (1836-1910)**

**Collection of the Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum, New York**

and I dosed with morphine, proceeded to Yorktown, rested there until the regiment came along, and was then much better. Above all good things, that persistent wound of mine healed up at Yorktown and has not troubled me since.

"Yesterday, I used the fingers a little too hard squeezing a lemon to make the colonel a lemonade and I discovered the arm felt wearied and it has all day felt tired. But that is all and it will get over the strain in a day or two.

"Mr. Reynolds [Asst. Surg. Porter L. F. Reynolds] has resigned and will go home in a short time. I wish he was going to Cincinnati, for I would send the sword by him. He is a good fellow and we have invariably been constant friends.

"You would be astonished, Mrs. Newton, to actually see a regiment melt away, day by day! It is astonishing, how well men, and men of assumed pluck, give out. Why, we have lost, died, dismissed, discharged

and resigned, more than one half of the officers we came out with a little over a year ago, and more will be lost to us soon. It is so with all regiments, and there is a daily change in the 'aggregate.' The *service*, (the country,) has lost about two hundred men in our regiment alone, in one year! What changes must appear on that great pile of muster rolls at Washington! What a history and sad story they tell! Killed at...., died of wounds...., died of disease...., discharged for physical disability contracted in the service...., resigned for...., and cashiered. There is a minute history of every man in this Grand Army."

John's correspondence to Mrs. Newton on the 18<sup>th</sup> demonstrated his increasing concern about the deteriorating condition of Col. Buel. Enclosed with his letter were poignant letters from the mother-in-law of Musician William H. Briggs, Co. G, and the mothers of Priv. William E. Griggs, Co. K, and Priv. Herbert Ellis, Co. G, inquiring about their health and hoping to see them return home for a visit:

"I do not propose to write you much of a letter to-day, simply to say, and that as the day of departure of the steamer approaches, it is doubtful whether I shall be able to send that sword or not. But if it is sent, you will be notified.

"I have the past week been worried almost to death about the colonel. He has been very sick again; indeed, dangerously ill with fever. He has been very low this week, but is better to-day, and we hope he will get well enough to be moved onboard the steamer and sent north. He is in my quarters and I shall be glad when he gets safely home, where he can be properly nursed. Camp is a poor place to be sick and men make poor nurses. The very idea of his condition almost makes me sick. Indeed, you can have no idea how glad I shall be when he starts home. I do not think he will return to this regiment and I am strongly convinced he will soon leave the service. He was examined a few days since by the Medical Examining Board for a discharge, and although his papers have not been returned, the president told me 'he was totally unfit for field service.' He has been sick ever since he came down here, and you need not be surprised when I write you the fact that he has resigned. I am sorry he must leave the regiment, but I do not honestly think he is strong enough to do duty. His wound in the hand shattered his nerves and the surgeons say he will not recover from that shock for a long time. He is a mere shadow now, and I fear his intended marriage must be postponed, although perhaps the sight of friends at home and the bright prospects of marriage will suddenly revive him. I hope so.

"As I have written you a letter by this steamer, I will not inflict another on you, but, for amusement, I will enclose two or three samples of letters which I receive each mail. These are the latest and the only ones in my desk at present. You will appreciate them without my pointing out their 'phunney' points.

"Poor Margaret has not heard from her son-in-law in three whole weeks! I write her Briggs [Musician William H. Briggs, Co. G] is well and says 'It's curious Ma don't git letters.'

"And Mrs. Griggs! She has done everything that a persevering mother would do to get her boy [Priv. William E. Griggs, Co. K] out of the service, ever since we left Troy, and now she wants to get him a furlough. But there are other and more deserving soldiers in the regiment, and Griggs cannot have a furlough. I write her I have referred her letter to her son's captain [Capt. Daniel Ferguson, Co. K].

"And Mrs. Ellis, 'Your boy [Priv. Herbert Ellis, Co. G] cannot be discharged. I know of no good reason why he should not serve his country as well as others. Be patient, good madam, and the three years

will soon roll around, and Herbert, your boy, will return Herbert the hero and man.' So read them and then destroy them.

"Since writing the above, your letter of the 8<sup>th</sup> has come to hand and I note its contents. I am sorry I wrote you that letter when I was feeling so badly. I had just then been informed that a slanderous tongue had maligned me and that a person pretending to be my friend had acted basely towards me. I was vexed – that was the cause of my temporary spleen. But it has partially passed off and *I think* I have surrounded him with points which will trouble him hereafter. At all events, his future shafts of enmity will fall harmless. He, the scamp, caused me to write that letter and for it I hold him responsible. So you will excuse me; that was all that caused my *ire*.

"But, Mrs. Newton, I have not really felt as happy recently, as light-hearted as in days gone by. I feel that it is so easy to back-bite and assail a man's character, especially one's enemies out of the army, that people so readily gulp the idle yarns of the hour that years of honorable career are dashed aside by one breath of calumny, true or false. Then again, I am consoled by the thought that I have good and firm friends; friends who have never deserted me and who have always proved true. Upon such I rely and feel safe. Oh! how miserable must that man be, who is deserted by his friends.

"I have the colonel on hand to worry about now, so as John says, 'A man always has some *worry*; I have my trouble as well as my sunshine. There are rainy, cloudy days in life, but the sun will break through the clouds and dispel the mist."

[Enclosures.]



Schaghticoke, N.Y., October 6<sup>th</sup>, 1863.

Respected Sir,

You will think it strange of getting a letter from a stranger, but as I have not got a letter from my son-in-law in three weeks, and he has always written so regular for once or twice a week, that we are getting very uneasy, or, I might

say, worried about him, that I thought it was best to write to the regiment and see, for he is apt to have the typhoid fever and in his last. He was afraid that he was going to have it. His name is William H. Briggs. He is a member of the band. Please find out and you will oblige us very much.

Yours with respect,

- Margaret A. Miller  
Schaghticoke Point, Rensselaer Co., N.Y.



To: Lieut.-Col. John McConihe

Troy, N.Y.,  
Monday Afternoon, October 19, 1863.

Dear Sir,

Pardon me for troubling you again. As the commanding general is granting furloughs from that island, I thought with your influence, my son might obtain a furlough and come home and make a visit and get rested. It will not only gratify his friends here but be a great pleasure to him also.

Please take notice of this and oblige.

- Mary A. Griggs

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To the head surgeon of the 169<sup>th</sup> Regiment [Surg. John Knowlson]. Referred to Lieut.-Col. John McConihe, commanding 169<sup>th</sup>:

Troy, N.Y., October 4<sup>th</sup> [?], 1863.

Dear Sir,

I have got a son in the 169<sup>th</sup> Regiment in Co. G by the name of Herbert H. Ellis, and he is all the one I have to



depend on for one cent, and I have been sick ever since he went away. It is one year to-day since I took my bed. I was sick when he went away, but I could go 'round and do some work. I can sit up some now, but I cannot walk. It has cost me so much for doctors that it is hard work to keep from the poor house.

My son knows how hard his mother worked to bring her boys up. I had four boys and sent three of them to war, and should send the other, but he is only ten years old, and I have him to see to. I had one son die in the war. He gave his life to his Country and his heart to God.

My son that is now in your regiment is not old enough as he should be, and his health is not very good, and I want to get him on the Invalid Corps so he can help me some. If I was well I would not ask you to help me, but here I am sick, and he is the only one to help me.

He will be 18 years the 18<sup>th</sup> day of next April, and now, my dear friend, I want you to do all that you can for me, for I stand in need of his help. My old mother lives with me and she has to haul me in a [wheel]chair. She is 69 years old and cannot do much, and I am too poor to hire help.

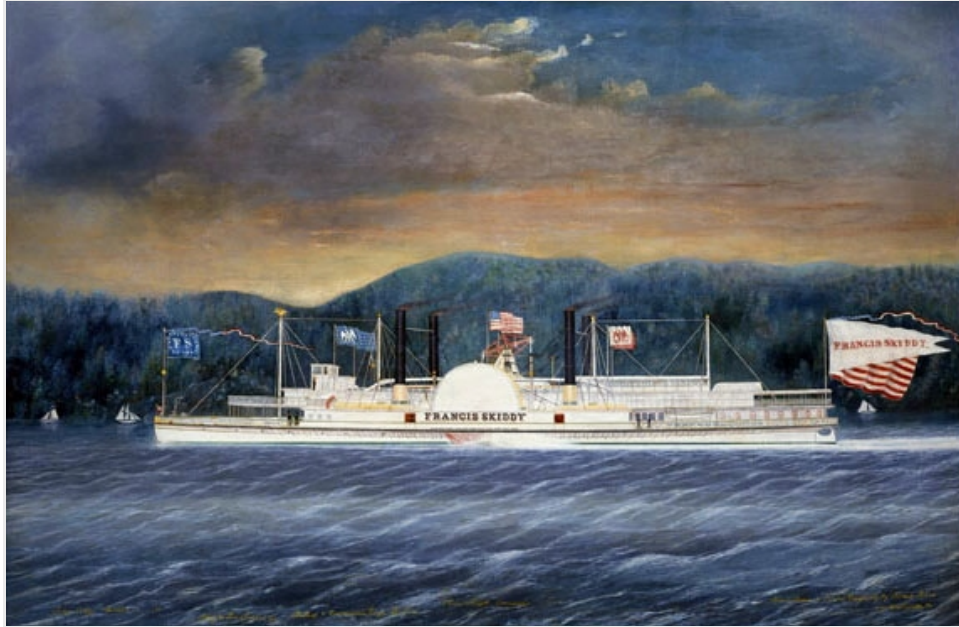
I have given all of my sons up to the government with a free heart, and am praying to God to watch over them and bless them for what they done for their country, and I think He will if you will attend to this, if you will oblige Herbert H. Ellis's sick mother. And may God bless you in all that you do.

From,

- Mrs. Muhala Ellis

The *Daily Press* and *Daily Times* reported the arrival in Troy of Col. Buel on the 25<sup>th</sup>, noting that he was "dangerously ill of typhoid fever" and conveyed to his residence on a litter. The *Daily Times* furnished additional details:

"COL. CLARENCE BUEL, of the One Hundred and Sixty-ninth Regiment, who reached New York on Monday



**The Francis Skiddy (1851)  
James Bard (1815-1897)  
Private Collection**

by the steamer *Fulton*, came up the river last night on the steamer *Francis Skiddy*, and arrived here at an early hour this morning. He was taken to his residence in First street. Col. B. has been suffering from a severe attack of typhoid fever, and is comparatively weak; but we anticipate his speedy return to health. Col. B has been visited by a number of friends since he has been here."



**Salmonella Typhi, the cause of Typhoid Fever**

*Typhoid fever is a disease transmitted by the ingestion of food or water contaminated with the feces of an infected individual containing the bacterium Salmonella Typhi.*

Col. Buel was married a few weeks behind schedule to Laura E. Davis at Burnt Hills, Ballston, Saratoga County, on December 30<sup>th</sup>, but he was far from well and resigned his officer's commission on February 13, 1864. From a sketch of Rev. Clarence Buel, found in *Historical and Genealogical Collections Relating to the Descendents of Rev. James Hillhouse* (1924), we read the rest of the story:



Union College, Schenectady, New York (ca. 1850)

"The Rev. Clarence Buel at my request wrote the following brief and modest record of his varied and interesting life.

'First as to my graduation – after a year in Williams College I left on account of illness and finished my college course at Union College, from which I graduated in A.D. 1849 as A.B., and took my degree of A.M. two or three years later. After graduation I studied law, partly in my father's law office, and partly in Fowler's Law School in Ballston Spa. I practiced this profession in Troy, New York, succeeding to my father's business until I engaged in the Civil War as Captain of Company E in the Harris Light Cavalry (2<sup>nd</sup> N. Y. Vol. Cavalry). My commission bore date December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1861, and I obtained my discharge October 10<sup>th</sup>, 1862. This was in order to accept the Colonelcy of the 169<sup>th</sup> N. Y. Vol. Infantry.

'While in the Harris Light Cavalry I took part in the first capture of Fredericksburg, and in some minor affairs of little serious moment. But the great and glorious work of this fine regiment was done after I left it.



National flag of the Harris Light Cavalry, Co. E, issued on August 12, 1861  
Collection of the Hartt Memorial Library, Troy, New York

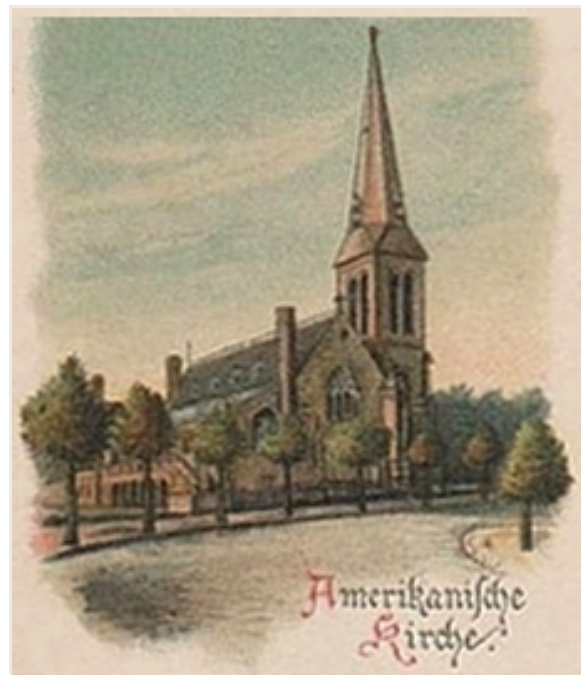
'As Colonel of the 169<sup>th</sup> N. Y. Volunteers I received a wound, which proved quite severe in a reconnaissance at Suffolk, Va. It was a shell wound that kept

me on the invalid list for two months. I rejoined my regiment on Folly Island, South Carolina – took part in the siege of Charleston until I was again prostrated by typhoid malarial fever, which after a long illness necessitated my withdrawal from the service, February 13<sup>th</sup>, 1864.

'After my marriage, December 30<sup>th</sup>, 1863, I studied for Holy Orders and graduated from the General Theological Seminary, New York, and was ordained to the Diaconate A.D. 1866, and to the Priesthood in A.D. 1868. Among other parishes which I have held were St. John's Church, Dresden, Saxony, and Emmanuel Church, Cumberland, Maryland. In this latter I followed my two



**Rev. Clarence N. Buel**



**Amerikanische Kirche St. John, Dresden, Germany**

*St. John's Church was constructed for the expatriate American community in Dresden, Saxony, in the German Empire, from 1883 to 1884. It was damaged by bombing in 1945 and demolished in 1959.*





**Winter Dawn: The Emmanuel Episcopal Church of Cumberland, Maryland,  
by James C. Groves**

*Rev. David Hillhouse Buel, Rector of Emmanuel Church, operated an Underground Railroad station at the church before the war.*

brothers, Rev. Samuel Buel, D.D., and Rev. David Hillhouse Buel, D.D., under the last named of whom the fine church was built.

'My ordination to both Diaconate and Priesthood was by Bishop Horatio Potter, D.D., LL.D., former Bishop of New York and both in New York City.

'Of the two regiments in which I held a command – the Second New York Cavalry (Harris Light) was mustered in from August 9<sup>th</sup> to October 8<sup>th</sup>, 1861, and was mustered out June 5<sup>th</sup>, 1865. The One Hundred and Sixty-ninth N. Y. Volunteers was mustered into service September 25<sup>th</sup> to October 6<sup>th</sup>, 1862, and was mustered out July 19<sup>th</sup>, 1865.

'I think the foregoing contains about all I can give in response to your letter with regard to myself.'

