Memorial to Ira Ayer 1802-1889

And

A History of Company A of the 116th Regiment of the New York Volunteer Infantry

> LeRoy S. Oatman 1890

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Memorial to Ira Ayer



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RICORD OF SERVICE.

Banks' Expedition, Sabine Pass Expedition, Texas. Snicker's Gap Expedition, Va. Siege of Port Hudson, La. Red River Campaign, La. Shenandoah Valley Campaign, Va.

BATTLES.

Plain's Store, La., May 21, 1863. Port Hudson, La., May 27, '63. Pleasant Hill, La., Apr. 9, '64. Fisher's Hill, Va., Sept. 22, '64.

Port Hudson, La., June 14, '63 Cox's Plantation, La., July 13, '63. Sabine Cross Roads, La., Apr. 8, '64. Cane River, La., Apr. 23, '64. Mansura Plains, La., May 16, '64. Opequan Creek, Va., Sept. 19, '64. Cedar Creek, Va., Oct 19, '64.

LOSSES.

Killed, II. Wounded, 32. Prisoner, I.

ADDRESS.

Commander, Comrades, Ladies and Gentlemen :

I appreciate the honor conferred by James Aver Post in inviting me to address you upon this occasion. I am glad to recognize so many familiar faces and to know that I am among friends of the town where, for nearly thirty years, I resided.

Words are not needed before such an audience to eulogize the memory of Ira Aver.

This vacant chair, with its somber drapery, speaks more eloquently than words of the solemnity of this occasion. It reminds us that the fierce artillery of time beats remorselessly upon our rapidly thinning ranks and that in peace, as in war, our comrades are falling out upon the march.

Time will not permit of extended allusions to the many important events national and local during the lifetime of our departed comrade.

Early History

When he was born, Thomas Jefferson was President and seventeen States had been admitted to the Union, whose entire population was less than that of New York State today.

Seventeen times since he attained his majority has an opportunity offered to exercise the right of suffrage in the election of President, At the first presidential election, after he became a citizen, John Quincy Adams was elected and at that time the Union consisted of twenty-five States.

In matters of local interest—he was twenty-three years of age when the Erie Canal was opened, was thirty years old when Buffalo, with about ten thousand inhabitants, was chartered as a city, and over forty before there was- any railroad communication eastward to Albany.

When he came to this town, a boy eight years of age, there was not a public highway nor a house, except the few log cabins of the pioneers and probably less than twenty families resided within the present limits of the town of Evans. He had resided in this town more than forty years when the first locomotive ran from Buffalo to Dunkirk.

Referring to the records of the early history of Erie County I find that the first settlement in what is now the town of Evans was made in June. 1804, by Joel Harvey who located on the west side of Eighteen Mile Creek, near its mouth. During the succeeding few years, several farmers built cabins in this town but moved away after a brief stay and their names have not been preserved. At the time of Mr. Harvey's settlement the territory now comprising the town of Evans was a part of the town of Batavia, but in 1805 it was changed to the town of Erie, which extended from Lake Ontario to the Pennsylvania line.

March 11, 1808, there was a re-organization of the Holland purchase and Mr. Harvey, who settled in the town of Batavia in 1804 and was in the town of Erie in 1805, found

himself in 1808, without changing his location, a resident of the town of Willink, Niagara County, which township extended from the Buffalo Reservation to the Cattaraugus Creek, and from Lake Erie to the eastern bounds of the present County of *Eric*, about twenty five miles wide and more than .thirty-five miles long.

In 1809 Aaron Salisbury located near the lake shore and Aaron Cash near the site of North Evans village. The following year Anderson Taylor settled on the site of Evans Center, and David Cash, Elijah Gates, Nathaniel Lay, John Barker, Seth Sprague, and Martin Sprague made their homes at various points near the lake shore. In 1810, or early in 1811, Gideon Dudley located at Evans Center, David Corbin and Timothy Dustin near there, and a Mr. Pike on the little stream known as Pike's Creek, and about the same time Job Palmer succeeded Mr. Harvey as tavern keeper in the log house he occupied near the banks of Eighteen Mile Creek.

Among the settlers of 1811, mention is made of James Ayer with his wife and family, consisting of his sons Low Bradley, Gorham and Ira, and his daughters, who afterwards became Mrs. Martha Dart, Mrs. Mary Low Beal, Mrs. Sarah Bradley Black and Mrs. Henrietta Atwood.

Captain James Ayer, the youngest of the family, was born in the town of Evans in 1813.

The father, mother and seven of the children sleep in the cemeteries of this town today. Only one, Mrs. Sarah Black, remains. I do not think another person is living who resided in the town of Evans in 1811.

In the same year mention is made of the arrival of Hezekiah Dibble, father of O. J. Dibble, Esq., and in 1812 of William Cash, of whose family, I think, the only survivor is your respected townsman, Ambrose Cash,

From these references you can appreciate something of the task before me to even allude to important events in the life of our deceased comrade.

Ira Ayer, the son of James and Sarah Bradley Ayer, was born in Haverhill, Massachusetts, December 26, 1802. He was the fourth child in a family of eight—four sons and four daughters.

In a little book of early reminiscences, written by himself, a description is given of their early home on the banks of the Merrimac, and of the time when, with the family and family possessions, they started with two emigrant wagons for a new home in the "far West"—of the four weeks' journey, before they reached Buffalo, then a village of about one hundred houses and some four hundred inhabitants. The family remained in Buffalo about three weeks while Mr. Ayer was deciding what part of the wilderness to choose for his home. He finally followed the windings of the lake as far as Eighteen Mile Creek, where he engaged, temporarily, a small log house owned by Mr. Job Palmer, and returning to Buffalo started with his family, traveling most of the way along the beach of the lake and not reaching the bank of Eighteen Mile Creek until after dark.

Calling across the creek Mr. Palmer heard them, and coming out with a lantern, directed them where to enter the creek and what course to take as they had to follow up the stream nearly a half mile before there was an opportunity to drive out upon the opposite side. In places the water was so deep that it ran into the boxes of the wagons. They finally reached the shore safely, took possession of this temporary home and unloading their goods arranged for the night. After traveling around the country, going as far as the present site of Springville, Mr. Ayer finally concluded to purchase a tract of

four ^hundred and thirty-nine acres, known as lot number sixty-seven, in what afterwards became the town of Evans.

Again loading their household goods in the wagons they started for the new home, Mr. Ayer having previously arranged with Anderson Taylor, who lived at what is now Evans Center, to move in with his family while he, with the aid of his neighbors, assisted the new settler in building a log house near the Little Sister Creek. You will remember that at this time Evans was a part of the town of Willink, and in the County of Niagara. In 1812, the town of Eden was formed comprising the present towns of Boston, Eden, Evans and Brant, and not until 1821 did the town of Evans exist under that name, and not until that year was Erie County formed by a division of the County of Niagara. I have referred to these early matters in the history of town and county to emphasize the fact that the history of our comrade ante-dates both.

In 1815, a Mr. Wright erected a saw mill and in the following year a grist mill at Evans Center, and the place became known as Wright's Mills, which name continued until the town was formed in 1821 and a postoffice, under the^ name of Evans was established. When our comrade came to Evans in 1811, Buffalo was the nearest postoffice and the United States mail was brought from Albany only once a week. In 1818 an office was located somewhere near the lake shore by the name of Eden, of which township this was then a part, and James Peters was the first postmaster.

The war of 1812 soon demanded attention and the armed vessels of the British annoyed the pioneers who had settled along the lake.

The "Queen Charlotte" would often send its boats ashore on foraging expeditions, seizing whatever could be found, and many times taking one or more of the residents prisoners for the purpose of intimidating any who might oppose them.

Eighteen hundred and thirteen was an eventful year. Buffalo was burned by the British and Indians, only one dwelling remaining, and the inhabitants were compelled to flee into the sparsely settled portions of the county and depend upon the scattering homes of the pioneers for shelter.

The same rear was the scene of the great conflict upon Lake Erie, when Commodore Perry won the victory over the commander of the British fleet.

In 1814, occurred the battles of Chippewa and Lundy's Lane, and the capture of Fort Erie, while in the same year Washington was burned, and in 1815 the decisive battle of New Orleans was fought. These stirring events in the history, not only of our county but of the Nation, could but have their effects upon the boy who was of an age that was susceptible to impressions regarding scenes of battle and who had personal knowledge of the dangers of frontier life.

News in those days was, to & large extent, a matter of verbal communication.

One weekly paper, smaller in size than the Angola Record and known as the "Gazette " was all that was published in Buffalo and that could not reach the settlers of this town regularly until the postoffice was established in 1818.

Weeks must have elapsed before news of the Battle of New Orleans could reach the scattered homes of the pioneers upon our frontiers.

In those early days it was a matter of necessity to visit the village of Buffalo to procure needed articles for family consumption, and it was not an unusual occurrence, when a boy of fourteen or fifteen, for Ira to walk to Buffalo, carrying two jars of butter by means of a neck-yoke, such as some of us have used in carrying water, and, having marketed the

same, return with groceries, ammunition, or other needed supplies suspended in the same manner.

The streets of Buffalo at that time and for many years thereafter bore names that would not sound very familiar to-day. Instead of Main Street, that thoroughfare was known as Willink Avenue until it reached the junction of Niagara Street, and above that tt was Von Stophurst Avenue. Instead of Niagara, Erie and Church Streets we had Schimmelpenneck Avenue, Vollenhoven Avenue, and Stodniski Avenue, while instead of Pearl, Franklin, Washington, Ellicott and Exchange, such names as Cayuga, Tuscarora, Onondaga, Oneida and Crow appear upon a map of the village published in 1825. The only tavern in the village was located at the corner of Willink Avenue and Crow Streets, (Main and Exchange), where the Mansion House now stands. All below that point to the river was a swamp, winding around the course of the Terrace and the boundary of the village as late as 1825 was the Terrace on the south, Chippewa on the north, Ellicott on the east, and the reserve line, a little beyond Morgan Street, on the west.

Compare Buffalo as he then knew it with the present city and think of the marvellous growth which has taken place under his observation.

In due time it became necessary to procure a sum of money owing Mr. Ayer in Haverhill, Massachusetts. Railroads and express companies could not be brought into requisition and it was decided that Gorham, who was about eighteen, and Ira, who was two years his junior, should undertake the journey.

Attired in their new suits of homespun garments, with well-filled haversacks and stout hickory canes they started on foot, walking to Cold Springs the first day, and taking the road eastward they passed on, reaching Saratoga Springs, crossing the Hudson at Sandy Hill, thence to Rutland, Vermont, and over the mountains, until they reached the home of an Uncle whom they desired to visit.

Remaining there a couple of days they again started, crossing the State of New Hampshire and at last reached the old home at Haverhill, Massachusetts.

After visiting about two weeks among the relatives they started upon their homeward journey, which they reached in safety, with the sum of one thousand dollars, securely sewed inside their clothes, and having walked over one thousand miles. During their many weeks absence no tidings of them had reached home.

They wore home-made, knitted red caps, and when the time came to expect their return you can imagine the anxious watching of the family from day to day, and the delight of the parents and the children when the red caps were seen in the distance and the shout went up announcing that Gorham and Ira were corning. Mr. Ayer went to the office of the land company at Batavia, and paying the amount due, secured the deed of his purchase.

.The advantages to acquire an education were limited, as schools did not abound in those days and boys had something else to do. I do not know how much our comrade attended during his youth, but I have learned that during the winter of 1821-1822, when Dea. Joseph Bennett was teaching school Ira Ayer was one of his pupils.

In 1815 the Evans M. E. Church was organized and prominent among the original members was the Ayer family.

At how early an age our comrade became a Christian I do not know, but arm quite sure that he was one of the constituent members of the Church.

Until 1844 the worshipers met at private houses and school houses. During that year Ira Ayer determined that a Church should be built. He began alone, cutting the trees and

hewing the timbers, and though others came to his aid from time to time he labored almost daily until the house was completed. In his younger days he had worked some as a carpenter and soon after his marriage he had constructed a saw mill near his home on the Little Sister Creek. The trees were mostly, if not all cut on the Aver farm and sawed at the Ayer mill, and a large portion of the work was done by him or under his supervision until the Methodist Church at Evans Center, which was -occupied until a few years ago, was completed. From his early manhood until his decease he was an official member of the Church and of his exemplary Christian life it is unnecessary to speak.

I have ascertained from official records and have personal recollection of the fact that during the years 1857 and 1858 he represented this town upon the Board of Supervisors,

It is useless, however, in the time allotted me to attempt to mention even the important events in the life of one, who for more than three-quarters of a century, was a resident of Evans", and who was for some years, without doubt, its oldest settler.

In the same year that the Ayer family came to Evans, or possibly earlier, as some records place the date as early as 1808. Ebenezer Ingersoll removed from Cayuga County, settling on the Hamburg side of Eighteen Mile Creek, near the lake, where he remained for some years, but his family eventually became prominent citizens of this town. William H. Ingersoll, if I am correctly informed, though not as old & resident of this town was one year the senior of our comrade, his birth having occurred in 1801. He is, I think, the only survivor of the family, and his youngest son, Francis, was a member of our comrade's company and was killed in its first engagement.

In looking over records of the early settlers, I have become convinced that there are not more than twenty-five persons living in Erie County to-day who have been residents continuously since the time that our comrade took up his residence in this town. In 1828 he was united in marriage with Miss Julia Maria Warner. He erected a house twenty-four by thirty-six which was plastered upon the outside and gravel thrown into the mortar as thickly as possible, making what was then considered a stylish finish. Seven children, three sons and four daughters, were born to them, of whom only two, Ira Ayer, Jr., and Mrs. Sarah E. Tifft, are now living.

Patriot War

During the Patriot War, in 1838, our comrade was found on duty as Colonel of the Forty-Eighth Regiment, New York Militia. How many the regiment contained or from how large a territory it was recruited I have been unable to ascertain. Three members of the regiment, Amos Avery, Daniel Mosher and Elijah P. Smith, are still residents of this town

I have ascertained that they marched to Buffalo, remained over night in one of the warehouses near the dock, marched in review before General Winfield Scott, proceeded down the river, and crossed by flat boats to Grand Island. I am not aware that they had any encounter with the enemy, though they showed their loyalty by leaving their homes and taking position as directed by the general, commanding.

How long he held his commission as Colonel or when the regiment disbanded I have been unable to ascertain.

Record of Ira Ayer Jr.

The services of Captain Ira Ayer during the War of the Rebellion are familiar to many comrades before me, whom I recognize as members of the same regiment and some who, with me, served in his company. Few men of his age considered it their duty to encounter the hardships and dangers of a soldier's life.

Mrs. Aver was an invalid when the \var commenced and died in August, 1861.

His only son, Ira Jr, was already winning honorable distinction in the service. A brief allusion to his record will not be irrelevant to this memorial. He was attending the Alleghany College at Meadville, Pennsylvania, when Sumter was fired upon; a Company was at once organized, mostly composed of students, he was elected Captain and they entered the service as Company "I" of the Tenth Pennsylvania Reserves.

From the records I think their first engagement was at Drainsville, Virginia, December 20, 1861, and from there with the Army of the Potomac at Mechanicsville, Glendale, Manassas, South" Mountain, Antietam, Fredericksburg, Gettysburg, Bristol Station, Manassas Junction, The Wilderness, Spottsylvania, North Anna and other battles they shared the dangers of the Fifth Corps, until the last engagement I find them mentioned as participating in was at Bethesda Church, in June, 1864.