Col. Buel, (b. October 5, 1830, d. July 24, 1915), was one of the longest-living veterans of the 169<sup>th</sup> N.Y. He and his wife, who died on July 13, 1894, had five children, two of whom reached adulthood.

Capt. Jerome Bonaparte Parmenter, Co. I, survived an attack of typhoid fever in May, but was disabled during the siege of Charleston by the concussion produced by the explosion of a shell while he was acting colonel of the regiment. He was sent to U.S. General Hospital No. 11 in Beaufort, S.C., in late October, and was reported to be "dangerously ill" by the *Daily Whig* on the 31<sup>st</sup>. The article hinted that he was close to death by writing, "In his decease that regiment would sus-



Lieut.-Col. and A.A.G. Jerome B. Parmenter,  
Tenth Brigade, Third Division N.G.S.N.Y.

*Col. Parmenter was the editor and publisher of the  
Troy "Daily Press" for many years after the war.*

tain a great loss." Capt. Parmenter survived his injury, which proved permanent, necessitating his retirement from the service on December 2, 1863, when he resigned his commission. The *Daily Times* printed his farewell address to the officers and men of Co. I, presented in its entirety:

## The Troy Daily Times.

DECEMBER 28, 1863.

☞ **FAREWELL ADDRESS.** – In leaving Co. I, of the One Hundred and Sixty-ninth regiment – a body of men principally recruited at the Nail Works, and as gallant a lot of soldiers as ever upheld the stars and stripes – Capt. Parmenter, who has been compelled to resign by reason of indisposition, addressed them the following spirited letter:

UNITED STATES GENERAL HOSPITAL,  
BEAUFORT, S. C., Dec. 4, 1863.

*Officers and Men of Co. I:* In taking my final leave of the company of which I am proud to have been the commander, I feel it due to the officers and men that I should return them my thanks for the faithful and patriotic manner in which they have severally performed their



duties and rendered service to our country, while under my command, and for the promptness and studied intelligence with which they have executed every order.

In leaving you, my fellow-soldiers, I feel that I am leaving a noble band of patriots, – an act which could only be justified by protracted disability, contracted in the service. I deplore the charge which compels me to accept the discharge which causes our separation, and no one more than I, appreciates the loss I sustain in surrendering the command of a company rendered dear to me by all that can bind an officer to his men.

Your valor has been tried and has stood the test. The "iron hail" from the belching cannon of Fort Wagner has attested it. But there is still more labor for you to perform – more hardships for you to encounter, nobler works for you to achieve, more sacrifices to be made, and more glory to be won. Let not the ardor of your patriotism be dampened, let not your faith in final victory waver, and let your former commander learn in a distant State that the old company is still up to its work, and always ready to do its duty faithfully and well.

As I write these words, the bronzed faces of your little band come back upon my memory, one by one, and my heart is sad that I must leave you, my friends, to fight the good fight without me. God bless you, every one. I think of you as friend thinks of friend, and shall through life be proud that I have had the honor to command you. Again I say, God bless you.

JEROME B. PARMENTER.

Spiritual matters received increased attention among Union troops at Charleston after the fall of Fort Wagner. Col. Buel conducted religious services for the 169<sup>th</sup> pending the arrival of Chaplain Edgar T. Chapman from Troy, as reported by the *Daily Times* on November 9<sup>th</sup>:



**"The Soldier's Prayer Book" belonging to Major Edwin R. Smith, 169<sup>th</sup> N.Y.**

*"The Soldier's Prayer Book" is 58 pages in length and consists of an abbreviated form of Morning Prayer, several collects and prayers, selections of Psalms, and a number of hymns. It was published in 1861 by the Protestant Episcopal Book Society in Philadelphia and was authorized by the Bishop of Pennsylvania.*

"At the monthly concert of the Second Presbyterian Sunday School, last evening, Mr. J. H. Kellogg read a letter from Major Alonzo Alden, of the One Hundred and Sixty-ninth Regiment, dated at Folly Island, S. C., 14<sup>th</sup> ult. It gave very cheering accounts of the condition of the regiment religiously considered. The past few weeks' religious services had been conducted at Headquarters, attended by almost the entire regiment, at which Col. Buel, read the beautiful service of the Episcopal Church, from the 'Soldiers' Prayer Book,' and Major Alden and other officers delivered addresses. Very earnest attention was given by the men to all the exercises, and there is evidently much personal interest in the subject of religion throughout the entire command. The friends of these soldiers, it is suggested, can benefit them by sending tracts and religious newspapers for distribution among them. Major Alden will be remembered by the Sunday School men of the city as connected with the Second Presbyterian School during his residence among us."

While searching about a month ago for images of *The Soldier's Prayer Book* to accompany the above article from the *Daily Times*, your correspondent was dissatisfied with what I was able to find on through research, the images being of an inferior quality. While engaged in the task of formatting the article for this month's issue of the 169<sup>th</sup> N.Y. Infantry newsletter, I was driven to search one more time on the Internet for a good photograph, and there it was! Maj. Edwin R. Smith's prayer book! Was the spirit of Maj. Smith calling out to your correspondent? I leave it for the reader to decide. The book was featured in an article published by the Glens Falls *Post-Star* on April 3<sup>d</sup> of this year and is presented in its entirety:



# THE POST★STAR

GLENS FALLS, N.Y., APRIL 3, 2013.

## Antique 150-year-old prayer book to exchange hands to Wilton soldier

by Meg Hagerty; photographs by Derek Pruitt.

WILTON. – Some books chronicle history, but "The Soldier's Prayer Book" actually has been part of some of the most significant military events of the past 150 years.

Army Maj. Edwin R. Smith carried the religious booklet through 32 active engagements in the Civil War.

More than a half-century later, a Stillwater resident, Ord. Sgt. Sidney Morey of the 1<sup>st</sup> Army American Expeditionary Forces, had the text with him during battles in World War I. He then handed it down to Master Sgt. William G. Clark for his service in World War II.

Capt. Shawn Littrell received the book in 1989 while he was a 2<sup>nd</sup> lieutenant serving with the 11<sup>th</sup> Marine Expeditionary Unit during the



**Major Edwin R. Smith, 169<sup>th</sup> N.Y.  
Collection of the New York State Military Museum,  
Saratoga Springs, New York**

Persian Gulf War. Clark knew Littrell's late father, Edward, who had served in Vietnam.

Littrell, a former Queensbury resident assigned to Winchcombe, United Kingdom, a site of Hollingsworth & Vose, which also has a paper mill in Easton and a research center in Greenwich, said the book was a "comfort" to him during difficult times.

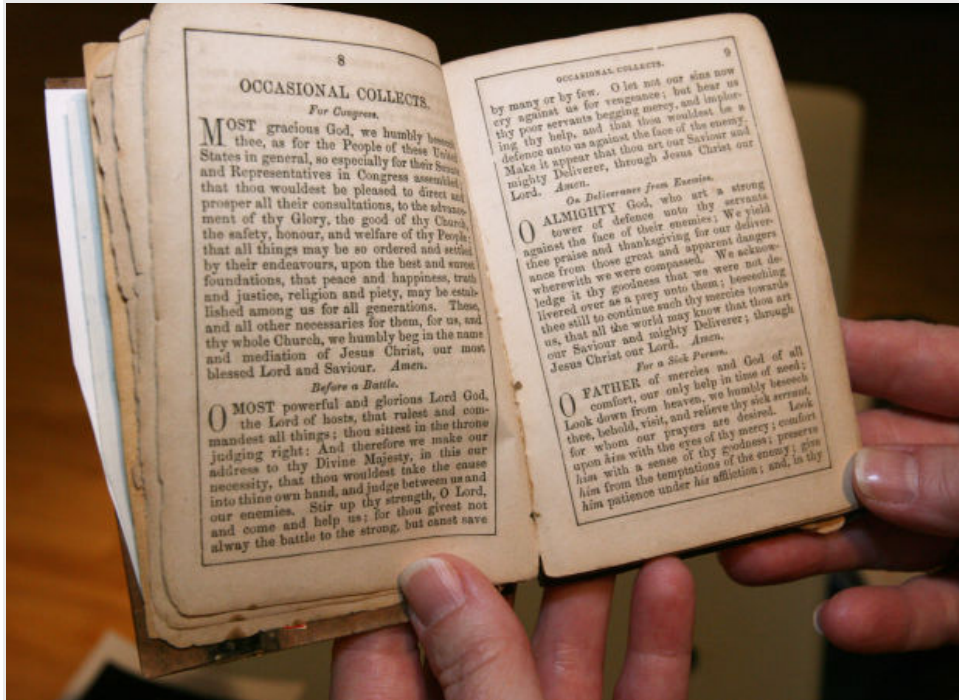
"To carry a book that has been held by three other warriors... over 150 years has been truly special. It helped to know that everyone who has carried it returned safely home to family and friends," he said.

The worn "The Soldier's Prayer Book" will soon be passed on to another military man – Army Spc. Michael Jenkins, a 2008 Saratoga Springs High School graduate. "I hope it brings him peace, luck and good fortune as it has to all of us who have preceded him," Littrell typed on a page in the front.

The antique volume includes a foreword dated 1861 by Alonzo Potter, bishop of the Diocese of Pennsylvania. Within its 60 pocket-sized pages are hymns, prayers and a funeral service that would be used by troops for a shortened worship service "in cases where the full service cannot be celebrated with advantage." Everyone who has received the book has been from New York state.

Littrell said he doesn't recall meeting Jenkins, but wanted the 22-year-old to have the prayer book after having many conversations over the years with his father, Tom, a former co-worker at Hollingsworth & Vose.

Jenkins joined the Army to help find direction in his life, Littrell said, and when he heard recently the young soldier was being deployed to Camp Leatherneck in the Helmand Province of Afghanistan, he felt the time had come to pass the torch.



*Debra Jenkins shows prayers in a Civil War-era prayer book as she seeks to find historical data at the New York State Military Museum in Saratoga Springs on Tuesday, April 2, 2013. The Jenkins family received the book last week addressed to their son, U.S. Army Spc. Michael Jenkins, who is currently serving a tour in Afghanistan.*

"It was clear to me he had made the transformation from a boy into a man and a leader prepared to make the ultimate sacrifice for his country," Littrell said. Jenkins joined the Army in 2010 and was stationed in Bamberg, Germany, until a few weeks ago, at which time he was told to report to Afghanistan.

The young man, a combat engineer who ferrets out and detonates land mines and roadside bombs, originally thought his duty would last nine months, but his tour has been extended to more than a year, his mother, Debra, said. Michael isn't aware this special book is being shipped to him. His mother hopes to catch his reaction during a Skype session.

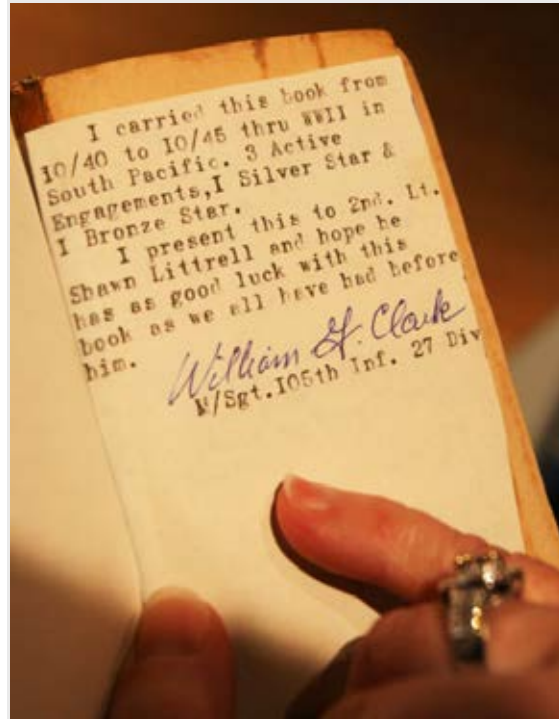
In the meantime, Debra has been doing research to try to find out more about the first three soldiers who were caretakers of the prayer book. She learned from New York State Military Museum in Saratoga Springs that Smith, at 37 years old, enrolled as an Army private at Lansingburg in 1862.

Debra called Littrell's gesture "amazing" and thinks Michael will be honored he was chosen to be the keeper of the prayer book until it is his time to entrust it to another deserving soldier.

Included with it is a small silk flag with 46 stars, thought to have been donated by Morey during World War I, and a gold cross, Littrell added.

Debra hopes the prayer book will help keep her son and the other soldiers in the 307<sup>th</sup> engineering battalion safe.

"Even if it just keeps the troop morale up and just gives them a glimmer that someone cares, somebody is supporting and thinking of them. They can make it through the job they have to do to come home," she said.



*The 150-year-old book has been handed down through five New York servicemen in various wars and each prior owner has left a written note about his service.*



Gen. Gillmore's headquarters was the site of a new chapel to be used for religious worship, as reported by the *New-York Times* on November 19<sup>th</sup>. Men from the 1<sup>st</sup> N.Y. Engineers constructed "a massive tent... intended to be used for religious worship, Masonic and other purposes." The 112<sup>th</sup> N.Y. and 13<sup>th</sup> Indiana built a chapel for their own use, which would be followed by the construction of an even more impressive chapel by the 169<sup>th</sup> N.Y.





Chapel tent at Gen. Gillmore's headquarters at Folly Island, South Carolina, set up for a Masonic ritual (1863)

Chaplain William L. Hyde of the 112<sup>th</sup> N.Y. wrote about their chapel in his *History of the One Hundred and Twelfth Regiment N.Y. Volunteers* (1866):

"Our Brigade consisted of the 112<sup>th</sup> N.Y., Col. Drake, the 13<sup>th</sup> Indiana, Lieut. Col. Dobbs, and the 169<sup>th</sup> N.Y., Col. Buel. Col. Buel was present with this Regiment but a few weeks. Lieut. Col. McConihe commanded. The camp of the 13<sup>th</sup> Indiana was on the right of the 112<sup>th</sup>, and but a short distance from it. Between this regiment and ours there always existed the pleasantest of feeling and a mutual respect. It was one of the oldest and best regiments in the service, having been originally recruited in the Spring of 1861 for three months service; afterwards re-enlisting for three years under Col., later Brig. Gen. R. S. Foster. They were our companions in Brigade from shortly after our arrival in Suffolk, until after the battle of Cold Harbor, June 1864 when the 112<sup>th</sup> was assigned to a new Brigade.

"While on Folly Island, the two regiments jointly built a commodious chapel for mutual use, on the open space between their camps, the Chaplain of the 112<sup>th</sup> officiating for both regiments. This chapel was built with no other tools except axes, hatchets and spades. The forest around supplied all the materials except a few nails. The posts were of palmetto logs set in the ground, the plates and rafters of yellow pine,



**Union camp on Folly Island, South Carolina with a larger structure on the left, possibly a chapel**

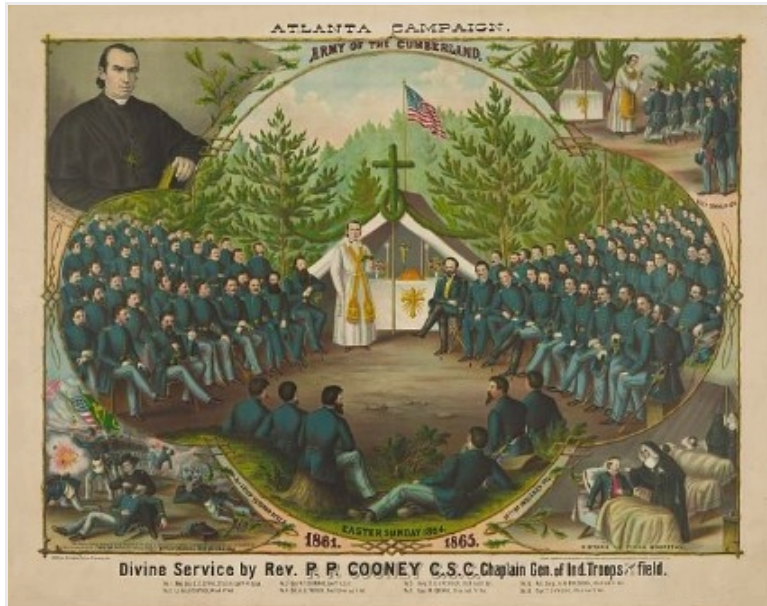
the sides thatched with the leaves of the palmetto, the seats and platform made of palmetto logs split and faced with axes, the backs of the seats made by driving stakes into the ground at each end and in the middle, and nailing a pole across the tops. The floor was clean white sand, which had this advantage over other floors that it needed no sweeping, and the stains of tobacco juice which on common church floors are so disgusting, were easily obliterated by a single brush of the foot. The roof was of old canvass from condemned tents. When finished it was very commodious and comfortable, and though not artistically elegant, yet as a work of art possessed no small merit, when we consider the tools with which it was built. Here religious services were held every Sabbath day, a preaching service in the morning, a bible class in the afternoon, and a prayer meeting in the evening, until we broke camp and left the Island.

"The 169<sup>th</sup> N.Y., under the superintendence of their Chaplain, and having command of more varied materials, built later in the season a far more elaborate chapel within their camp. It was a gem of beauty, both in its structure and adornments."

An article in the *New South* on December 5<sup>th</sup> provides additional details about how the soldiers of the 112<sup>th</sup> N.Y. and 13<sup>th</sup> Indiana conducted their religious services. For some reason the editor elected to withhold the regiments' identities:

"MR. EDITOR: – We are the weekly recipients of your, to us Army boys, welcome, and truly soldiers' paper; but never yet have I noticed a mention of our church; perhaps some would think it strange for us to go to work, and build a church the first thing after coming on the sandy Island of Folly, but nevertheless soon after we came here one was commenced under the charge of the efficient Chaplain of the \_\_\_<sup>th</sup> N. Y. Vols. It is now completed; it is about sixty feet long and forty wide, with seats of split Palmetto logs with backs to them; it is covered with old, condemned tents. In fact it is a model church for soldiers, and considering the circumstances, the country, etc., it is very good.

"As to the Divine service, we have a meeting every Sunday at 10 o'clock A.M., also a Bible class at 1 P.M., Prayer meeting on Sunday evening, and on different evenings through the week. The sermons are generally preached by the Chaplain of the \_\_\_<sup>th</sup> N. Y. Vols.; he is a good man and a thorough Christian – he puts in his time well, visiting through



**Divine Service by Rev. P. P. Cooney,  
C. S. C. Chaplain General of Indiana Troops in the Field  
Private Collection**

men's tents of his own Regiment and others, going to the Hospital and doing what he can for the poor sick and wounded soldier. We have an excellent choir composed of a few officers and men of the \_\_\_<sup>th</sup> N. Y., and the \_\_\_<sup>th</sup> Ind. Vols.

"The health of the troops on the Island is good; better than it was during the hot weather. But these cold nights take the men down a little. But do not allow me to intrude, and take up too much room in your paper."

The beautiful chapel of the 169<sup>th</sup> mentioned by Chaplain Hyde of the 112<sup>th</sup> N.Y. was described in detail in an article by the Springfield *Daily Republican* on January 9, 1864, presented in its entirety:

## Springfield Republican.

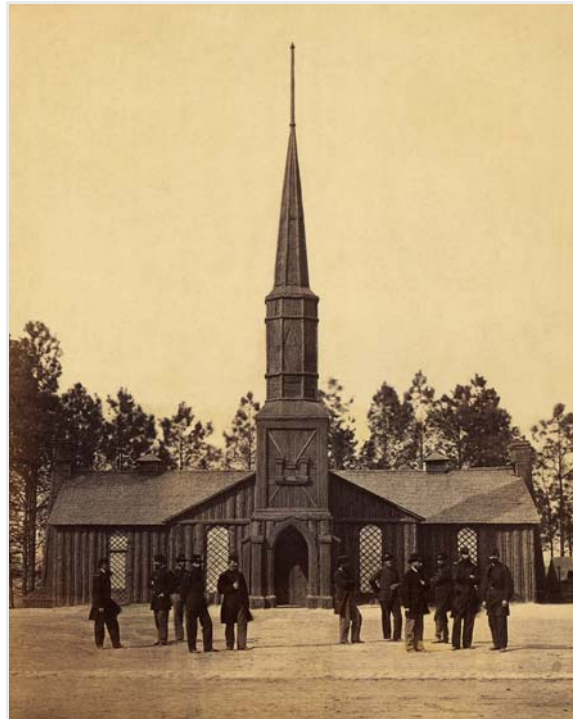
SPRINGFIELD, MASS., JANUARY 9, 1864.

### A RUSTIC CHAPEL FOR SOLDIERS.

The chaplain of the 169<sup>th</sup> New York, Rev. Mr. Chapman, has had constructed on Folly Island, under his own eye, a unique and beautiful rural church. It is about forty feet long and eighteen wide. The sides are made from palmetto leaves, fastened in the form of a thatch, and descend in graceful lines that are gently stirred by the breeze. Eight arched windows give "dim religious light" to the interior, through pink and white cambric muslin. The front is constructed of white pine slabs, split from the logs by the men of the regiment, which are alternated with green palmetto stalks, diverging from a common center. The door is arched, and over the entrance is a rustic cross, surmounting the ridge of the roof. In the eastern end the chancel is situated in a little recess, and rivals in beauty the most costly and elaborate productions of the artisan. The altar is built of palmetto logs, in their natural state,

wreathed with evergreen and holly, and in the front center is the monogram of the Trinity, with the letters I. H. S. in silver. The altar is covered with white, bordered with holly and holly berries. Over the altar is the Apostle's creed in German text – the gift and the work of the surgeon of the 157<sup>th</sup> New York – framed with magnolia leaves, and above this, in the peak, is a silver star on a blue background. The interior of the chancel is decorated with holly and cedar. The chancel rail, semi-circular in form, is made from the natural vine of the grape, which is ingeniously and beautifully twined and worked, while the lectern in front of the chancel rail is elegantly supported by vines, with the cross immediately underneath. The dark blue berry of the grape, with the red of the holly and the light blue of the cedar, are tastefully interwoven, and cling around the rail in all the richness and beauty of their natural growth. The chancel arch, of palmetto wood, wreathed with evergreens, is also very pretty, and over it are the words – "The Lord is in His Holy Temple." The name of the chapel is the "Church of the Nativity." On Christmas eve, imagine the effect, when all this beauty was enriched with the light of an hundred candles, that made the little chapel brighter than the brightest day.

In *Adirondack Camps: Homes Away from Home, 1850-1950* (2000), we find an account of the carpentry skills of Serg't. Seth M. Pierce, Co. A, a renowned furniture craftsman who also built several acclaimed rustic lodges in the Adirondacks after the war. There is little doubt that Serg't. Pierce served in a key role in the design and construction of the 169<sup>th</sup> N.Y.'s chapel at Folly Island:



**Poplar Grove Church, near Petersburg, Virginia, constructed by the 50<sup>th</sup> N.Y. Engineers (ca. 1865)**

"Another maker was Seth Pierce, a Civil War veteran who conceivably assisted with the construction of decorative rustic cabins and even a church, called Poplar Grove Church, which a detachment of engineers built during a quiet spell in the Union army's siege of Petersburg, Va., in 1864. The patterns formed by split poles on the church tower bear



**Seth Pierce (center) at Raquette Lake, New York (ca. 1905-'10)**  
**Collection of the Adirondack Museum, Blue Mountain Lake, New York**



**Corner Cupboard (ca. 1885)**  
**Attributed to Seth M. Pierce (1828-1911)**  
**Collection of the Adirondack Museum, Blue Mountain Lake, New York**

an approximate resemblance to the smaller-scale mosaic work of two sideboards and a corner cupboard that have been attributed to Pierce. One of the side-boards, at the Stott Camp on Bluff Point, Raquette Lake, is so big that a door would have to be widened to move it. The other, equally splendid, is in Trophy Lodge on Brandreth Lake, a few miles north of Raquette Lake. A family picture of the 1890s shows the looming presence of the sideboard behind the assembled McAlpins and Brandreths on the porch. Pierce is also the attributed maker of the corner cupboard from Camp Cedars that is now at the Adirondack Museum. The cupboard, which adopted a quilt design of the late nineteenth century known as 'Flower Basket,' was a gift from Frederick Clark Durant, Jr., a son of the owner of Camp Cedars and the Prospect House hotel."

On September 26, 1894, the *Daily Press* mentioned a photograph of the chapel of the 169<sup>th</sup> N.Y. at Folly Island, on display during the ceremony dedicating the "Soldiers's Memorial Window" at St. Margaret's Episcopal Church in Menands, N.Y. The photograph, possibly the only image of the regiment's chapel, may now be lost to history:

"Tuesday, September 25, will pass into history as the chief of the reunions since the organization of the One Hundred and Sixty-ninth Regiment N. Y. V. association. It will long be remembered as a day when the church and the members of the regiment were drawn in closer touch, and ties were bound tighter between the two. Never before in the history of a regiment has the fact been recorded where a memorial window had been erected as a memorial to the fallen dead.

"The members of the regiment, numbering sixty-four men, and their guests were met upon alighting from the electric cars at Brookside avenue by a part of Doring's band composed of twelve pieces of music.

"The party marched to St. Margaret's church, Menands. The edifice had been tastefully trimmed for the occasion with American flags. Over each side of the main entrance was draped a handsome flag, and as a centrepiece over the door a star had been formed of smaller ones, in the middle of which was the picture of the first church on Folly Island, S. C., in which Rev. Edgar T. Chapman ever preached..."

Despite the fact that many soldiers in the 169<sup>th</sup> were Roman Catholics, including the Irish, Germans, and French (mostly Québécois), there are no known instances of doctrinal conflict between them and the regiment's Episcopal chaplains, or the mostly-Protestant officers. The Episcopal diocese was a very powerful organization in Albany and Troy 150 years ago, one of many churches which undertook a collection for families impoverished by the loss or disability of fathers, husbands, and sons, as reported by the *Daily Press* on November 24<sup>th</sup>:

"THANKSGIVING COLLECTIONS IN THE EPISCOPAL CHURCHES. – Bishop Delancy publishes in the *Gospel Messenger*, a pastoral address, directing that on Thanksgiving day – Thursday next – a collection be taken up for 'the parish clergy, much needing, in these hard times, this additional assistance to their meagre support and depreciated salaries;' and, adds the bishop, 'to carry out the benevolent suggestions of the Governor, I recommend that a collection be made on the following Sunday morning, Nov. 29<sup>th</sup>, and contributions be received, "for the comfort and support of the destitute families of those who have lost their lives, or have become disabled in the service of their country," and that the amount raised be appropriated to this object as the rector and wardens shall direct."

Col. McConihe's letter to John Kellogg on the 23<sup>d</sup> begins with instructions concerning the liquidation of property investments in Nebraska Territory made by both men before the war. Musician Clarkson D. Fuller, Co. K, performed the role of courier while on leave in Troy. Of greater interest, however, was the news that a recruiting detail would soon be sent to Troy from the regiment:



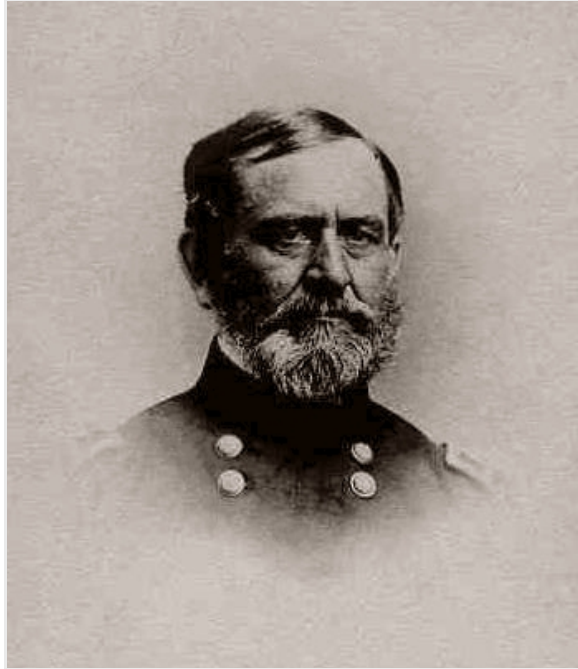
**No. 13 First Street, Troy, New York, the site of the Central Bank of Troy, which changed its name to the Central National Bank in 1865, where John B. Kellogg served as cashier from 1857 until his death in 1871**

"I sent you, per Clarkson D. Fuller, a deed which he witnessed, and which I wished him to execute as such witness before you, and for you then to send it to Omaha and receive in return the sum of three hundred dollars. I hope he will not neglect to call on you without delay. If he does, I wish you would call on him, as you are passing up Second street, between Division and Ferry, and get it from him.



**Identification disc for Musician Clarkson D. Fuller, Co. K, 169<sup>th</sup> N.Y. Private Collection**

"No great amount of news here. I am sorry you were not gratified in your ardent desire for 'Sumter' to be in our possession. We are still pouring our shell day and night into its ruins, throwing an occasional shot over on James and Sullivan's Islands, and a *reminder* now and then into the nest of treason itself.



**New York Adjutant-General John T. Sprague**

"General Sprague is down here and has requested that the commanding officers of New York regiments in this Department be sent home with a proper detail of line officers and privates to recruit their respective regiments and fill them up with volunteers. General Gillmore has approved the plan and forwarded it to Washington for sanction. In case it is approved *there*, it will probably be returned here within the next twenty days, and there is a chance of my being sent to Troy. But *my* going will depend upon my getting the major ordered back to the regiment, as I could not leave until some field officers rejoined it, and the colonel and major are now not with the regiment. But I think I can get the major returned, and if so, I expect to shake your cordial hand before the middle of December. The detail from the 169<sup>th</sup> will consist of six line officers, one field and one staff, and about 40 men, including the regimental brass band, which I have asked to take with me in case I can be spared to go. It would delight me very much to be with you through the holidays. It seems an age since I have seen a 'Young Lady,' and I doubt not I should go crazy at the sight of one. But we shall see.

"Colonel Buel's resignation papers have not been sent in yet. He told Dr. Knowlson to hold onto them until further orders. I suppose they will go forward in 20 or 30 days, when his leave is up, for instance. In this way, he can continue to draw pay, and I cannot be mustered in as colonel until the regiment is filled up, and we need to-day to fill it just two hundred and fifteen men. 250 men would make me all right. In case we receive no recruits and the colonel resigns, I will be in command as lieutenant-colonel, and no colonel mustered in. So it behooves us to get recruits. Colonel Buel, I think, will never return to the regiment as its colonel.

"Lieutenant Kisselburgh is still on General Vogdes' staff and says he shall resign soon in order to take charge of the *Troy Times*.

"The new chaplain, the Reverend Mr. Chapman, has arrived and expresses himself as highly delighted with the regiment, its discipline and standing. He said, 'Colonel, everything in your regiment moves like clockwork and I am astonished at your regularity and precision. You are



far, far ahead of the Old 2<sup>d</sup> [N.Y.] in such matters.' He remarked that unasked this morning. So you see he is pleased.