The regiment lost one hundred and sixty men, killed, and of that number twenty-three were from his company. The casualties as to wounded I have no records to show. After the battle at Fredericksburg, in December, 1862, the regiment was sent to Washington to rest and recruit its thinned ranks. When, however, they learned of Lee's invasion of Pennsylvania they asked to be ordered to the front to aid in driving him out of their own State and reached Gettysburg in time to take part in a portion of the battle. Captain Ira Aver, Jr., was wounded four times— twice severely. Fie was promoted until he was in command of his regiment, with the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel, it having become so decimated from continued active service that it was riot entitled to muster a Colonel. He commanded his Regiment during the Battle of the Wilderness, receiving at that time a gunshot wound, fracturing his leg and was made Colonel by brevet for " gallant and meritorious conduct " in that engagement. Looking at this brief statement we, as comrades, can take pride in his record, showing as it does, that he was a " worthy son of an honored sire."

War of the Rebellion

Our deceased comrade could not remain inactive when the life of the nation was in danger.

Though not possessing the same vigor as when he rode at the head of a Regiment, the same spirit inspired him and he believed that the young men would respond to his call for volunteers. More than a year had elapsed since Fort Sumter had fallen.

In the south, Port Royal, Fort Picket, New Orleans and many other places had become noted in the history of the war. In the West we had read of Fort Donelson, Pitts burg Landing, Shiloh, Chattanooga and many other sharply-contested battles.

While these had attracted our attention it was to the Army of the Potomac that the eyes of the whole nation turned, and hardly a school child but could recall Bull Run, Cold Harbor, Hanover Court House, Seven Pines, Fair Oaks and scores of other hard-fought

battles, while the great encounter between the Monitor and the Merrimac had rendered Hampton Roads and Fortress Monroe familiar as household words.

The Army of the Potomac, under McClellan, had advanced and the seven days' battles in the Valley of Chickahominy had ended July 1st, 1862, with the repulse of the Confederates at Malvern Hill.

Men were needed to take the places of those who had fallen, and to reinforce the armies both of the east and the west. July 2d President Lincoln issued his call for three hundred thousand volunteers. Governor Morgan issued general order number four, apportioning the quota to each Senatorial District and appointing in each a military committee. The thirty-first military district comprised the County of Erie and the committee organized July l0th.

Among those who applied for authority to recruit a company was our late comrade, Ira Ayer. His expectations were fully realized, as when it was known that one of his military experience and high social position was to command, the young men responded quickly and on the nth day of August he marched into Fort Porter—then know as Camp Morgan— at the head of nearly a full company and reported to Colonel H. K. Viele, who was in command.

As ours was the first organization that had been perfected we were mustered into the service as Company "A," of what was afterwards known as the One Hundred and Sixteenth Regiment, New York Volunteer Infantry. As the record of Company "A " was largely due to him as its recruiting officer and first Captain, 1 shall consider it my privilege upon this occasion to give some statistical information regarding his " boys " as he loved to call us.

Comrade Josiah L. Claghorn was appointed Regimental Commissary Sergeant and Company " A," as mustered into the service of the United States, September 3d, 1862, consisted of ninety-eight officers and men.

Of the ninety-seven under Captain Ayer's command, thirty-seven were boys from eighteen to twenty years of age and of the others only eleven were over twenty-eight. The average age of the members was a little less than twenty-three, while our Captain was nearly sixty.

Comrade Jacob Gottschalk was eighteen the day we were mustered into the service and I think with that exception I was the youngest member. September 5th we left Buffalo and proceeding to Baltimore, Maryland, went into camp at Druid Hill Park, where the work of discipline—drill, target practice, &c., began.

In the matter of discipline Captain Ayer excelled. Always carefully obeying the orders of his superior officers, he exacted the same obedience from those under his command. Upon parade, and in all the duties of camp life his neatness as to uniform and equipments was an example to his men.

As to mastering the manual of arms and the new tactics and commands it was not an easy matter for him and very much of that duty devolved upon the Lieutenants and the non-commissioned officers.

October 11th, about midnight, an orderly from General Emory's headquarters galloped into the camp. We were immediately aroused, ordered to cook three days' rations and be ready to move early in the morning. It was reported that General Stuart with a large force of Confederate Cavalry had started upon a raid into Pennsylvania. On the i3th we reached Gettysburg. Marching out of the village on the Chambersburg Road, or as it is sometimes

called, the Cash-town Pike, leaving the Seminary upon our left we" descended the incline towards Willoughby Run, passing within a few rods of the spot where General Reynolds was killed, and crossing the little stream whose waters were afterwards reddened with the life-blood of both the Blue and the Gray, we were soon on the ground occupied by our Cavalry when the battle of Gettysburg opened. Proceeding along the Pike we passed the house which, during a portion of the battle, was General Lee's headquarters and bivouacked in the field where A. P, Hill's Corps was massed on the morning of July 1st, 1863, and from which position they advanced, crowding our army back, over Willoughby Run and up the slope until after having contested every foot of the ground over which we had marched, night closed upon the first day's battle with the Confederate- line upon Seminary Ridge. How little we then knew of the future.

A few months later we were nearly a thousand miles from there, more than a third of our number dead or wounded, the survivors crowding the lines closer and closer around Port Hudson, while the greatest battle of the war was being fought where we then were, the rattle of musketry, the roar of cannon and the shriek of shell reverberating from hill to hill, as the messengers of death did their deadly work, until nearly every foot of the ground upon which we had trod was hallowed by the blood of those who fell.

After remaining over night, the general commanding having ascertained that the reported raid had been abandoned we retraced our steps, and on the i6th were again in camp at Druid Hill Park. November 5th we embarked upon boats and proceeding to Fortress Monroe, Virginia, found a large fleet assembling, destined for some distant service. Nearly a month in close quarters upon the boat was disastrous to the health of the regiment and one hundred and fifty—twelve of whom were from Company " A " were left in the hospital at Fortress Monroe, when " Banks' Expedition," of which we were a part, sailed December 4th. We; had a very rough voyage and many vessels of the fleet were disabled in the storm, which we encountered. I shall never forget the kindness of both Captain Ira and Captain James Aver upon the voyage. I was very low with typhoid fever. Once or twice daily each of them would visit me, bringing some little delicacy from the officers' table to tempt my appetite.

To them and other comrades who cared for me and protected me from the storm I consider myself under obligations that I can never repay.

On the 13th we arrived at " Ship Island " where we temporarily went into camp, as our vessel was too large to cross the bar at the mouth of the Mississippi River.

I referred to Captain Ayer's exactness in obeying orders. A little incident will illustrate this: Christmas, 1862, Colonel Chapin allowed the enlisted men to elect their company officers from among their number, and they in turn to elect field officers, and, for that day, the officers so elected were to be absolutely in command of the regiment.

It was considered a good opportunity to show the officers how well we could discipline the regiment, and to that end many of them were arrested and ordered to perform some of the duties of a private soldier. Captain Ayer was found by the guard outside of camp, was brought before the proper company officer and as a penalty was ordered to do police duty; or to make it plain to you who are civilians, was ordered to clean the company streets. This was a matter in which he had always been very exacting, insisting that the streets and ground around the tents should be kept scrupulously clean.

Arrayed in the blouse of a private, armed with the necessary implements and escorted by the guard he proceeded to obey orders, and though the following day was the sixtieth

anniversary of his birth I will venture to assert that the streets of Company " A " were never better cleaned than when he reported his task completed and was released from arrest.

The morning of the 30th we entered the mouth of the river and passed Forts Jackson and St. Philip, of whose capture by Farragut's fleet we had read when at home.