"I shall bring you and Mose and Tim a Palmetto cane *when* I come home to recruit [Moses Warren and Timothy S. Banker]. Congratulate Mose extensively and hugely for me on the strength of his reëlection [as Surrogate of Rensselaer County]. It shows that merit and worth are not always overlooked. Good for Mose. I wish I could have been home to have helped him. But it is good as it is."

Lieut. Kisselburgh would remain on Gen. Vogdes' staff until the close of the war. In his letter to Mrs. Newton on the 24<sup>th</sup>, Col. McConihe wrote about his high hopes for a vacation in Troy in the very near future:

"Another steamer will soon leave these shores, bound north, and it behooves me to write you. I have no letters on hand from you unanswered, but I have to inform you that the scheme of sending that sword to Troy via Cincinnati, was most suddenly crushed and destroyed. Colonel Buel was so very low when we moved him aboard the ship that he could not even give instructions concerning his personal effects, and of course I could say nothing to him about expressing it at New York. I dare not rely upon his attendant, so the sword will travel with the colonel's baggage direct to Troy.

"I am sorry I elaborate the idea so extensively, yet I am confident you will not blame me for disappointing my own word. If it is as much of a disappointment to you and John, I will promise you shall see it, the very first opportunity. So forget the whole affair, and think it a dream.



**Major-General Quincy A. Gillmore**  
**Commanding X Army Corps and Department of the South**

"But oh, another, more gorgeous scheme: I am thinking seriously of being able to get home within the next 20 days, in charge of a large recruiting party, some seven officers and forty men from this regiment. The plan has been laid before General Gillmore, approved by him, and forwarded to Washington for their approval. The general said, 'Colonel, I think you cannot be spared from the regiment just now, being the



Troy and Vicinity (1872)

only field officer with it, and that you had better recommend your senior captain.' But I said *no*, and I intend *no*. I shall do all I can to go, and hope to be successful. I shall, in due time, get the major ordered to rejoin the regiment, and I have already sent in my name, with *cogent* reasons attached, showing why I should go, and not the senior captain. In case I go, I shall take a staff officer, and have applied to take the regimental band. Should this fine scheme be successful, I propose you and John make a visit to Troy, while I am home. I shall get mother to send you a formal invitation *when I get home*, and you and John would hugely enjoy such a visit in Troy this winter. It would afford recreation for you and take John for a few days, away from those unending, always-increasing bank figures.

"Is this not a nice plan? And I want you to approve of it. Mother would make you and John as much at home in Troy as you and John did me in Cincinnati. Then when we all meet again, we will complete our arrangements for the sailing of the ironclad.

"The whole camp is agog on the subject of 'who the colonel will send,' and although I have already nominated the names of every person I intend shall go, none of them know whether they are the lucky ones or not. The first known of the plan was my sending to each company commander for the names of three proper enlisted men to be sent home on recruiting service. While these were being made out, I nominated eight officers to go, and as soon as the names were all in, I dispatched all to the general. This haste was necessary to get it off with the steamer, which sailed the next morning. When an officer asked me to send *him*, I told him the names have already gone forward to the general. And that, of course, was a clincher on all requests. But I shall not be too jubilant until I hold in my hand an *order for me* to go.



Charleston at Sunrise, 1863, by William R. McGrath

"I have not been at all anxious to obtain a leave, but since the matter has come up, I felt as if a little respite from duties in the field would be pleasant and acceptable. All the New York regiments will do the same, and it is at Governor Seymour's request, laid upon General Gillmore by General Sprague, in person, that the commanding officers of regiments, where there are more than one field officer present, be sent home in charge of the detail. So you see, nothing can prevent my going except the absence of the major. I will not lay out any plans about my visiting Cincinnati until I go aboard the steamer, *en route* to New York.

"There is nothing doing here (nor is there going to be anything more; there is nothing more to be done by this army) at present. We are shelling Sumter, and James and Sullivan's Island daily, with an occasional shot into Charleston, and the Rebels shell us in Wagner and Gregg. But it don't seem to amount to much. This is one reason why I think of going away from the regiment for a vacation."

Col. John anxiously awaited the arrival of a permit from "Uncle Abe" to go recruiting in Troy, according to a short letter to John Newton on the 26<sup>th</sup>:

"A Happy Thanksgiving Day! I send you a copy of the proceedings on the occasion of the presentation of the sword. I only wish I could also send you the sword to look at.

"I am ready at any moment to vacate *this* territory and leave Folly Island to the contrabands. This is a great place for fleas, and this is the height of the season. I am somewhat anxiously looking for the arrival of the next mail, and hope it will bring Uncle Abe's permit for me to go north recruiting. 'Let us tarry, let us tarry, let us tarry yet awhile.'"

Priv. Schutt, by now the premier newspaper correspondent of the 169<sup>th</sup> N.Y., wrote in his Thanksgiving Day letter, published by the *Daily Press* on December 3<sup>d</sup>, about the stoic attitude of the men towards the siege of Charleston and their "most favorable impression" of the regiment's new chaplain:

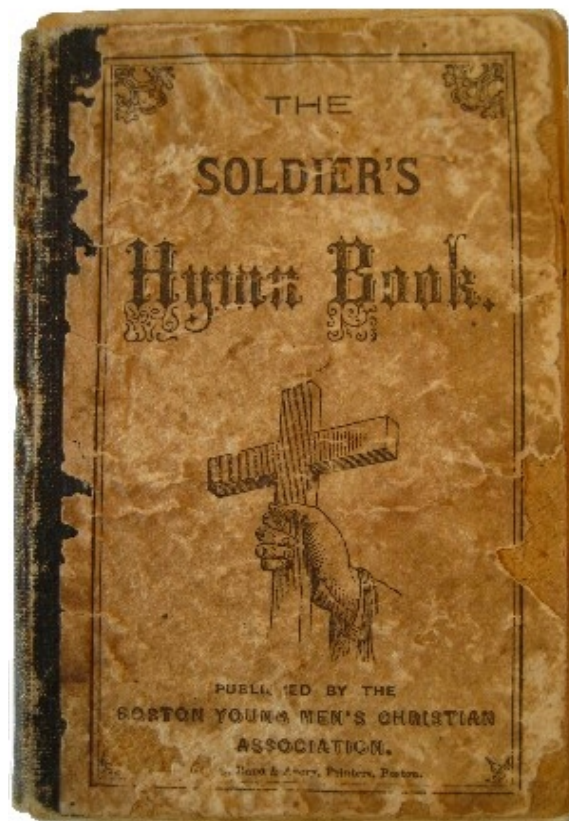


**Bursting of a Shell in the Streets of Charleston, South Carolina**  
Published in "Harper's Weekly" (January 9<sup>th</sup>, 1864)

"No results of tangible form have yet revealed themselves out of the terrible bombardment which has been in progress here for the past three weeks and over. The cloud of uncertainty which has been so long hung, like a dark shadow over the fate of Charleston, is as impenetrable as ever; and he who can deduce from the eventualities of the few weeks past anything like warrantable data wherewith to knit the woof of certain presage, must possess the alchemist's true secret, and might favor the world with some startling revelations now hid from mortal ken.

"The everlasting *bum bum* of our guns on Morris Island still reach our ears and at night the lightning-like flashes of these same engines of destruction send their red glare against the deep azure of the fair, genial skies, which still bend upon us the regal beauties of summer's glow, – a warm sun by day, unclouded serenity by night. – What real progress the siege is making no one appears to know or presume; and for that matter, a general feeling of indifference is manifested on all sides. The flush of victory, which followed the fall of Wagner and Gregg, has paled before the stubborn resistance offered by Sumter. The exuberance of spirit elicited by that event has been supplanted by a certain feeling of stoic unconcern on the part of the troops. They see that in the possession of Morris Island, Sumter at our mercy; the batteries on Sullivan's Island left virtually in our rear; the city of Charleston shrinking from fear of our shells, which may be thrown at pleasure into its paved streets; with all the contingent advantages incident to our possession of its many islands and watercourses to the south and southwest of the city. In all this they see, that while we are leisurely watching the lair of our foe, 'bearding the lion in his den,' if you please – all he can do is to growl and grin more fiercely when the Yankee showman stirs him up, or creep still further into the shadow of his hole when the glaring flame of righteous vengeance burns upon the gloom of night, and warns him of the undying wakefulness of that young genius of Liberty, upon whose shining temple he has dared to lay the traitorous hands of violence.

"We are, then, calmly contemplating the city, its defenses, and its soldiery; feeling assured that 'all is well that ends well,' and confident that reasons, cogent and adequate, are not lacking with our military authorities to explain why more stringent measures are not employed to obliterate this accursed eye-sore from the face of the Earth, or at least render it too dangerous to be inhabited by the scornful devotees of secession. Whatsoever the policy of the government may be with regard to Charleston, it is a humiliating fact, if we are prosecuting an earnest siege for its reduction, that no attempt has been made to overcome the obstructions said to exist in the main channel, and that our ironclads still diffidently conduct their limited operations *scarcely within long range* of the enemy's guns. But enough of this. I gladly turn from a subject so pregnant with ambiguity, and so astonishing in its phases of forbearance and undefined policy on one side, and taunting defiance on the other.



**The Soldier's Hymn Book (1861)**

"Yesterday (Sabbath), was characterized by an event, auspicious as it was pleasant and agreeable to the officers and members of the regiment. It was the occasion of no less an incident than the assumption of his legitimate functions, as Chaplain of the regiment, by Rev. Mr. Chapman, of Troy, formerly Chaplain of the old Second. At the appointed hour, a goodly congregation assembled in front of Colonel McConihe's quarters, when the service (Episcopal) was commenced by our new Chaplain in the usual form. The sermon was preached by Rev. Mr. Taylor, Agent of the Soldiers' Christian Commission. Upon introducing Mr. Taylor, the Chaplain made a few pertinent remarks, observing that although he had been with us a few days, he had little or no time to visit the hospital, or mingle with the men to cultivate their

acquaintance and friendship. He said he had come here, not only as our spiritual advisor, but to share the perils and dangers which environed us; the humblest member of the regiment claimed and should receive the same attention and consideration in his need, as the officer. He referred to Col. Buel's illness, whom he had accompanied as far as Hilton Head on his journey home, and alluded to this as one of the causes which had denied him the privilege of becoming better acquainted with the officers and men of the regiment. In conclusion, he invited the men to lay aside all diffidence, and to visit him in his quarters, to ask his advice and assistance in all cases where it was his province to serve them. This frank and open-hearted greeting of the Chaplain, at once created the most favorable impression in his behalf, and opened the door to confidence, in every bearer's heart. Rev. Mr. Taylor then delivered a short but eloquent sermon, and the services were concluded, not without an awakening of feeling among the auditory, which there is every reason to believe, will not prove of a simply evanescent character.



**Brigadier-General Robert S. Foster**  
**Commanding 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade, X Army Corps**

"On Saturday last, Gen. Foster's brigade, at present composed of three regiments – Thirteenth Indiana, One Hundred and Twelfth N. Y. V., and the One Hundred and Sixty-ninth N. Y. – was reviewed by Gen. Vogdes and Gen. Foster, accompanied by their respective staffs. This review must have proved a most gratifying occasion to the generals and officers in immediate command of the three regiments; for a finer display of martial bearing was never witnessed, than that presented by

the troops of this brigade, in general equipment, scrupulous neatness, accuracy of movement, and splendid appearance of the column as it passed in review before the able commander of the North end of Folly Island, who expressed, in no measured terms, his approbation.

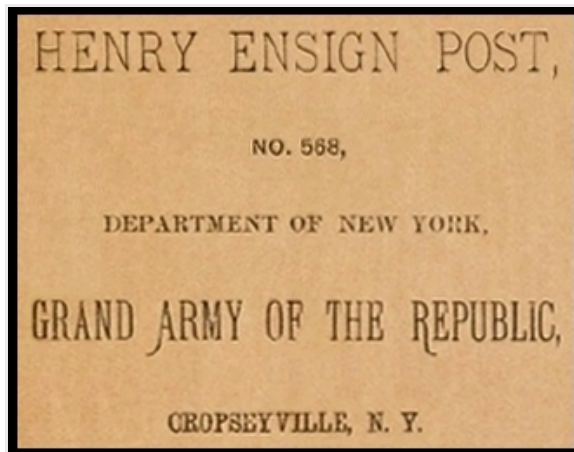
"Col. Buel, who is suffering from an attack of typhoid fever, was removed to Hilton Head last week, and will, I believe, if the nature of his disease permits, go north by the first boat, where he can have the advantages of those little cares and attentions which home alone vouchsafes the invalid. He carries with him the sympathies and prayers of his men that his recovery may be speedy."

Lieut. Kisselburgh continued his correspondence with the *Daily Times*, though less frequently than in the past. A letter published on December 3<sup>d</sup> addressed the case of Capt. Wood at the War Department, (see the October 2013 issue of the newsletter), the arrival of Chaplain Chapman at Folly Island, and the return of Mr. H. A. Ensign, leader of the regiment's band:

"Rev. Mr. Chapman, the new Chaplain of the One Hundred and Sixty-ninth, has been mustered into the United States service, and entered upon the discharge of his duties. Already he has secured a stronghold on the regard of the men, and will, I have no doubt, be of great service to the regiment in his capacity as Chaplain.

"Assistant Surgeon P. L. F. Reynolds has resigned his position and will soon go north. Joy go with him.

"Mr. H. A. Ensign, formerly the leader of the band of the One Hundred and Sixty-ninth, has been reëngaged by the officers of the regiment, and has again resumed the direction of the musical matters of the command. He was with the regiment from the organization of the band until the Peninsular campaign, when he abandoned us. Since then the band had almost become extinct."



Detail from "Rules and Regulations for the Government of Henry Ensign Post, No. 568, Department of New York, Grand Army of the Republic, Cropseyville, N. Y." (1886)  
Collection of the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

*Priv. Henry A. Ensign served as a Musician in the 22<sup>d</sup> N.Y. and the brigade band of the 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade, 3<sup>d</sup> Division, II Army Corps. The Henry Ensign Post No. 568, G.A.R., Cropseyville, (Brunswick), N.Y., was named after him.*

The foregoing update from the lieutenant was followed by a letter on November 26<sup>th</sup>, published by the *Daily Times* on December 4<sup>th</sup>, addressing the subject of the elephant in the room: "The 'siege' is no longer a siege, if at any time it was one."



**Reading the news – Off duty – Rappahannock Station (March 12, 1864)**  
**Edwin Austin Forbes (1839-1895)**  
**Collection of the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.**

"It is a long while since I have put pen to paper for the purposes of newspaper correspondence; and I do not sit down to write now because there is any amount of news here, either departmental or regimental, to justify the enterprise, though I have thought a few running comments on the prospects of our army before Charleston, sandwiched with such items of regimental consequence as I might deem worthy of note, might not be entirely misappropriate. First, then, I am led to believe that the North is clamorous for the capture of Charleston, but I can assure you that the people are not more so than are the soldiers who are specially engaged in the difficult task; and from a clearer knowledge of the situation it ought not to surprise anyone if we read with pain the comments that occasionally appear in the Northern press upon the apparent deleteriousness with which the siege is being carried on. Perhaps we may as well confess the truth, admitted here, that the 'campaign is closed.' The impression is general that the present army can do nothing further to-





**Confederate Brigadier-General Pierre Gustave Toutant Beauregard  
Commanding the Coastal Defenses of South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida**

wards the capture of the city, but it is believed on the contrary that if the navy was disposed to do its work, the imperial seat of chivalry might soon be made to bow its head to our united forces. The man who can look at Sumter to-day and desire that it should be subjected to any more poundings from our artillery, to protect the fleet in its approaches to the harbor, must have an obliquity of vision painful to contemplate. And yet, in obedience to the request of the Admiral, our guns keep up their fire on the fort, and little by little it is crumbling away, and will eventually I presume be leveled to the sea. It is simply a Quaker fort, as Beauregard's guns at Manassas were Quaker guns, more terrible to look at than fearful in execution. If the North could fully understand our position, it would not wonder that events progress no faster, but on the contrary it would be surprised at what has been done with the means at hand. The capture of Forts Wagner and Gregg was in itself the most difficult feat of the war, and yet owing to circumstances that cannot now be explained, the fall of those works has been of no practical use to us, nor any great injury to the rebels. But whilst the people cannot rightly complain of any real tardiness in the conduct of the operations here on the part of the army, they may perhaps have good ground of complaint against the military administration in another essential particular, and that is, the persistency with which our successes and the ability we possessed to inflict injury upon the enemy were permitted to be magnified. Every vessel that went North from here took with it tidings of great joy to the people – the army was on the eve of doing great things – the navy had not, it is true, gone into the harbor, but was about to do so – Greek fire had been or was about to be thrown into Charleston, and that city was on the verge of destruction, if it had not already surrendered. These were some of the reports circulated by skippers running between this point and New York. And when



**Interior view of Fort Putnam (1865)**

Gen. Gillmore announced to the world that 'his guns covered the harbor and city of Charleston,' he delighted the public with a piece of information that subsequent events have not served to justify. The plain fact is, somebody has been hoaxed, whether it was Gen. Gillmore or the public, I will not attempt to say.

"Our batteries have recently thrown a considerable number of shots into or at Charleston, but so far as we can learn, very little damage has been inflicted upon the city. I do not learn that Greek fire was used in any case; and indeed it matters little, since it is pretty generally thought that the injury which can be inflicted on the town from our present position will not compensate for the material expended. The idea that we can fire Charleston to any extent even from Cumming's Point, is pretty well exploded. Somebody is to blame for exciting public expectations in this particular, also. The 'siege' is no longer a siege, if at any time it was one.

"Adjutant-General Sprague, of New York, is now paying a visit to this Department, one of the objects of his trip being to concert measures by which the New York regiments in the field could be filled up, and recruiting in the State stimulated. A meeting of the commanding officers of State regiments was held at Gen. Gillmore's headquarters one evening, at which Gen. Sprague was present, and various plans were discussed for securing these desirable results. Finally, it was decided that the commanding officer of each regiment, one staff officer, one line officer, and three enlisted men for every fifty men required to fill up the regiment to the maximum, should be despatched home to their respective districts to recruit for their commands. This proposition was approved by Gen. Gillmore, and forwarded for the sanction of the War department. If it is approved by Mr. Stanton, the recruiting party from the One Hundred and Sixty-ninth regiment will soon be in Troy, where it is hoped a sufficient number of volunteers may be obtained to fill the



**Edwin M. Stanton, U. S. Secretary of War (1862)**  
**Alonzo Chappel (1828-1887)**

regiment up to the maximum standard. Lieut.-Col. McConihe will head the delegation from the regiment.

"To-day being Thanksgiving day, religious services are held at all the camps, and in some instances whole brigades assemble together for worship."

In Col. McConihe's letter to John Kellogg on the 27<sup>th</sup>, he wrote that the recruiting detail would be composed of "good men." Since there were many good men in the regiment, one has to wonder if extenuating factors may have been considered in the selection process. One of the men chosen for the recruiting detail was your correspondent's great-great-grandfather, Serg't. Patrick J. Aylmer, Co. G, who lost his infant son, John P. Aylmer, age 9 months, on August 26, 1863, from tubercular meningitis contracted three weeks earlier.

"Yours of the 18<sup>th</sup> inst. came per last steamer, and I am glad to know you were pleased with those proceedings, 'even to the ½ gill whiskey to the men.' The men also took very kindly to said whiskey.

"My last letter to you will record my action on the subject of sending home a recruiting detail. It accords with your views as expressed in your letter and I hope to know, within the next ten days, what action in the matter the Government will take. The 'detail' will be composed of

good men, and with the assistance of our friends, I believe it will be a successful one. Let us hope so. I will write you as soon as anything definite transpires about the recruiting detail. We think we shall hear from Washington by the next steamer (Wednesday the 2<sup>d</sup>, prox.)

"The regiment was paid off to-day in full to October 31<sup>st</sup>, and the men have settled their clothing account with the Government in full, up to August 31<sup>st</sup>, 1863. The last two paydays the U. S. drew heavily on their funds, and I fear their families received but little. They will hereafter draw full pay until another year rolls around, and then, if they overdraw their clothing allowance, they must again settle.



"It is raining hard, yet the heavy guns are sounding through the air. I sent to-day, per Sergeant Tompkins of Co. K, a Palmetto cane to you, to Martin I., to Mose, to Tim, to Isaac, and to Alonzo.\* The wood you will find quite tough, and I think it will make a neat, light stick when more fully dried. I 'turned' them myself for you, and would advise you to use them carefully until seasoned. They are now fully as stout and durable as 'rattan sticks.' The one for you is marked, and is, I think, the neatest-turned. You may present the others to the aforesaid gentlemen with my compliments. Said cane is the stalk of the leaf of the Palmetto and cut *green*, and will season yellow. *In case* I go home, I shall bring one for Mr. Hawley and for Rufus M. Townsend each."

[Note: \*Serg't. Albert A. Tompkins, Co. K, Martin I. Townsend, Moses Warren, Timothy S. Banker, Isaac McConihe, Jr., and Alonzo McConihe; the latter two were John's brothers.]

Col. McConihe's letter to Mrs. Newton on November 29<sup>th</sup> invoked memories of the Newton home in Cincinnati, where John recuperated from his wound at Shiloh. The colonel then described the sumptuous dinner held at the headquarters chapel, given on Thanksgiving eve by representatives of the press for invited guests:

"Your letter of the 17<sup>th</sup> inst. came Friday (it is Sunday evening) and I will not tell you it was a good letter (for all your letters are good) but I will remark it was felicitous; yes, very charming. You must be aware, from the frequency with which I write you, the occasional papers which I send you, and the great length of my letters to you, that I am determined to keep myself in your memory, and to retain the recollection green, of sweet, bygone hours. How could I do otherwise, than vividly, unceasingly, too, remember the none but pleasant days and scenes when I sojourned with you and John. I will not accept your pin sticking scene in place of the scene I depicted. No, I will retain mine, and embellish it



Character sketches inside a sketchbook (186?)

Charles Gulager (1826-1899)

The Fenwick Collection, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and  
State University, Blacksburg, Virginia

all with everything that makes a group look happy. I will paint it as it was – the surroundings could not be more serene, high-toned, contented, happy, jolly! Such shall be the picture, with all in, Mr. Graham fixing the water-pot under the hydrant, Harry wistfully looking at that wily squirrel on the stone fence, and Ellen's head peering out the side door, announcing supper, (you and John and myself, as before mentioned) and the neat white cloth spread bountifully, being seen through the open window over John's boots on the railing, &c. All these things, and many more, shall be painted.

"It would delight you and John to drop in these evenings, on the really beautiful, comfortable appearance of my quarters. I have partially described them to you in a previous letter, but since then I have adorned them with the holly and magnolia.

"It has rained hard all day, and the crackling, cheerful fire in my fireplace seems most generous this evening. I feel contented, at home, when within these quarters; but when I look out and see the boundless waters, I see familiar faces and cherished scenes, flitting, dancing, and existing in the great expanse beyond. At sunset, the heavens betokened a pleasant morrow – the western sky was clothed in its mixed golden-crimson-silvery dress, and was resplendent with light and color. Yet, as I gazed upon the beauties of this Southern sky, I saw through and beyond this gorgeous glare, and looked into the faces of friends afar off, and passed to many a pleasant, bygone scene. You and John, Mr. Graham, Harry, Ellen, Miss Appleton, Miss Bakewell, Mr. Potter, Willie Potter, the squirrel, the dog, the vine, and McFarland Street are there – all and many other not enumerated are there. McFarland Street runs through a dark cloud, down to a golden building, and I see John inside, writing with a gold pen (an unusual thing for him) and then it branches, (I mean McFarland Street), off into 4<sup>th</sup> Street, and you and I are standing in front of a large building, watching a great procession –



**The Soldier's Dream of Home (ca. 1861)**

it is the funeral of General McCook, and John is lost somewhere in the crowd, and I see him quietly taking a position, after having made a very cursory search for us.

"The military happenings and the martial air of this throng brings me to ask what is life in the army – a volunteer, not a professional soldier – and I see a solution to my query in that crimson-fringed, fleecy cloud; it is (life in the army is) a crimson-fringed, fleecy longing for those faces beyond, at home. Ah, too true is it, that the volunteer longs for the dear ones far away, but he crushes out the longing – pushes back the thought of them – only to have it rush forward again as he silently gazes at the mute forms of the loved ones, moving along in the crimson-fringed, fleecy cloud in the great beyond. The soldier's dream of home is not a mere fancy – it is a constant, renewing *phantasy*; a vision that assumes shape and form.

"And I know there are aching hearts at home, clasped hands and up-lifted eyes, praying he may be restored to us, and that God's loving angels may watch over him. I know this from the anxious letters which I constantly receive (and invariably answer) concerning soldiers of my regiment. Let us hope the war will soon be honorably closed, and the volunteer be returned to his home. Then the artist can paint the picture of a 'Happy Family.'

"Indeed, I do so wish you were down here a short time to enjoy the music of General Gillmore's band, our band, and the colored troops' (brigade band, and the thousand and three drums, bugles, and fifes) which make such constant, inharmonious, melodious, heart-stirring, ear-breaking music. You would never write of charming duets, but would be led to think of the music of the spheres, not music Seraphic, but the concentrated music hemispheric. And then there's the music of the artillery. I would delight to hear soft, sweet music – vocal singings – not the clanging of cymbals and the rush of horns, but that soul-inspiring love begetting sweet music of song singing. A good hand organ would even be a relief. *Sotto voce*.



**Still-Life with Game Fowl (ca. 1600-'03)**  
**Juan Sánchez Cotán (1560-1627)**  
 The Art Institute of Chicago

"Thanksgiving eve, I dined at the great dinner given by the representatives of the press in this Department at headquarters chapel, built by the engineers. In the first place, let me say the chapel is most tastefully gotten up with the rudest materials (with canvas for a roof), and that it exceeds, in trimming and appearance, any decorated church trimmed for Christmas I ever saw. The wreaths of rich green cedar, hanging profusely yet gracefully, the dark rich green magnolia, and the lighter green, small-leafed holly, with its delicate, red berry, intertwined with the cedar and the palmetto, all artistically and tastefully arranged, made the chapel truly bewitching. About eighty guests sat at the long table, and there was an abundance to eat and drink. Speeches were made, and I spoke to the toast, 'The volunteers, the mainstay of our Republic.' I told them I was a soldier by circumstance, and that I would lay off my military today and shout glad tidings of peace when this war is over.

"Yes, Mrs. Newton, I made a speech, but I do not know if it is recorded elsewhere, but I wish to assure you it was a pleasant gathering, and as I sat at the bountiful table, supplied with turkeys, ducks, game, Champagne, and all that appetite can crave (brought from New York), I thought of absent friends, and gave thanks inwardly for them.

"Nothing has been heard from the colonel since he left. Nothing concerning the recruiting detail."

Corp. Carmon was enjoying a life of leisure since the end of daily division drill, according to a letter to his sister on the 6<sup>th</sup>. A lot of the men must have taken the opportunity to write home, as evidenced by the shortage of postage stamps:

"There is nothing new going on here. It is the same old story. We are a building a new chapel here in our regiment. We have not got it quite done yet, but I think that we will finish it this week. General Gillmore has raised a splendid flagpole down in front of his headquarters.

"You spoke about my allotment. I did not get any last payday. I drew more than my allowance of clothing for the last year, so they took it out of my pay and I did not get but only nine dollars, so I thought that I would keep that for me to use. We got paid-off a few days ago and I



**Battle of Chattanooga, November 25, 1863**

**Thure de Thulstrup (1848-1930)**

**Published by L. Prang & Co., Boston, Massachusetts (ca. 1880)**

have got an allotment this time. I expect that Richard Horton will be a going home in a few days, and I will send it by him, but we don't know for certain whether he will go or not. If he don't go, I will send it in my next letter.

"They fired a salute here the other day in honor of General Grant's great victory in Tennessee, and a glorious victory it was too! One of the Rebel rams tried to come down out of the harbor one morning a few days ago, but the 'old Ironsides' opened on her, and she soon lay on the bottom of the harbor.

"You don't know what comfort we take here now. We have got our tent fixed up good and warm, and a nice little fireplace built in it. I used to think that it was warm down here, but I find out the difference now. It is warm enough in the daytime, but the nights are pretty cold. We have to get up every morning at five o'clock and stack arms in the street untill daylight, when we have to fall-in again and take our guns. By that time breakfast is ready.

"I wish that you would send me the girl's photographs. I will pay for having them taken. It would seem so nice to have all of the folks here to look at once in awhile. There is no chance for me to have mine taken. If there was, I should have it done and send it to you.

"We don't have scarcely anything to do now. We were having division drill every afternoon, but that is played-out. So all we have to do is to lay around camp. I am getting to be so fat that I can't hardly see! Send me some stamps in your next letter, as it is pretty hard to get them down here."

Lieut. Kisselburgh's letter of the 4<sup>th</sup>, published by the *Daily Times* on the 14<sup>th</sup>, was accompanied by the following introduction: "Lieut. Kisselburgh, whose letters are ever readable, gives the names of the soldiers of the One Hundred and Sixty-ninth who have been decorated with medals of honor for gallantry in the trenches before Fort Wagner. The 'roll of honor' will be read with pride and int-





Interior view of Fort Putnam, showing two 100-pounder Parrott guns and stacks of shells (1865)

erest at home – especially by the friends of the men thus distinguished." The letter is presented in its entirety:

## The Troy Daily Times.

**From the One Hundred and Sixty-ninth.**

Correspondence of the Troy Daily Times.

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

The *status quo* remains unchanged. From the hoarse-throated mortars in Wagner and Gregg, now Forts Strong and Putnam, and from the Parrotts that change the cry of "Polly wants a cracker," to "Gillmore wants Charleston," as well as from the rebel batteries all along the shore, there is nothing but the same old monotonous artillery report to record. We fire and the rebs return the compliment; and so from day to day the same old tiresome song is sung. On the morning of the 1<sup>st</sup>, however, our friends on the other side rather outdid themselves, and from a new battery which they uncovered, kept up the most incessant fire I ever heard. They fairly rained the shot down upon our works, but so well are the men protected that I believe not a soldier was injured. The cause of this sudden outburst of rebel fury I have been unable to



**Mortars in Fort Putnam aimed at Fort Sumter (1865)**

learn; but it is conjectured that possibly an attempt was to have been made to run the iron ram out of the harbor under the cover of this powerful and concentrated fire, and taking her to Wilmington, make a last struggling effort to keep open at least one port to the blockade-runners engaged in supplying the increasing wants of the Confederacy. If this supposition is correct, the intention is to speedily abandon Charleston; for, in the present aspect of affairs, Beauregard would not consent to spare even the least of his means of defence so long as he intended to prolong the struggle.