We now had our first glimpse of real Southern scenery. Magnolia trees in full bloom and orange trees laden with fruit in mid-winter. Gorham Ayer, the older brother of our comrade, lived near the banks of the Mississippi, and I remember with what interest Captains Ira and James scanned the various plantations until they located their brother's home. We soon reached New Orleans, Louisiana, and passing on landed at Carrollton, five miles above the city. After about one month of the routine of camp duty we again embarked on steamer, and February 4th were at Baton Rouge, the capitol of the State.

This was our first advent into the enemy's country and active duty began. Pickets were thrown out, surrounding the city, all the roads were protected by a reserve force and cavalry videttes posted in advance. This, with the usual camp-guard duty and with company, battalion and brigade drills gave us plenty of employment. The constant duty devolving upon a company commander and the great change of climate¹ and mode of living were too much for a man over sixty years of age and we all realized that Captain Ayer was physically unfitted to endure the hardships when the heat of summer came.

I talked freely with him but he would say: " My boys enlisted to serve with me and I must stay."

After being quite unwell, and for several days unable to do duty, on the 24th of February he directed me to inform all the Sergeants that he desired to meet them at his tent that evening.

He then talked of his physical condition and of his fears for endurance of active service, and that he had concluded, if the lt lx)ys " did not object, to resign, believing it was best Ixith for him and for the younger men of the company.

He, however, expressed the same idea as before, that we had enlisted under him and if we so wished he would remain and perform his part as long as his strength would permit.

We all advised him to resign and return home, assuring him that it would be satisfactory and that we did not consider it the duty of one so far advanced in years to encounter the exposure and hardships of active service.

He soon resigned, and on the 3d of March left Baton Rouge for home.

I was with him most of the day March 2nd and remember the anxiety he manifested for all, and the recalling of those who started with us six months previous.

Twelve of our number were left at Fortress Monroe. Of these, four, James Cook, Bethuel Fuller, Philip Mumbach and Arthur Redmond were dead. Of the condition of the other eight we knew but little.

Seven were then sick and unable for Duty, some of whom were in the hospital at Baton Rouge ; three had been transferred to other commands and in the organization of the Regimental Hand five members had been taken from Company "A," while three others were on detached service. Of the ninety-five enlisted men when we left Buffalo, taking out the necessary details for cooking and other camp duties we had only sixty-one to carry muskets. He talked of the future, of the expected advance upon Port Hudson, of his faith in the courage arid discipline of the Company, and seemed to have implicit confidence that they would obey orders in any emergency. While he expected that danger

and death was before some of us his greatest regret seemed to be that he would not h^* permitted to share the danger with us. Could he have foreseen the future and known that in less than three months his brother, Captain James Ayer, would be laid to rest in southern soil, and that thirty-two—over one half of the active members of Company " A"—would be numbered among the killed and wounded, the parting would have been saddened many fold.

We went to the hospital and he took messages to the loved ones at home. I think he said a word of farewell to every comrade. The morning of March 3d I went upon picket and when I returned to camp he had gone and his active military life had ceased.

Let us now briefly recall the records of Company "A " and see how it fulfilled the expectations of our Captain.

Our first engagement was at Plains Store, Louisiana, May 21, 1863. This is an engagement unknown in the history of the war, merely referred to in official reports, and yet Plains Store is sacred to the memory of every member of our Regiment, and especially to Company "A." In the Mexican War the battle of Palo Alto was heralded all over the land as an important engagement. The entire losses of the American Army in that battle were nine killed and forty-seven wounded, while at Plains Store, our regiment had thirteen killed and forty-four wounded. The entire losses connected with the siege and capture of Vera Cruz were only sixty-four, while the losses of our brigade at Plains Store were eighty-five.

I cannot, however, dwell upon the Brigade or the Regiment only by way of the above comparison, but must confine myself to the losses in Company "A."

As heretofore stated, our Regiment lost thirteen killed and forty-four wounded. Nearly one fourth of that number were from our company. We went into the battle with fifty-seven officers and men, three were killed and eleven wounded, one of whom afterwards died. May 27th was the first assault upon Port Hudson. Volunteers were called for to organize a storming party. Seventy-four officers and men from our Regiment responded to the Call, nine of whom were members of Company "A."

In the unsuccessful assault of that day the loss of the regiment was twenty-two killed and eighty-five wounded. Three of the killed and fifteen of the wounded, three of whom afterwards died, were from the membership of Company " A."

June 19th another call was made for volunteers to organize a storming party and of the twenty-four that volunteered from our regiment, five were members of Company "A."

With ten companies in the regiment you will notice that each of the above comparisons show that our company not only suffered much more than an average loss, but that the number of volunteers for hazardous service speaks well for the courage of its members.

Our loss in battle of the original members during our entire service was eleven killed or mortally wounded, thirty wounded and one prisoner; or about seventy per cent, of the actual fighting membership of the company.

Of this loss during the nearly three years' service, thirty-two of the forty.-one killed and wounded received their injury in our first two engagements.

During our term of service fourteen died from disease, sixteen were discharged on account of disease o-r wounds, fifteen had been transferred or promoted from the company, and of the original number forty-two were mustered out June 8th, 1865, as members of Company "A." Of the members who enlisted from this town, three, Francis D. Ingersoll, George Herr and Ephraim Wooderson, were killed or mortally wounded.

Henry W. Raymond was discharged on account of sickness and died at Cairo, Illinois, on his way home. Charles Stan ton was discharged for the same cause, reached home and soon died. Among the wounded, eight, John H. Dingman, Frank Bently, Jefferson White, Edward Barry, Eron V. Carr, Norman Carr, Thomas Hussey and myself were from the town of Evans.

I mention these names, not for the purpose of giving them any prominence over equally deserving comrades who enlisted from adjoining towns, but for the reason that they will be familiar to many of my audience to whom the names of others of the Company would be unknown.

Neither have I referred to the statistics by way of comparison with any other company of the regiment or of any other organization, but simply to show the service rendered by the men who rallied at the call of the comrade whom we this day seek to honor.

I believe that Captain Ira Ayer's exemplary Christian life as a man and an officer had much to do in the formation of character among the members of his command.

As I have stated they were mostly young, and impressions received were liable to be lasting. Sixty-one of the original ninety-nine are supposed to be living. They are scattered through twelve states, some living near the Pacific coast. I have endeavored to keep track of them and have never heard of a member of Company "A" who has not proven himself a good citizen in the place he has chosen for his home.

None of their names are found upon the records of the penal institutions of our country, while on the contrary many have held civil positions of honor and distinction, and one is an ordained minister of the gospel.

What better Memorial to him whom these services commemorate than to point to those whom he took from their homes as boys, and after having referred to their services as soldiers, look upon them in nearly twenty-five years of honorable civil life.

Standing, as I do, to speak for the comrades of the Company of which it is the proudest thing in my personal history to say I was a member, looking back along the chain of memory for more than a quarter of a century and re-calling all the honored names, speaking for every comrade whose name was borne on the rolls of Company "A," I feel that I am authorized to thank this large assemblage of citizens who, by their presence, and these comrades of the Grand Army of the Republic who, by these memorial services, have sought to honor the memory of Ira Aver.

Closing Years of Life

Of his life since the war you are familiar, as a citizen, a Christian, a comrade and a friend.

October i4th, 1869, he was united in marriage with Miss Bessie Cronkhite who, with his two children, Ira Jr. and Mrs. Sarah E. Tifft and one adopted child, Lolah, mourn the loss of the husband and father.

March 17th, 1881, he was one of twenty-seven comrades who were mustered as charter members of James Ayer Post, No. 202, Grand Army of the Republic, and in that organization where all rank' is laid aside and where the only qualification demanded is honorable service and an honorable -discharge from the Army or Navy of the United States, he was glad as occasion permitted to meet with his comrades.

At reunions of the Regiment no one was accorded a heartier reception than he, and wherever a member of the one hundred and sixteenth Regiment can be found, words of pleasant remembrance will be spoken of Captain Ira Ayer.

Having removed to the home where his last years were passed, he seemed to enjoy the beauties of nature and the boundless expanse of lake upon the one hand, while in the opposite direction the rolling landscape and distant hills were seen. It was my privilege on several occasions to visit him there. I remember once, while sitting in the door of a tent, reference was made to the soldier tents of long ago, and conversation was enjoyed regarding comrades who were with us.

About a year ago, when more than eighty-five years of age, he took up three courses of reading—first and foremost of all was the Bible; second, a book of religious meditations, and third, a course of secular reading as he termed it. During the summer of 1888, he completed Warren's Astronomy, United States History, and Winchell's Walks and Talks in Geology. Sitting with his loved ones as twilight gathered he would talk of his day's reading. Nothing seemed too abstract or scientific for him to enjoy, and as he once remarked—explanatory of his eagerness to grasp the knowledge he sought — "I have been so busy all my life I must hurry up now in order to acquire an education." Above all, however, he read his Bible, and when at one time he feared his eyes would fail he seemed to cling to that more closely, saying, "If I should become blind I want to be very familiar with my Bible and remember all I can."

At the last he had nearly completed a large volume devoted to the history of Methodism when he was taken sick, and his education, so far as earthly matters were concerned, ceased.

All who visited him during his sickness testify to the marvelous sweetness of his death bed experiences. Heaven Deemed very real to him, and at one time conversing with his daughter, he said " If it would not seem presumptuous in me, I would say that I am now walking in Bunyan's Beulah Land " —as his wife came into the room he said in a faint voice, "Clusters of glory are around me, love; clusters of glory..." When at last, Sunday morning, July 28th, he heard the rustling of the wings of the " angel of death " he was ready to receive his discharge—ready to cross the river and be mustered into the ranks of that illustrious host—who from every battle field of the Union and every prison pen of the south have pitched their tents upon the celestial plains.

"The sword and cross arc both laid down,

Our comrade wears the victor's crown."

He had been permitted to see his country reunited and redeemed from the curse of slavery; the implements of war had been laid aside ; the battle flags had been furled, and surrounded by loving friends he had passed quietly down the hill leading to the stream that lies upon the confines of life.

Nearly half of his boys of "1862 " had preceded him, and with a long list of relatives and friends were ready to welcome him upon the other side.

"And I heard a voice from Heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed *are* the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth : Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors ; and their works do follow them.

" They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more ; Neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.

"For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters : and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

Comrades: I have sought to fulfill the task you assigned me. I have endeavored to show some of the characteristics and mention some of the events in the life of our departed comrade. As scenes of twenty-five years ago have been recalled, thoughts have crowded your brain and mine, and many shadowy forms have appeared whom we left to moulder into dust far from home and friends.

History relates that one Latour d'Auvergne, a private in the French army, had covered himself with glory in a hundred battles, and had been given the proudest title a French soldier can receive, that of the "First Grenadier of France." When at last he fell pierced by the enemy's bullets, a general order directed that his name should be kept u|>on the active roll of his company—should be called at every roll call—and that a private from the ranks should answer for him.

At every reveille and every tattoo the Sergeant called— "Latour d' Auvergne !" and a private stepping from the ranks saluted and answered—" Died on the field of honor."

While these services have sought to honor the memory of one comrade and in so doing reference has been .confined to his immediate command, let us not forget that nearly two million eight hundred thousand comrades served in the armies of the Union—that more than four hundred thousand laid down their lives in defence of the flag, and while more than three hundred thousand (nearly one-half of whom are unknown), sleep in the national cemeteries to-day, thousands more rest in unknown graves scattered over every southern state.

If the muster rolls of that Grind Army were spread out before us ; if the familiar names were called of every company and regiment whom you my comrades represent, each one within the hearing of my voice could rise in his place and answer not for one but for many, "Died on the field of honor."

May this memorial service teach the living to honor our dead by serving the country for which they died. May it teach the the living to be grateful to our dead by their readiness to help the widow and the orphan.

While the floral tributes we place upon the graves of our departed comrades will wither, may the tender fraternal love which they symbolize endure until the touch of death shall chill the warm pulse-beat of our hearts.

May our charity be ever fruitful in good works, and our loyalty ever true to the flag under which we fought and from the shadows of whose folds our comrades were promoted.

May we in this sacred edifice—solemnly dedicated to the service of that Supreme Ruler who guided the nation through the perils of civil war—in the presence of these symbols of mourning and surrounded by this large assemblage of friends, pledge ourselves anew that, God helping us, the memory of our departed comrade shall inspire in us all a still more zealous and loyal patriotism.

Our best years are behind us, comrades ; we do not walk with the same elastic step as when we marched to the music of the Union. Our brows are more, deeply furrowed and grey hairs are creeping in even among the locks of us boys.

We are but the rear guard of that grandest army that ever rallied around a standard. Every twelve months a full brigade of more than four thousand men in obedience to orders from the Supreme Commander, fords the stream that lies upon the confines of life.

May we so live that when our promotion comes and we are ordered to report at headquarters, we can go forth as did our lamented comrade with a brave and manly heart, believing as he did that "out of death cometh life."

He is lost to OUT sight in the shadows on the other side. May he rest in peace until awakened by the last reveille, to answer to the last roll call and take part in the final grand review.

LETTER FROM IRA AYER JR.

The following letter from the son of our deceased comrade supplies dates of commissions and interesting reminiscences of early military service not included in the Memorial Address, and is so full of interest that rather than glean from its pages I insert it in full—a fitting testimonial from the son who bears the honored name of Ira Ayer.

NF.W YORK, Dec. 17th, 1889.

MR. LEROY S. OATMAN, Buffalo, N. Y.:

My Dear Comrade:

I would be very glad if in compliance with your request, I should l>c able to contribute anything in regard to the life and character of my revered father which would add to the interest of the Memorial by which the personal affection and respect of his army comrades seek expression.

To the immediate members of his family, the faithful and kindly manner in which the work entrusted to you by the Grand Army Post of which he was a member has been performed, is a matter of grateful appreciation.

Father was perhaps most widely known by his military title and associations.

I have in my possession his Commissions : The first as Lieutenant in the 48th Regiment of Infantry, with rank from July 11th, 1827. This is signed by "DeWitt Clinton, Esq., Governor of our said State," the form of which seems somewhat quaint in contrast with those of more modern date.

Subsequent Commissions as Captain, Major, and Lieutenant Colonel followed, and on the 16th day of October, 1837, he was Commissioned by Governor Marcy, Colonel of the 48th Regiment of Infantry, with rank from Sept. 9th, 1837.

He was then thirty-four years of age, in the strength of young and vigorous manhood. He was possessed of a fine voice and had a martial spirit and bearing.

Full of fire, but genial and sympathetic, he was endowed by nature with those characteristics that make a popular commander.

He was a thorough master of the tactics pertaining to company and battalion evolutions and was therefore never at a Joss for the proper word of command, which even in the more complicated movements was given with ease and precision, and with a force and spirit that not only inspired confidence, but awakened enthusiasm.

The year after the date of his commission as Colonel, the Patriot War difficulties in Canada caused a feeling of insecurity along the frontiers and the Brigade of which the 48th Regiment formed a part was ordered to Buffalo.

The 48th, though made up of companies from the country, and quite widely separated, was the first to report at Buffalo, and was immediately ordered to Grand Island where it remained, if my memory serves me correctly, some four weeks, the principal duty being to maintain the peace and preserve the neutrality of the border.

The lower end of Grand Island laps down below the upper end of Navy Island, which latter is Canadian territory and on which the Patriots had taken a stand.

It appears that here something in the nature of an "Artillery Duel " took place between the Patriots and the regular forces on the Canadian side. I remember to have heard father tell of one poor fellow, who was possibly out foraging with the natural instincts of a soldier, and who got within range of the firing and was killed by a cannon ball that evidently overshot fie mark.