The news of Grant's victories reached us on the 1<sup>st</sup>, and was received with great joy by the troops. Gen. Gillmore at once ordered a salute to be fired, and as the news spread from camp to camp it would have gladdened the heart of every pestilent copperhead at the North to have heard the hearty, rousing cheers that were given for the gallant army of the West. The news reached us a day or two before it was publicly announced to the soldiers by the way of the pickets of the enemy, through whom we generally obtain the first intelligence of an important nature. A Charleston paper of the 2<sup>d</sup> inst. is now on the island – only two days after publication – and a most dolorous view of Southern affairs it takes. Indeed, the confession is becoming general that the Confederacy is "busted," and that the war is near its close. Prisoners and refugees who have arrived here – and considerable numbers of the latter have recently come in – all confess that the people of the South are thoroughly disheartened, their armies greatly demoralized, and that everybody is anxious for peace. This is the universal report of all who come in – not the testimony of one or two, but of all. The army feels jubilant, and hundreds who a short time ago looked forward to a long period of service now see the harbinger of peace already in the heavens.



**The Gillmore Medal**

*The Gillmore Medal was adopted on October 28, 1863, by General Orders No. 94, Headquarters Department of the South, by command of Maj. Gen. Quincy A. Gillmore. It was intended for enlisted men and was to be awarded for "gallant and meritorious conduct during the operations before Charleston." The award was to go to not more than three percent of the men serving who had been in action or on duty in the trenches or batteries. Company officers were to nominate men of their unit who were felt to be deserving of the award. The medal has on its face a representation of Fort Sumter in ruins and was produced by the firm of Ball, Black & Company of New York City.*

Sunshine begins to break through the darkness – light to flash along the mountain peaks; the fog is lifting in the valleys – the storm is passing away.

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.

DEPARTMENT OF THE SOUTH, HEADQUARTERS IN THE FIELD,  
FOLLY ISLAND, S. C., Oct. 28, 1863.

GENERAL ORDERS No. 94. – I. Medals of honor for gallant and meritorious conduct during the operations before Charleston, will be awarded by the Commanding General to a number of the enlisted men of this command, not exceeding three per cent. of the present aggregate strength of those regiments, companies and detachments that have been in action or on duty in the batteries or trenches.

Candidates for these honors will be nominated by company officers, acting for their respective companies in the capacity of a Board. The recommendations of these Boards will be forwarded to the post commanders, through the usual channels, accompanied by remarks of approval or disapproval of the intermediate commanders, set opposite the name of each candidate.

The list thus obtained will be examined and pronounced upon by Boards convened by post commanders, and composed exclusively of field officers, and will then be forwarded to these headquarters.

II. In honor of some of the brave men who have fallen on Morris Island during the present campaign, the following names are adopted for the works herein-below designated, viz:

The work at Cummings Point will be known as Fort Putnam; that next to it, on Morris Island, as Battery Chatfield; Fort Wagner, as Fort Strong; the new work near the south end of Morris Island, as Fort Shaw; that on Oyster Point, as Battery Purviance; and that on the north end of Folly Island, as Fort Green. By command of

Maj.-Gen. Q. A. GILLMORE.

Chaplain Chapman is erecting a house of worship for the regiment. It will be completed in time for use on Christmas day, probably before.

I regret to state that Capt. Jerome B. Parmenter has been forced to resign in consequence of continued ill-health. Capt. P. was one of the most efficient and competent officers in the regiment, and by his high-toned character, uniform courtesy and soldier-like demeanor, won the regards of both officers and men. He evinced rare adaptability to the profession of arms, and until seized by the disease from which he has so long suffered, was one of the most active spirits of the command. It has been long evident to all, save himself, that he would have to quit a service too severe for his impaired constitution, and now that the painful conviction is forced upon him, he resigns with a reputation unsullied. It is to be hoped that in the quiet enjoyment of civil life, he may be restored to health. First Lieut. Daniel J. Cary has been recommended for promotion to fill the vacancy, and Second Lieutenant E. R. Smith to the position vacated by Lieut. Cary.

In my last letter, it was announced that the War Department had revoked Captain Wood's muster. At the time the letter was written, this was undoubtedly the fact; but the same day, Capt. W. received a second notice from the War Department, from which it appears that he is now "all right." I am happy to assure his friends of this fact, and all will no doubt be glad to learn that at last the case of Stanton vs. Wood is determined for the defendant.

W. E. K.



Mounting Guard Inspection, Fort Strong (April 1865)

A letter from Priv. Schutt on the 8<sup>th</sup> provides another interesting account of regimental affairs, including news about the resurrected regimental band. He reported the date of the Thanksgiving dinner provided by the press at Gen. Gillmore's headquarters as the 21<sup>st</sup>, whereas Col. McConihe wrote in his letter to Lavinia Newton that it took place on Thanksgiving eve. President Lincoln proclaimed a national day of "Thanksgiving and Praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the Heavens," to be celebrated on Thursday, November 26<sup>th</sup>. The letter is presented in its entirety:

## The Troy Daily Press.

DECEMBER 14, 1863.

### From the One Hundred and Sixty-ninth. – an Interesting Letter.

CAMP OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTY-NINTH REGIMENT,  
FOLLY ISLAND, NEAR CHARLESTON, S. C., December 8<sup>th</sup>, 1863.

*Editors Daily Press:* – Your correspondent can but reiterate the assurances now conveyed by every steamer from this department, of alternate storm and calm in the progress of the bombardment, without so much as a shadow to offer in the way of results. One day will be characterized by steady unabated fire by our batteries on Morris Island, upon rebel works, and the next by an almost unbroken lull, with no apparent disposition on either side to annoy each other. A little firing between the enemy's and our own advanced pickets are the only really exciting incidents which occasionally disturb the rather tranquil monotony of the siege.

In the absence of other news, therefore, it may not be uninteresting to mention matters of a more subdued character than the details of death and carnage, unalienable with the prosecution of a sanguinary contest, where assaults and *sorties* are occurrences of every day.

#### GRAND COMPLIMENTARY DINNER BY THE PRESS.

A grand complimentary dinner was given by the representative of the *Press* in this department on Thanksgiving day, 21<sup>st</sup> inst., to the many distinguished officers and other notables engaged under Gen. Gillmore



in the prosecution of the siege, and it was one of the most brilliant affairs so far as such a banquet could realize the expectations of epicurean taste and cordial good feeling ever attempted on the field within gunshot (Parrott) of the enemy. It was, emphatically, a

"Feast of reason and a flow of soul,"

aside from the substantial and delicate displays of edibles, pastry, &c., which had been procured at no inconsiderable expense from distant marts, and which were served in a style and with regard for the etiquette of modern usages that would have done credit at the banquet board where the Russian naval officers figured a few weeks since, as the honored guests of the great city of New York.

The new and commodious chapel recently erected near Gen. Gillmore's headquarters was selected by the representatives of the press, and "mine host" on this occasion, as the most suitable place for the laying of the festive boards and the entertainment of their distinguished guests, and its use was cheerfully accorded them. The interior of the chapel was most beautifully and tastefully decorated with magnolia, holly, and the native palmetto, and every device which could be appropriately wrought with the primitive material on hand, to add *éclat* to the occasion, was made to serve it and toward the realization of this idea. Were I to essay everything more than a superficial glance of this *chef d'œuvre* in the banquet hall, I should be transcending the humble province. I have circumscribed at the limit of my reportorial limit. A full and detailed account of this affair will appear in the New York papers, and Mr. Crane, the unapproachable artist of *Frank Leslie's Illustrated*, will do up the illustrations in his most happy style.

Col. McConihe was among the invited guests, and, it is needless to add, represented Troy and the One Hundred and Sixty-ninth as they should



be, as a soldier and rhetorician, schooled no less in the science of arms, than in the scholarly acquisitions of civil life, which shine alike within the halo of the bar, or when scintillated from the impromptu rostrum of the festive board.

All in all, the occasion was one which, although not anomalous with precedents among military men, may be cited as one of the most successful, if not only attempt, ever undertaken by the representatives of the *Press*, or any other civil class, to give a banquet on such a magnificent scale, upon the field, near the scene of active operations.

#### **THE MEDALS OF HONOR.**

In a previous letter, I made mention of the fact that medals of honor, to the number of three percent, were to be awarded to meritorious soldiers, who had taken an active part in the operations before Charleston. The number of medals awarded to this regiment is eighteen, and I am now able to give you the names of those upon whom the different boards of company officers have decided to confer this honor: Sergeant Thomas Jessop, Co. A; Private August Strassman, Co. A; Sergeant Michael Ryan, Co. B; Sergeant George A. Willis, Co. C; Private George Broker, Co. C; Sergeant Barney McGuire, Co. D; Sergeant John H. Williams, Co. E; Sergeant William W. Downs, Co. E; Corporal George C. Wagner, Co. F; Corporal John McLaughlin, Co. F; Sergeant Samuel C. Sargeant, Co. G; Corporal John D. Havens, Co. G; Sergeant Edgar Vanderzee, Co. H; Corporal Alonzo Sliter, Co. H; Sergeant George Campbell, Co. I; Corporal Marshall Dillon, Co. I; Sergeant James H. Straight, Co. K; Corporal Joseph White, Co. K.

When the presentations of these medals will transpire I am not apprised. It will probably be some weeks yet, however.

#### **THE BAND OF THE 169<sup>TH</sup> – ITS PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE.**

When our regiment was encamped at Camp Abercrombie, in Virginia, it was discovered that the element for the composition of a good brass band existed in the ranks, and forthwith a number of officers,



**Captain Daniel W. Ferguson, Co. K, 169<sup>th</sup> N.Y.  
Collection of the New York State Military Museum,  
Saratoga Springs, New York**

conspicuous among whom was Capt. Ferguson, of Co. K, determined to develop the embryo talent, thus awaiting the classic hand of some competent master to mold into an organic body, which should be capable of filling a sensible void in our otherwise well-appointed and efficient regiment. Accordingly, Capt. Ferguson was sent home to purchase the instruments and secure the services of a competent teacher and leader. – His mission proved successful in both respects, and in due time the instruments were received, and were shortly followed by Mr. H. A. Ensign, of Lansingburgh, who at once entered upon the in no wise enviable task of organizing and instructing the future members of the band. In this he was ably seconded by Mr. G. M. Smith, of Co. K, under whose immediate charge the band and drum corps are, and who assumes the leadership in the absence of Mr. Ensign.

Thus organized and controlled, the band made rapid progress, and in the course of a few weeks evinced marked proficiency, and continued to improve until the Peninsular campaign of last summer, when its members threw aside their instruments to join in the long and toilsome marches and deprivations incident to the penetration of an enemy's country where their services might be required to minister to the wants of their wounded and dying companions, should the enemy choose to dispute our progress before the accomplishment of the object for which the expedition was intended.

During the sojourn of the regiment in Washington, the *Daily Chronicle* pronounced the execution of the band equal to that of the famous Dodsworth's, which I assure your readers was no mean comparison at that time, for the band performed excellently, and at dress parades and guard mountings the streets about the barracks were thronged with eager listeners, and crowded with equipage of the *élite* of the city.





Since the Peninsula expedition, however, sickness has entered the ranks of the band, and other causes have militated against its successful continuance as an institution of more than ordinary interest. The introduction of new members to replace those who by sickness or inefficiency, were removed, and the absence of a competent instructor, may be set down as the chief cause of its deteriorated excellence. These disparaging circumstances, however, are now happily overcome. Mr. Ensign, accompanied by a superior fifer for the Drum Corps, Mr. Thomas D. Halligan, formerly of Sullivan's Band, reached here by the *Arago* last week, and we may now safely predict for the Band a reputation for the future excelled by none in the service.

The names of the members of the Band, as now organized, together with the instrument played by each, I herewith append for the knowledge of their friends at home, and all who may feel interested:

**H. A. Ensign, Leader and Instructor**

NAMES	INSTRUMENTS
W. Adams	Solo Ebercorno.
J. M. Smith	Eb Cornet.
J. H. Stickelmyres	Bb " .
J. Murray	2 <sup>d</sup> Alto.
H. Fritz	1 <sup>st</sup> Alto.
S. Cheever	1 <sup>st</sup> Tenor.
W. Briggs	2 <sup>d</sup> Tenor.
I. Rose	Bb Cornet.
George Youngs	1 <sup>st</sup> Baritone.
W. Puffer	1 <sup>st</sup> Tuba.
J. Fox	2 <sup>d</sup> " .
S. Olmstead	Cymbals.
T. Knight	Snare Drum.
H. R. Leffingwell	" " .
F. Delaire	Base Drum.



**Sergeant John Murray, Co. H, 169<sup>th</sup> N.Y.,  
2<sup>d</sup> Alto Horn  
Provided by Cynthia McKeon**



**Regimental Fife and Drum Corps in the field**

The Drum Corps also bids fair, under the tutorship of Mr. Halligan, and daily practice, to make its mark in the history of the regiment, and we hail these indications of certain improvement with feelings of pride and pleasure.

The following now constitute the members of the Drum Corps: Thomas D. Halligan, Fife Major; D. Cummings, fifer; James Waters, fifer; Thomas A. Overcocker, snare drummer; George D. Ripley, snare drummer; Barney Dean, snare drummer; Julius Stebbins, snare drummer; C. D. Fuller, snare drummer; F. Delaire, base drummer.

The *Daily Times* provided further details on Mr. Halligan on the 16<sup>th</sup>: "Thomas Halligan has been appointed to be Drum Major of the One Hundred and Sixty-

ninth Regiment. Mr. Halligan is abundantly qualified for the position, having served his time in the Eighth regulars. He is a member of Sullivan's Band, of this city."

The onset of cold weather brought about a reduction of military operations in Virginia, and the 125<sup>th</sup> N.Y., serving with the Army of the Potomac, went into winter quarters. In a meeting of the Rensselaer County Board of Supervisors on December 10<sup>th</sup>, Mr. Levi Squire, representing the 4<sup>th</sup> Ward of Troy, offered a resolution to see about bringing the boys home for the winter months. Mr. Dennis Shehan of the 7<sup>th</sup> Ward moved to include the 169<sup>th</sup> N.Y., but action on the resolution was "deferred," according to an article appearing in the *Daily Times* the following day:



**Troy Court House, Troy Female Seminary, and  
First Presbyterian Church (ca. 1889)**

"BOARD OF SUPERVISORS. – *Thursday, Dec. 10, 2 P.M.* – Mr. Squire offered the following:

'*Whereas*, It has been represented to the Board of Supervisors of the county of Rensselaer in the State of New York that the One Hundred and Twenty-fifth Regiment of Infantry, New York State Volunteers, a regiment organized in the City of Troy in said county, is about to go into winter quarters and remain inactive for some months; and

'*Whereas*, In the opinion of said Board of Supervisors, the recruiting and enlistment of new men for military service would be greatly increased by the presence and exertions of the officers and men of said regiment, and in sufficient numbers to justify the transportation of said One Hundred and Twenty-fifth Regiment to the City of Troy, New York; and

'*Whereas*, Said regiment is now, as said Board of Supervisors has been informed and verily believe, not needed for present active service; therefore be it

'*Resolved*, That the Representative in Congress from this District be requested to use his exertions to induce the Secretary of War and proper military authorities at Washington to transport to the City of Troy, New York, said One Hundred and Twenty-fifth Regiment during the winter months, or for such time as they will not be likely to be needed for active service, for the purpose of facilitating enlistments and inducing persons to enter the military service of the United States. And be it further

'*Resolved*, That copies of these preamble and resolutions be signed by the Chairman and Clerk of this Board, with the seal of the county, and furnished without delay to the Honorable the Secretary of War, and to the Hon. John A. Griswold, the Representative in Congress from this district.

"Mr. Shehan moved to amend by including the One Hundred and Sixty-ninth Regiment. Action was deferred."



**Hilton Head, at the Entrance to Port Royal, S.C. (1883)**  
**Thomas Moran (1837-1926)**  
**Private Collection**

The War Department approved Gen. Gillmore's request to send recruiting details up North, but his visit to the headquarters of the Dept. of the South at Hilton Head would delay the departure of the 169<sup>th</sup>'s detachment, as feared by Col. McConihe in his letter to John Newton on the 12<sup>th</sup>:

"I understand the plan adopted by the commanders of New York regiments on these islands has been returned from Washington, *approved*. But General Gillmore is at the headquarters, and I fear he will not return in time to allow us to take this steamer. Too bad, isn't it, that we can't get home by Christmas?!"

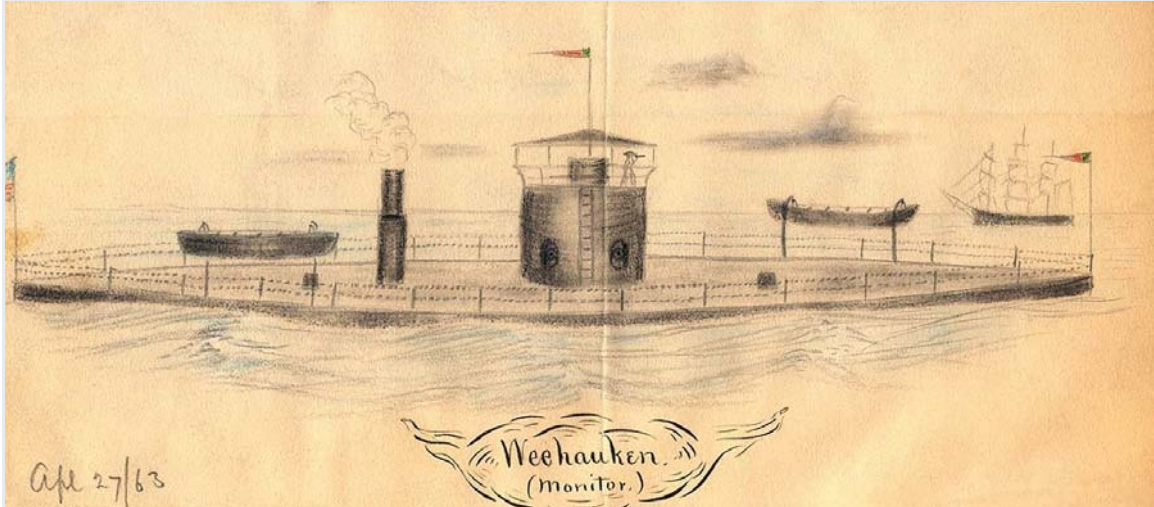
"Hoping to be able to get off on the next steamer."

In reading the colonel's letter to John Kellogg the same day, one must wonder why Gen. Gillmore did not promulgate the orders from Washington before leaving Folly Island. In any event, the bad weather delayed his return:

"Yours of the 3<sup>d</sup> inst. came per the last steamer, and I fear we shall not return on her. General Gillmore has received our application, approved by the War Department, I am reliably informed, but does not promulgate them for some reason best known to himself. Immediately after receiving his despatches per steamer, he started for Hilton Head and is now absent. A storm is raging and I hardly think he will return to-day. So you see the 'Detail' cannot leave by this steamer, but must wait until the next, which sails on the 22<sup>d</sup> from Hilton Head.

"Old Ocean is roaring and surging at a terrible rate. If she continues her rage, these islands will disappear and we will be floated off. Already considerable of the soil has melted before the tide, and the breakers roll up to within twenty feet of our tents. Such a constant noise I never heard."

A letter from a correspondent of the *New South* discussed the tragic accidental sinking on the 6<sup>th</sup> of the U.S. Monitor *Weehawken*, at anchor in rough seas, costing the lives of 31 men; the court-martial and execution of a deserter from the 3<sup>d</sup> N.H.; and a scene of the most macabre nature discovered at the beach near Fort Putnam on Morris Island. Presented in its entirety:



Weehawken (April 27, 1863)  
 Private Herbert E. Valentine, 23<sup>d</sup> Mass. (1841-1917)  
 Southern Historical Collection, The Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

# THE NEW SOUTH.

PORT ROYAL, S. C., DECEMBER 19, 1863.

## LETTER FROM MORRIS ISLAND.

Correspondence of THE NEW SOUTH:

### Further particulars of the Weehawken calamity – Explosion in Sumter – Harbor obstructions coming down – Soldier shot for Desertion – Skeleton rebels about.

MORRIS ISLAND, S. C., Dec. 17<sup>th</sup>, 1863.

The only additional items known here, relative to the *Weehawken* calamity, is the cause of the disaster, and a partial list of the victims. On the day she went down, *her forecastle hatch was left open*, and there being a "Norther," with a rough sea at the time, and as shot and shell were accumulated in that part of the ship, she filled and sunk *in less than three minutes!* Thirty-one men were lost, four of whom were Engineers; – names as follows, viz:

AUGUSTUS MITCHEL,	3 <sup>d</sup> Assistant Engineer,		
GEORGE W. MCGOWAN,	"	"	"
MR. MARBRINN,	"	"	"
MR. SPUNBURN,	"	"	"

The names of the other unfortunate men I cannot learn, as I have no means of communicating with the fleet. Capt. BUNCE was in command of the *Weehawken* on the day she foundered, but at the time of the accident, was absent on the flag ship.

On the 11<sup>th</sup> inst., an explosion occurred in the ruins of Fort Sumter – sending the debris "sky high," and making many of us believe that the



**Rebel Battery and Obstructions in Charleston Harbor  
Published in "Harper's Weekly" (January 16<sup>th</sup>, 1864)**

Rebs were deserting that citadel of fame. Many of the Confederate garrison (in the fort,) were seen climbing and scrambling over the North-West angle, as if trying to escape. Probably it was an accidental explosion. The rag of Treason yet floats there.

For several days after the recent severe storm and gale, large quantities of hewn-timber, plank, etc., came ashore at the North end of this island – indicating that some of the obstructions of the channel were washed away. One large box, perhaps fifty feet long by twenty-five wide, also came ashore near the Inlet. It was built like a floating battery, but may not have been used for that purpose. If these were a part of the "obstructions" to the main ship-channel, as many believe, now is the time for the Navy to "go in" and smash things generally. An admirable, if not an *Admiral* idea!



**Military Execution (December 13, 1861)  
Alfred Wordsworth Thompson (1840-1896)  
Collection of the Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, Virginia**

One of the saddest scenes that occur in war was witnessed here yesterday. Private JOHN KENDALL, Company "G," 3<sup>d</sup> New Hampshire Volun-



teers, was shot for desertion. His case was a very aggravated one; he having deserted from his regiment – gone into another (Union) camp, and declared himself "a deserter from the enemy," etc., expecting probably to be sent North. The Court-Martial found him "guilty;" the sentence was confirmed, and duly carried out yesterday. I did not witness the execution – my unsophisticated mind not liking such scenes.

The high tides of the past week licked up much of this Island; and also unearthed large numbers of the rebel dead, near FORT PUTNAM: – in fact the beach here has been hideously ornamental, with the dry bones of the Rebellion. I saw an Army Correspondent, to-day, walking off with the skull of some rebellious chevalier. "Alas, poor Yorick!" – "Where be your gibes now? your gambols? your songs? your flashes of merriment? when you thought of knocking the Federal Union into eternal smash?"

TUBAL-CAIN.

Major Alden, in command of the post of Pawnee Landing at Folly Island until the 20<sup>th</sup>, took command of the 169<sup>th</sup> upon the departure of Col. McConihe. Surprisingly, we read in the *Daily Times* of the 28<sup>th</sup> that the major was promoted to the colonelcy of a Colored regiment:

"EXCELLENT APPOINTMENT. – Maj. Alonzo Alden, of the One Hundred and Sixty-ninth Regiment, has been recently promoted to be Colonel of a colored regiment in Major-General Gillmore's Division. He is an excellent tactician, a competent officer and a popular gentleman. Success to him in the new position."

Mention of the appointment was also made the same day in the *Daily Press*, yet the only reference found in Gen. Alden's memoirs of any association with a colored regiment concerned his temporary assignment to the command of Pawnee Landing, "including the ordinance, quartermaster's and commissary depots, two entrenched batteries of artillery, a three-gun redoubt, and a garrison of two regiments of colored troops."

Corp. Carmon's letter to his sister on the 20<sup>th</sup> was brought to Troy by Serg't. Richard J. Horton, Co. H, one of the men selected for the recruiting detail in Troy. Alfred expected a quiet Christmas at Folly Island:



"I received your letter to-night and as Richard Horton is a going to start for home in the morning, I thought that I would answer it to-night. I am as well and healthy as ever. You spoke about sending me a box. I think that you had better not send it. The distance is most too great.

"The weather is getting to be quite cool down here now, the night especially, but it don't seem much like the winters up North, but they are cold enough, for all that. I should like to be home to go to a New Year's ball somewhere. I don't suppose that there will be anything going on here at all. It won't seem much like Christmas. I don't think but we will make the best of it, and when we get home, then we will make up for lost time, and I hope that that time will not be a great ways off. You spoke about some papers. I think that they would come if you would send them. Richard Horton has papers sent to him and he gets them regular.

"I was on guard last night and I did not get much sleep, so I don't feel much like writing... The drum has sounded for roll call and I shall have to stop writing for the present. But I will finish it before I go to bed, for if I don't, I can't send it by the boys, as they start at three o'clock in the morning."

1<sup>st</sup> Serg't. William Quinn, Co. G, sent correspondence to the *Daily Press*, but the newspaper stated on the 26<sup>th</sup> that since the letter carried "no news of special importance," it was "compelled to omit its publication." The *Daily Press* did, however, report this bit of helpful information: "The writer states that the regiment is in a high state of discipline, and everything connected with the siege is progressing favorably. The soldiers have implicit confidence in Gen. Gillmore. We shall be pleased to hear from 'W. Q.' when he communicates items of regimental or general news."

Capt. Wood's letter of the 23<sup>d</sup> to the *Daily Whig*, personally delivered by 1<sup>st</sup> Lieut. Daniel J. Cary, Co. K, a member of the recruiting detail, was accompanied by the following introduction: "Lieut. C. brings a letter from our humorous cor-





Gouache of the Assault by the 54<sup>th</sup> Mass. Volunteer Infantry at Battery Wagner (1940)  
Suzanne Schweig Langsdorf Martyl (1918-2013)  
Collection of the DuSable Museum of African American History, Chicago, Illinois

respondent, which touches up pleasantly camp-life, but gives us very little war news – the expedition preparing against Savannah, probably rendering such news 'contraband.' The writer, it will be seen, speaks favorably of the efficiency of the negro troops."

"Two musket shots last midnight, and the information that they emanated from the guards at the negro brigade headquarters, remind me that these troops have been within nose shot during the last month, and I have, as yet, written nothing in regard to them. Every correspondent favored by contact with this powerful element, has given testimony to its strength as an element, and my only excuse for not having ventilated myself on the subject, is the fact that they are situated to the leeward, and consequently are not so constantly brought to mind, as though our locations were reversed.

"Before proceeding further, I must here remark that any statement to the effect that negro troops require more space between front and rear ranks, than is tactically permitted, on account of an unusual projection of the heel, is quite absurd, and the assertion that they cannot be brought to the required state of discipline, by reason of too luxuriant development of 'lip,' is simply a ridiculous fabrication of the enemy. To speak earnestly and briefly, they are good soldiers. Quiet and unobtrusive in camp, brave and tireless in the field, they have won the good will of their white comrades to such an extent, that there is not a man in our regiment who will not slake his thirst with Sambo's whiskey, there is not a white soldier who will not eat the lion's share of Sambo's rations, and that man is now being eagerly sought after, (with but poor prospects of success,) who could be prevailed upon not to take the last chew of Sambo's tobacco.

"For many palpable reasons, white troops are to be preferred, but no officer commanding negroes need look upon himself as 'a victim of misplaced confidence,' in event of an engagement, – no matter how desperate. Should he be fated to become provender for the 'jaws of death,' there will be no lack of dark-complexioned morsels from the same dish, a consummation highly gratifying to the social instincts of the officer, and a most convenient arrangement for traveling purposes on 'the other side.'

"The grand experiment of the war has been successful. The negro troops, side by side with their white comrades, have, on many a bloody

field, proved themselves true and gallant men, and those artists who are photographing the crowded, swift-shifting scenes of the times, will hand down to posterity a bright and highly colored picture of these dark-hued heroes.



"Were you ever drawn from reverie, back to the stirring world by a certain nameless something, a something silent, yet affecting you almost to frenzy? If so, you can imagine how suddenly the dream-provoking fire, and the soothing meerschaum ceased to be influences with me, and the astonishing celerity with which I commenced and continued investigations to find, alas! that the 'certain something' had at my first movement taken occasion to

'Flea from the wrath to come.'

"Four weeks ago, how well I remember it, – this same intelligent and highly concentrated flea, domesticated himself in my bed, and has since been employed in surveying the surrounding neighborhood. The fact that he domesticated himself with 'malice and prepense,' and the further fact that his surveys were almost too complicated and frequent for comfort made me sleeplessly vigilant for an opportunity to transfer his scene of operations to a more distant and congenial sphere. But, as all my philanthropic attempts at emancipation had proved futile, I concluded to move my quarters and 'leave him alone in his glory.' Did I lay in ambush with ready hand and sharpened nail, or, following him from point to point, suddenly dart out at him with the confidence of superior intelligence? Certainly I did, and was forcibly reminded at the time of an individual named Patrick, who possessed one of the animals in question, which was never there when his hand was on him.

"I remember one occasion particularly. It was a cold night, and I had arranged myself on twelve barrel staves, called by the horribly humorous name of 'bed,' – with my head comfortably resting on a segar box, and everything else quite pleasant and sleep-inducing. I had dozed myself nearly home, when I became conscious that my sleepless tenant was making rapid and comprehensive aggressive movements under the cover of blankets. I immediately marshaled my forces, and after a series



An officer's quarters, Folly Island, South Carolina

of surprising and rapid evolutions, succeeded in surrounding and capturing him with small loss of blood on our side. He who, night after night, has lain under the smothering protection of bed clothes, and has at last, in the madness of desperation, issued forth to the attack, armed with pillow, wet towel, and a moist stocking, and finally, after knocking down the plaster, stepping in the water pail, breaking his shins on the stove, and breaking his nose and the mirror, has succeeded in flattening the enemy to the wall, – can imagine the deep satisfaction with which I stood in the spittoon, endeavoring to light a refractory candle with a wet match, and rolled the enemy between the victorious thumb and forefinger of my left hand, and, when the candle was at length lighted, who cannot imagine the caution with which the imprisoning fingers opened, and how greedily the eyes glared down in search of the victim. But I venture to assert that no one can imagine my look of comical despair, so I threw down the captive – knot of wool – and hastily retired to my luxurious barrel staves, wondering if the supernatural powers of the flea were sufficiently unlimited to allow him to resume his former shape again.

"The two great difficulties to surmount in letter writing, are the beginning and the ending. These difficulties have been increased by the banishment of the I-now-take-my-pen-in-hand style of opening, and so-no-more-this-time-yours-till-death, method of closing an epistle. I will launch out on the beginning of this end, however, by endorsing the regrets of the *Times* correspondent, at the departure of our properly-appreciated Assistant Surgeon, P. L. F. Reynolds. There has never been a time when the regiment health was better than at present, excepting, of course, the period when *both* surgeons were absent, and it is to be regretted that he should leave us now, when his invaluable services are needed to assist in swelling the list of casualties to the desired standard. One surgeon, no matter how well-qualified or indefatigable, cannot effect as much alone as when assisted, and, as the services of a regiment are measured by its list of deaths, and appreciated accordingly, it is sincerely hoped that another self-denying 'Medicine Man' may soon be inflicted upon us.