This, I believe, was the extent of the casualties, but this short campaign was apparently pleasantly remembered by those who participated in it.

Well do I remember how, in my younger days, father was frequently called upon to respond to the warm and friendly salutations of passerby who proved to be men of the 48th Regiment that had " served under him on Grand Island."

These meetings, though brief, were exceedingly cordial, being generally accompanied with some reminiscence, and the parting was always one of hearty respect and good will.

Although I am writing of matters pertaining to a former generation, there are no doubt those still living, to whom the scenes and events described will be familiar.

They will probably agree with me that the spirit of those times savored strongly of the spirit of '76 which was not then so remote a date as it now is, and the memories of which had been revived and perpetuated, rather them dimmed by the War of 1812.

In giving these incidents I have remembered that I was speaking through you to the surviving members of Company " A " and to Grand Army friends who would probably feel interested in facts connected with his former military experiences.

I need not speak of his pure patriotism, his regard for the rights of man, or his stem devotion to duty, characteristics which were known and recognized in him as widely as lie was known. And may I not here be indulged in a moment's digression? The memory of a beloved mother comes before me like that of an angel of light. A woman of superior intelligence and of sensitive and refined nature, she was not wanting in a full realization of the demands of the country in those dark and trying days of its history.

I have never forgotten her last words of approval when in June, 1861, during her last illness I bade her a final farewell to join my command.

A few more words and I close.

Father's religious character was well known, and from my sister Mrs. Tifft, and others, you have, no doubt, received accounts of his sayings and experiences near the close of his life. It was my privilege to be with him for a few days *before* his death. He died as the Christian only can die, with a firm reliance in the divine goodness and an unswerving trust in the love of his God and Savior.

He spoke freely and in well chosen language of the glory that awaited him.

On one occasion that I particularly remember when speaking of his happiness and of the brightness of the eternal future just before him, his eye though dim with age, kindled with its old lustre, and with an expression of exalted and supreme joy he said: "My son, let it be said of me when I am gone: *lie died in the faith* ! " These words spoken as they were, with great force and energy of expression, may be accepted as the final utterance of the Christian man and soldier, to his friends, and his former companions in arms.

Very faithfully yours,

IRA AVER





Memorial to Ira Ayer



Memorial to Ira Ayer



RICORD OF SERVICE.

Banks' Expedition, Sabine Pass Expedition, Texas. Snicker's Gap Expedition, Va. Siege of Port Hudson, La. Red River Campaign, La. Shenandoah Valley Campaign, Va.

BATTLES.

Plain's Store, La., May 21, 1863. Port Hudson, La., May 27, '63. Pleasant Hill, La., Apr. 9, '64. Fisher's Hill, Va., Sept. 22, '64.

Port Hudson, La., June 14, '63 Cox's Plantation, La., July 13, '63. Sabine Cross Roads, La., Apr. 8, '64. Cane River, La., Apr. 23, '64. Mansura Plains, La., May 16, '64. Opequan Creek, Va., Sept. 19, '64. Cedar Creek, Va., Oct 19, '64.

LOSSES.

Killed, II. Wounded, 32. Prisoner, I.

EXERCISES AND RESOLUTIONS.

IRA AYER died at his residence in the town of Evans, Erie County, New York, July 28th, 1889. The funeral obsequies were under the direction of JAMES AYER POST, No. 202, G. A. R. The services were held July 30th at the Evans M. E. Church, of which the deceased was an official member, Rev. J. C. Neal, the pastor, officiating, after which the remains were borne to the cemetery at Angola, N. Y. and deposited with the honors due to a comrade of the *Grand Army of the Republic*.

The following comrades: Edward Barry, Co. "A," 116th N. Y. Vols.; John H. Dingman, Co. "A," 116th N. Y. Vols.; James H. Duffy, Co. "A," 116th N. Y. Vols.; Leroy G. Bundy, Co. "A," 116th N. Y. Vols.; Edward Avery, Co. "K," 116th N. Y. Vols.; Morris Taylor, Co. "K," 116th N. Y. Vols. officiated as bearers.

At a subsequent meeting of the Post, EDWARD BARRY, JOSEPH FROCHLEY and GEORGE FULLER, all of whom enlisted with and served under his command, were appointed a committee to draft resolutions and to make arrangements for a memorial service.

The committee reported the following :

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WHEREAS, It has pleased our Supreme Commander to muster our comrade, Ira Ayer into the Grand Army above, thus uniting him with the comrades who fought and bled that the Nation might live.

Resolved, That while we mourn the loss of a beloved comrade we bow in humble obedience to the orders of our Great Commander in Chief.

EXERCISES AND RESOLUTIONS.

Resolved, That we who were bound to him by the ties of Fraternity, Charity and Loyalty, tender to the family of our deceased comrade our sincere and heartfelt sympathy, in this their sore affliction.

Resolved, That the charter and official emblems of the Post be draped in mourning for thirty days as a mark of respect to our deceased comrade.

Resolved, That these resolutions be spread upon the Adjutant's report of JAMES AVER POST, NO. 202, G. A. R., and that a copy be sent to the family of our late comrade, and to the press for publication.

The committee also reported in favor of holding a Memorial Service on Sunday, September 1st, and recommended that Comrade LeRoy S. Oatman of Buffalo, N. Y., Past Commander of Bidwell-Wilkeson Post, No. 9, G. A. R., and an ex-member of Company "A," one hundred and sixteenth N. Y. Vols., be invited to deliver a Memorial Address on that occasion.

The report of the committee was unanimously adopted and the committee continued to perfect the arrangements.

Sunday afternoon, September 1st, 1889, the Post assembled at headquarters, and with several visiting comrades marched to the First Presbyterian Church.

In front of the desk was a vacant chair, heavily draped while the Post colors festooned with crape, and the floral tributes bespoke the solemnity of the occasion.

In the presence of the widow of the deceased comrade, 1 only surviving sister and many other relatives, together with a large concourse of citizens, the beautiful memorial service of the Grand Army of the Republic was observed.

The following record was' read by the Adjutant, and the address was delivered by the comrade who had been selected to perform that duty.

Exercises and Resolutions





ADDRESS.

Commander, Comrades, Ladies and Gentlemen :

I appreciate the honor conferred by James Ayer Post in inviting me to address you upon this occasion. I am glad to recognize so many familiar faces and to know that I am among friends of the town where, for nearly thirty years, I resided.

Words are not needed before such an audience to eulogize the memory of Ira Ayer.

This vacant chair, with its sombre drapery, speaks more eloquently than words of the solemnity of this occasion. It reminds us that the fierce artillery of time beats remorselessly upon our rapidly thinning ranks and that in peace, as in war, our comrades are falling out upon the march.

Time will not permit of extended allusions to the many important events national and local during the lifetime of our departed comrade.

When he was born, Thomas Jefferson was President and seventeen States had been admitted to the Union, whose entire population was less than that of New York State to-day.

Seventeen times since he attained his majority has an opportunity offered to exercise the right of suffrage in the election of President. At the first presidential election, after he became a citizen, John Quincy Adams was elected and at that time the Union consisted of twenty-five States.

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In matters of local interest—he was twenty-three years of age when the Erie Canal was opened, was thirty years old when Buffalo, with about ten thousand inhabitants, was chartered as a city, and over forty before there was any railroad communication eastward to Albany.

When he came to this town, a boy eight years of age, there was not a public highway nor a house, except the few log cabins of the pioneers and probably less than twenty families resided within the present limits of the town of Evans. He had resided in this town more than forty years when the first locomotive ran from Buffalo to Dunkirk.