**Playing Old Soldier (1863)**  
**Winslow Homer (1836-1910)**  
Collection of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Massachusetts

"The most noticeable among the many improvements constantly being made in camp, is a chapel built of narrow pine slabs, tastefully ornamented with the dark green stems of the Palmetto leaf and tipped with a cross. It having been erected under the superintendence of private La Duke [Priv. Lewis La Duke, Co. I], we may with propriety call it after the ducal style of architecture.

"Our brigade commander, Gen. R. S. Foster, accompanied by Lieutenants of his staff, D. S. Durbin, A. D. C.; B. N. Smith, A. D. C.; and O. F. and Thomas B. Eaton, A. D. C's., and Inspector-General, left by the last steamer for the North, on a short leave of absence. It is rumored here, that the last named officer will return a Benedict.\*

"I have at last succeeded in entering the charmed circle of the 'correspondents' corps,' and my facilities for obtaining the latest news being thereby increased, I hope to be able to make my future letters passably interesting. I am particularly intimate with the *Herald's* correspond-

[Note: \*The list includes 1<sup>st</sup> Lieut. David S. Durbin, 13<sup>th</sup> Indiana; 1<sup>st</sup> Lieut. Bernard N. Smith, Co. B, 169<sup>th</sup> N.Y.; and 1<sup>st</sup> Lieut. Thomas B. Eaton, Co. D, 169<sup>th</sup> N.Y.]

ents, and this intimacy giving me rare opportunities of studying their habits, I make it a frequent point to call upon them during their absence. These calls leave me free to look over their papers, without disturbing the owners thereof, and un-pledged in regard to revealing the contents. I am, therefore, enabled to give you the 'latest from Charleston Harbor, by our special correspondent on the spot,' together with explanatory notes, for the editorial ear only, and not intended for publication.

#### ITEMS.

Dec. 21, 1863.

"One thousand four hundred and forty projectiles were thrown into the city during twenty-four hours. One solid ball struck Beauregard immediately below the chest, as he was sitting in his private hotel.

"A deserter came into our lines last night with the aid of a sub-marine vessel. He brings Charleston papers, and information that everybody in the Confederacy is on his last legs, and the back-door of the rebellion is incurably open.

"Fort Sumter is still in ruins, and the rebel flag floats over it. We have positive information that Gen. Gillmore can oblige the enemy to haul down the colors at any moment, and only allows them to occupy this important point as an advanced picket post, from motives of generosity.

#### PRIVATE NOTES.

"The number of projectiles fired into the city, is slightly exaggerated. By erasing the three first figures, you will have the correct number. I have made the old 'fish-ball' joke serve me, in stating that Beauregard was struck immediately below the chest.

"The deserter is the same one who has served me since the commencement of operations. The sub-marine vessel is a good thing, and I regret he did not come in that manner.

"I felt obliged to make Sumter appear, and flatter myself that the generous motive dodge is a good one, calculated to give the people a feeling of confidence as to the result, and impress more fully upon their minds our own satisfaction at the progress of the siege.

"I will close this already lengthy letter by stating that the sutlers have compromised with Gen. Gillmore by charging the troops fearfully, instead of Sumter. As our term of service has nearly expired, (only two years more,) and our constitution remains sound, we hope to survive the onslaught, and be enabled many times to sign the initials,

N. W.

"NOTE. – Recruiting detail from the 169<sup>th</sup> N. Y. Regiment, arrived Saturday evening from South Carolina. Lt.-Col. John McConihe, Lt. Clark Smith, A. D. C., Capt. Augustus Vaughn, Capt. Frank W. Tarbell, Capt. Spencer W. Snyder, Lt. Daniel J. Cary, and sixteen non-commissioned officers. An office will be opened in this city and another in Washington county. They are to report at Albany."

The New York *Herald* took an interest in the arrival in the city of the detachment from the 169<sup>th</sup>, reporting on the 27<sup>th</sup>: "Colonel John McConihe, accompanied by Lieut. Clark Smith, aide-de-camp; Captain Tarbell, Capt. Vaughn, Captain Snyder and Lieut. Cary, arrived on the steamer *Fulton*, from South Carolina, last evening. Col. McConihe is in command of a large 'recruiting detail' from the well-known and gallant One Hundred and Sixty-ninth New York Regiment, and is stopping at the Astor House."

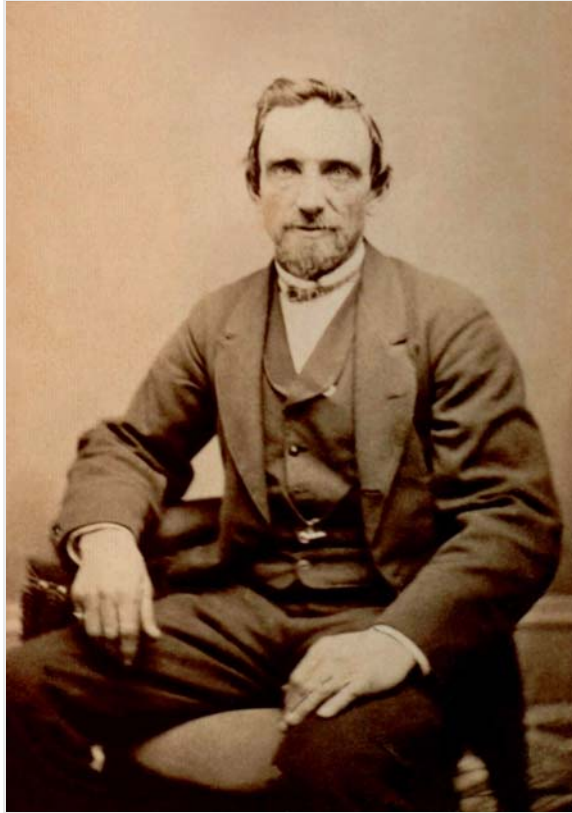


**The Astor House, New York City (center), with St. Paul's Chapel on the left and the U.S. Post Office on the right**

The *Daily Press* reported the next day: "Colonel John McConihe, accompanied by Lieut. Clark Smith, A. D. C., and the several Captains and Lieutenants above-named, reported to Adjutant-General Sprague at Albany this morning. – This large recruiting party, of which Colonel McConihe is in command, will be equally distributed throughout this and Washington counties, and owing to the energetic material of which it is composed, its efforts will doubtless greatly redound to the filling up of the exhausted ranks of the One Hundred and Sixty-ninth." The *Daily Times* added, "The party reached Troy on Saturday evening. Col. McConihe was most cordially welcomed by his numerous friends." A complete list of personnel was published by the *Daily Times* on January 2<sup>d</sup>, 1864:



**Captain Augustus D. Vaughn, Co. F, 169<sup>th</sup> N.Y.  
Collection of the New York State Military Museum,  
Saratoga Springs, New York**



**Sergeant Cornelius M. Sitser, Co. K, 169<sup>th</sup> N.Y.  
Post-war photograph  
Provided by Laura Conrad**

Lieut.-Col. John McConihe, Capts. F. W. Tarbell, Augustus D. Vaughn, Spencer W. Snyder; Lieuts. Daniel J. Cary, Clark Smith (staff officer); Sergeants Edgar Vanderzee, Thomas Jessop, John Sullivan, Chas. S. Philips, Frank Biggart, Wm. W. Downs, Erastus G. Bailey, Patrick J. Aylmer, Richard Horton, Napoleon Root, Cornelius M. Sitser; Corporals Henry A. Slack; Jno. D. Havens, Ezra Crannell; Privates H. Martenett, Edward Connor.

[Note: The following list contains the full name, rank and company of the above-named officers and enlisted men: Capt. Frank W. Tarbell, Co. E; Capt. Augustus D. Vaughn, Co. F; Capt. Spencer W. Snyder, Co. D; 1<sup>st</sup> Lieut. Daniel J. Cary, Co. K; 2<sup>d</sup> Lieut. Clark Smith, Co. A; 1<sup>st</sup> Serg't. Edgar Vanderzee, Co. H; Sergeants Thomas Jessop, Co. A; John Sullivan, Co. B; Charles S. Philips, Co. C; Francis Biggart, Co. D; William W. Downs, Co. E; Erastus G. Bailey, Co. F; Patrick J. Aylmer, Co. G; Richard Horton, Co. H; Napoleon Root, Co. I; Cornelius M. Sitser, Co. K; Corporals Henry A. Slack, Co. A; John D. Havens, Co. G; Ezra Crannell, Co. K; Privates Herman L. Martenett, Co. C; and Edward Connor, Co. E.]

"Col. John McConihe and his associates," reported the *Daily Press* on the 29<sup>th</sup>, are perfecting arrangements for the opening of recruiting offices in this city, and in Washington county." Further details were provided by the newspaper on New Year's eve:

"The recruiting party from the One Hundred and Sixty-ninth regiment, headed by Lieut.-Col. John McConihe, are now prepared to enlist all who desire to join that excellent regiment. To those persons who have



Corporal Henry A. Slack, Co. A, 169<sup>th</sup> N.Y.  
Collection of the Military and Historical Image Bank,  
Southbury, Connecticut

friends or acquaintances in the regiment, and who contemplate enlisting, this is a fine opportunity. The One Hundred and Sixty-ninth has earned a proud name since taking the field. – Two hundred recruits will fill it up to the minimum standard, and this number will no doubt be obtained in a few days. Men who desire to enlist can apply to the following officers: Capt. Snyder, at Nail Factory; Capt. Tarbell, Carpenter's Hotel; Capt. Cary, Washington Square; Capt. Vaughn (for Washington county,) at Whitehall, or to Lieut.-Col. McConihe, in person, at no. 47 First street. Those about to enlist should bear the fact in mind, that by joining the One Hundred and Sixty-ninth, they will serve under competent and experienced officers. Composed as the regiment is, mostly of Trojans, it has peculiar claims on all our citizens. Now is the time! The bounties are the largest ever offered, and there is no probability of their being increased. Call on Col. McConihe!"

On the 31<sup>st</sup>, the *Daily Whig* solicited the support of the citizenry to assist the 169<sup>th</sup> fill up its ranks, with a clarion call to avoid the draft:

"ENLIST. – It is the duty of every citizen to give his time during the coming six days to promote enlistments. Recruiting officers need but the hearty support of the citizens to fill our quota and relieve us of the draft. Bring up your 'substitute,' and by looking in our advertising columns, you will see before what officers to take your friends about to enlist."





Union soldier reclining and reading, Folly Island, S.C. (March 10, 1864)  
Captain John G. Fay, 3<sup>d</sup> N.Y.  
Private Collection

We conclude our travel back in time with a letter on the 30<sup>th</sup> by Corp. Patrick Murphy, Co. D, to "Friend Thomas":

"I thought I would inform you that I received your paper and I am very obliged to you for your kindness, and in return I will send you *The New South*, a paper printed at Hilton Head, and you will find it quite a paper, as it gives all the popular news of this Department. I have not any news of any importance to communicate at present, as we are quite idle at present, only doing picket duty.

"I suppose you have been sleighing. The weather is very pleasant and quite warm here at present. The Christmas passed rather dull last week. The New Year is near at hand and I suppose will be unpleasant and pass away as Christmas was. No enjoyments of any kind whatsoever. For the soldiers only pass away the time the best they can.

"I was informed that James Brannen has joined the Free Masons. What do you think of it? I will not give you my opinion of it. I wrote to James and sent my regards to you and all inquiring friends. I hope you are well and lucky enough to escape the draft. James is rather inclined, I think, that Uncle Sam shall need his services, but I hope he will be excused.

"The captain of my company and Frank Biggart are home in recruiting service for the regiment. Rather big for Frank. I am assured and know a lad that will enlist. I guess it's all right if they do. I think his chances are very poor around that part of the county. But it will not make any difference with Frank whether he gets any or not. The chance to get home is what took his eyes. Well, Frank is a good boy and I am glad he got the chance.



Union army 1<sup>st</sup> Sergeant and his Captain

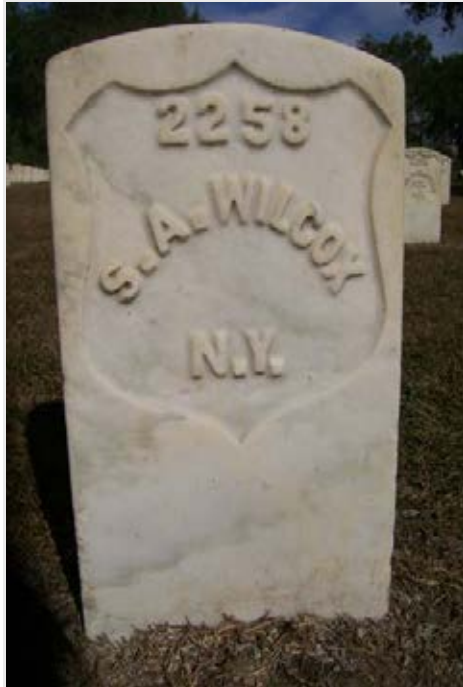
"Sergeant French's name was on the list to go home on recruiting service, but it was taken off on account that the first sergeants have to remain with their companies for the present, being that so many of the commissioned officers are away from the regiment. It was rather a disappointment to him, but he takes it very cool, considering the circumstances."



Your correspondent has recently come into possession of correspondence by Serg't. Mason S. Chamber, Co. F, and Corp. Edward T. Penny, Co. K, (one each), kindly provided by Brian and Maria Green, Inc., of Kernersville, N.C., dealers in Civil War autographs, correspondence, documents, currency, and photographs.

Also acquired is another letter by Serg't. Chambers, published in a Merrick, N.Y., newspaper. The article included Mason's photograph, and efforts are underway to obtain a higher-quality scan from its owner. It appears that Mason's correspondence has been scattered to the winds, with letters having been sold by two auction houses in 2009 and 2012. Another example of dispersed correspondence is that of Private James Caton, Co. D, whose letters were sold off this year as individual items by two auction houses.

Presented for your review and contemplation are gravestone photographs from Cypress Hills National Cemetery in Brooklyn, N.Y. Also included is the gravestone of Priv. Stanton A. Wilcox, Co. H, who died on December 7, 1863, at the U.S. General Hospital at Beaufort, S.C.



**Private Stanton A. Wilcox, Co. H**  
Beaufort National Cemetery, Beaufort, S.C.



**Private Adelbert N. Spicer, Co. E**  
Cypress Hills National Cemetery, Brooklyn, N.Y.



**Private James Curtis, Co. G**  
Cypress Hills National Cemetery, Brooklyn, N.Y.



**Private William Austin, Co. F**  
Cypress Hills National Cemetery, Brooklyn, N.Y.



**Private George Corn (Coon), Co. E**  
Cypress Hills National Cemetery, Brooklyn, N.Y.



**Private Jacob Van Volkenburgh, Co. H**  
Cypress Hills National Cemetery, Brooklyn, N.Y.



**Private Joseph Powlett, Co. K**  
Cypress Hills National Cemetery, Brooklyn, N.Y.



**Private Lewis Shafer, Co. K**  
Cypress Hills National Cemetery, Brooklyn, N.Y.



**Corporal Louis Winkler, Co. G**  
Cypress Hills National Cemetery, Brooklyn, N.Y.



**Private Alexander Clark, Co. K**  
Cypress Hills National Cemetery, Brooklyn, N.Y.

Cheers,

- Steve Wiezbicki

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