Referring to the records of the early history of Erie County I find that the first settlement in what is now the town of Evans was made in June, 1804, by Joel Harvey who located on the west side of Eighteen Mile Creek, near its mouth. During the succeeding few years, several farmers built cabins in this town but moved away after a brief stay and their names have not been preserved. At the time of Mr. Harvey's settlement the territory now comprising the town of Evans was a part of the town of Batavia, but in 1805 it was changed to the town of Erie, which extended from Lake Ontario to the Pennsylvania line.

March 11, 1808, there was a re-organization of the Holland purchase and Mr. Harvey, who settled in the town of Batavia in 1804 and was in the town of Erie in 1805, found himself in 1808, without changing his location, a resident of the town of Willink, Niagara County, which township extended from the Buffalo Reservation to the Cattaraugus Creek, and from Lake Erie to the eastern bounds of the present County of Erie, about twenty five miles wide and more than thirtyfive miles long.

In 1809 Aaron Salisbury located near the lake shore and.

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Aaron Cash near the site of North Evans village. The following year Anderson Taylor settled on the site of Evans Center, and David Cash, Elijah Gates, Nathaniel Lay, John Barker, Seth Sprague, and Martin Sprague made their homes at various points near the lake shore. In 1810, or early in 1811, Gideon Dudley located at Evans Center, David Corbin and Timothy Dustin near there, and a Mr. Pike on the little stream known as Pike's Creek, and about the same time Job Palmer succeeded Mr. Harvey as tavern keeper in the log house he occupied near the banks of Eighteen Mile Creek.

Among the settlers of 1811, mention is made of James Ayer with his wife and family, consisting of his sons Low Bradley, Gorham and Ira, and his daughers, who afterwards became Mrs. Martha Dart, Mrs. Mary Low Beal, Mrs. Sarah Bradley Black and Mrs. Henrietta Atwood.

Captain James Ayer, the youngest of the family, was born in the town of Evans in 1813.

The father, mother and seven of the children sleep in the cemeteries of this town today. Only one, Mrs. Sarah Black, remains. I do not think another person is living who resided in the town of Evans in 1811.

In the same year mention is made of the arrival of Hezekiah Dibble, father of O. J. Dibble, Esq., and in 1812 of William Cash, of whose family, I think, the only survivor is your respected townsman, Ambrose Cash,

From these references you can appreciate something of the task before me to even allude to important events in the life of our deceased comrade.

Ira Ayer, the son of James and Sarah Bradley Ayer, was born in Haverhill, Massachusetts, December 26, 1802. He was the fourth child in a family of eight—four sons and four daughters.

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In a little book of early reminiscences, written by himself, a description is given of their early home on the banks of the Merrimac, and of the time when, with the family and family possessions, they started with two emigrant wagons for a new home in the "far West"-of the four weeks' journey, before they reached Buffalo, then a village of about one hundred houses and some four hundred inhabitants. The family remained in Buffalo about three weeks while Mr. Ayer was deciding what part of the wilderness to choose for his home. He finally followed the windings of the lake as far as Eighteen Mile Creek, where he engaged, temporarily, a small log house owned by Mr. Job Palmer, and returning to Buffalo started with his family, traveling most of the way along the beach of the lake and not reaching the bank of Eighteen Mile Creek until after dark.

Calling across the creek Mr. Palmer heard them, and coming out with a lantern, directed them where to enter the creek and what course to take as they had to follow up the stream nearly a half mile before there was an opportunity to drive out upon the opposite side. In places the water was so deep that it ran into the boxes of the wagons. They finally reached the shore safely, took possession of this temporary home and unloading their goods arranged for the night. After traveling around the country, going as far as the present site of Springville, Mr. Ayer finally concluded to purchase a tract of four hundred and thirty-nine acres, known as lot number sixty-seven, in what afterwards became the town of Evans.

Again loading their household goods in the wagons they started for the new home, Mr. Aver having previously arranged with Anderson Taylor, who lived at what is now

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Evans Center, to move in with his family while he, with the aid of his neighbors, assisted the new settler in building a log house near the Little Sister Creek. You will remember that at this time Evans was a part of the town of Willink, and in the County of Niagara. In 1812, the town of E on was formed comprising the present towns of Boston, Eden, Evans and Brant, and not until 1821 did the town of Evans exist under that name, and not until that year was Erie County formed by a division of the County of Niagara. I have referred to these early matters in the history of town and county to emphasize the fact that the history of our comrade ante-dates both.

In 1815, a Mr. Wright erected a saw mill and in the following year a grist mill at Evans Center, and the place became known as Wright's Mills, which name continued until the town was formed in 1821 and a postoffice, under the name of Evans was established. When our comrade came to Evans in 1811, Buffalo was the nearest postoffice and the United States mail was brought from Albany only once a week. In 1818 an office was located somewhere near the lake shore by the name of Eden, of which township this was then a part, and James Peters was the first postmaster.

The war of 1812 soon demanded attention and the armed vessels of the British annoyed the pioneers who had settled along the lake.

The "Queen Charlotte" would often send its boats ashore on foraging expeditions, seizing whatever could be found, and many times taking one or more of the residents prisoners for the purpose of intimidating any who might oppose them.

Eighteen hundred and thirteen was an eventful year. Buffalo was burned by the British and Indians, only one dwelling remaining, and the inhabitants were compelled to

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flee into the sparsely settled portions of the county and depend upon the scattering homes of the pioneers for shelter.

The same year was the scene of the great conflict upon Lake Erie, when Commodore Perry won the victory over the commander of the British fleet.

In 1814, occurred the battles of Chippewa and Lundy's Lane, and the capture of Fort Erie, while in the same year Washington was burned, and in 1815 the decisive battle of New Orleans was fought. These stirring events in the history, not only of our county but of the Nation, could but have their effects upon the boy who was of an age that was susceptible to impressions regarding scenes of battle and who had personal knowledge of the dangers of frontier life.

News in those days was, to a large extent, a matter of verbal communication.

One weekly paper, smaller in size than the Angola Record and known as the "Gazette" was all that was published in Buffalo and that could not reach the settlers of this town regularly until the postoffice was established in 1818.

Weeks must have elapsed before news of the Battle of New Orleans could reach the scattered homes of the pioneers upon our frontiers.

In those early days it was a matter of necessity to visit the village of Buffalo to procure needed articles for family consumption, and it was not an unusual occurrence, when a boy of fourteen or fifteen, for Ira to walk to Buffalo, carrying two jars of butter by means of a neck-yoke, such as some of us have used in carrying water, and, having marketed the same, return with groceries, ammunition, or other needed supplies suspended in the same manner.

The streets of Buffalo at that time and for many years thereafter bore names that would not sound very familiar

to-day. Instead of Main Street, that thoroughfare was known as Willink Avenue until it reached the junction of Niagara Street, and above that it was Von Stophurst Avenue. Instead of Niagara, Erie and Church Streets we had Schimmelpenneck Avenue, Vollenhoven Avenue, and Stodniski Avenue, while instead of Pearl, Franklin, Washington, Ellicott and Exchange, such names as Cayuga, Tuscarora, Onondaga, Oneida and Crow appear upon a map of the village published in 1825. The only tavern in the village was located at the corner of Willink Avenue and Crow Streets, (Main and Exchange), where the Mansion House now stands. All below that point to the river was a swamp, winding around the course of the Terrace and the boundary of the village as late as 1825 was the Terrace on the south, Chippewa on the north, Ellicott on the east, and the reserve line, a little beyond Morgan Street, on the west.

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Compare Buffalo as he then knew it with the present city and think of the marvellous growth which has taken place under his observation.

In due time it became necessary to procure a sum of money owing Mr. Ayer in Haverhill, Massachusetts. Railroads and express companies could not be brought into requisition and it was decided that Gorham, who was about eighteen, and Ira, who was two years his junior, should undertake the journey.

Attired in their new suits of homespun garments, with well-filled haversacks and stout hickory canes they started on foot, walking to Cold Springs the first day, and taking the road eastward they passed on, reaching Saratoga Springs, crossing the Hudson at Sandy Hill, thence to Rutland, Vermont, and over the mountains, until they reached the home of an Uncle whom they desired to visit.

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Remaining there a couple of days they again started, crossing the State of New Hampshire and at last reached the old home at Haverhill, Massachusetts.

After visiting about two weeks among the relatives they started upon their homeward journey, which they reached in safety, with the sum of one thousand dollars, securely sewed inside their clothes, and having walked over one thousand miles. During their many weeks absence no tidings of them had reached home.

They wore home-made, knitted red caps, and when the time came to expect their return you can imagine the anxious watching of the family from day to day, and the delight of the parents and the children when the red caps were seen in the distance and the shout went up announcing that Gorham and Ira were coming. Mr. Ayer went to the office of the land company at Batavia, and paying the amount due, secured the deed of his purchase.

The advantages to acquire an education were limited, as schools did not abound in those days and boys had something else to do. I do not know how much our comrade attended during his youth, but I have learned that during the winter of 1821-1822, when Dea. Joseph Bennett was teaching school Ira Ayer was one of his pupils.

In 1815 the Evans M. E. Church was organized and prominent among the original members was the Ayer family.

At how early an age our comrade became a Christian I do not know, but am quite sure that he was one of the constituent members of the Church.

Until 1844 the worshipers met at private houses and school houses. During that year Ira Ayer determined that a Church should be built. He began alone, cutting the trees and hewing the timbers, and though others came to his aid from time to
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time he labored almost daily until the house was completed. In his younger days he had worked some as a carpenter and soon after his marriage he had constructed a saw mill near his home on the Little Sister Creek. The trees were mostly, if not all cut on the Ayer farm and sawed at the Ayer mill, and a large portion of the work was done by him or under his supervision until the Methodist Church at Emans Center, which was occupied until a few years ago, completed. From his early manhood until his decease he was an official member of the Church and of his exemplary Christian life it is unnecessary to speak.

I have ascertained from official records and have perse recollection of the fact that during the years 1857 and 18 he represented this town upon the Board of Supervisors.

It is useless, however, in the time allotted me to attempt to mention even the important events in the life of one, who for more than three-quarters of a century, was a resident of Evans, and who was for some years, without doubt, its oldest settler.

In the same year that the Ayer family came to Evans, or possibly earlier, as some records place the date as early as 1808. Ebenezer Ingersoll removed from Cayuga County, settling on the Hamburg side of Eighteen Mile Creek, near the lake, where he remained for some years, but his family eventually became prominent citizens of this town. William H. Ingersoll, if I am correctly informed, though not as old a resident of this town was one year the senior of our comrade, his birth having occurred in 1801. He is, I think, the only survivor of the family, and his youngest son, Francis, was a member of our comrade's company and was killed in its first engagement.

In looking over records of the early settlers, I have become convinced that there are not more than twenty-five persons

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living in Erie County to-day who have been residents continuously since the time that our comrade took up his residence in this town. In 1828 he was united in marriage with Miss Julia Maria Warner. He erected a house twentyfour by thirty-six which was plastered upon the outside and gravel thrown into the mortar as thickly as possible, making whet was then considered a stylish finish. Seven children,

e sons and four daughters, were born to them, of whom only two, Ira Ayer, Jr., and Mrs. Sarah E. Tifft, are now living.

During the Patriot War, in 1838, our comrade was found on as Colonel of the Forty-Eighth Regiment, New York additia. How many the regiment contained or from how large a territory it was recruited I have been unable to ascertain. Three members of the regiment, Amos Avery, Daniel Mosher and Elijah P. Smith, are still residents of this town

I have ascertained that they marched to Buffalo, remained over night in one of the warehouses near the dock, marched in review before General Winfield Scott, proceeded down the river, and crossed by flat boats to Grand Island. I am not aware that they had any encounter with the enemy, though they showed their loyalty by leaving their homes and taking position as directed by the general, commanding.

How long he held his commission as Colonel or when the regiment disbanded I have been unable to ascertain.

The services of Captain Ira Ayer during the War of the Rebellion are familiar to many comrades before me, whom I recognize as members of the same regiment and some who, with me, served in his company. Few men of his ageconsidered it their duty to encounter the hardships and dangers of a soldier's life.



The casualties as to wounded I have no records to show. After the battle at Fredericksburg, in December, 1862, the regiment was sent to Washington to rest and recruit its thinned ranks. When, however, they learned of Lee's invasion of Pennsylvania they asked to be ordered to the front to aid in driving him out of their own State and reached Gettysburg in time to take part in a portion of the battle. Captain Ira Ayer, Jr., was wounded four times twice severely. He was promoted until he was in command of his regiment, with the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel, it having become so decimated from continued active service

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that it was not entitled to muster a Colonel. He commanded his Regiment during the Battle of the Wilderness, receiving at that time a gunshot wound, fracturing his leg and was made Colonel by brevet for "gallant and meritorious conduct" in that engagement. Looking at this brief statement we, as comrades, can take pride in his record, showing as it does, that he was a "worthy son of an honored sire."

Our deceased comrade could not remain inactive when the life of the nation was in danger.

Though not possessing the same vigor as when he rode at the head of a Regiment, the same spirit inspired him and he believed that the young men would respond to his call for volunteers. More than a year had elapsed since Fort Sumter had fallen.

In the south, Port Royal, Fort Pickens, New Orleans d many other places had become noted in the history of the war. In the West we had read of Fort Donelson, Pittsburg Landing, Shiloh, Chattanooga and many other sharply-contested battles.

While these had attracted our attention it was to the Army of the Potomac that the eyes of the whole nation turned, and hardly a school child but could recall Bull Run, Cold Harbor, Hanover Court House, Seven Pines, Fair Oaks and scores of other hard-fought battles, while the great encounter between the Monitor and the Merrimac had rendered Hampton Roads and Fortress Monroe familiar as household words.

The Army of the Potomac, under McClellan, had advanced and the seven days' battles in the Valley of Chickahominy had ended July 1st, 1862, with the repulse of the Confederates at Malvern Hill.

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Men were needed to take the places of those who had fallen, and to reinforce the armies both of the east and the west. July 2d President Lincoln issued his call for three hundred thousand volunteers. Governor Morgan issued general order number four, apportioning the quota to each Senatorial District and appointing in each a military committee. The thirty-first military district comprised the County of Erie and the committee organized July 10th.

Among those who applied for authority to recruit a company was our late comrade, Ira Ayer. His expectations were fully realized, as when it was known that one of his military experience and high social position was to command, the young men responded quickly and on the 11th day of August he marched into Fort Porter—then know as Camp Morgan at the head of nearly a full company and reported to Colonel H. K. Viele, who was in command.

As ours was the first organization that had been perfected we were mustered into the service as Company "A," of what was afterwards known as the One Hundred and Sixteenth Regiment, New York Volunteer Infantry. As the record of Company "A" was largely due to him as its recruiting officer and first Captain, I shall consider it my privilege upon this occasion to give some statistical information regarding his "boys" as he loved to call us.

Comrade Josiah L. Claghorn was appointed Regimental Commissary Sergeant and Company "A," as mustered into the service of the United States, September 3d, 1862, consisted of ninety-eight officers and men.

Of the ninety-seven under Captain Ayer's command, thirtyseven were boys from eighteen to twenty years of age and of the others only eleven were over twenty-eight. The average age of the members was a little less than twenty-three, while our Captain was nearly sixty.

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Comrade Jacob Gottschalk was eighteen the day we were mustered into the service and I^{*}think with that exception I was the youngest member. September 5th we left Buffalo and proceeding to Baltimore, Maryland, went into camp at Druid Hill Park, where the work of discipline—drill, target practice, &c., began.

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In the matter of discipline Captain Ayer excelled. Always carefully obeying the orders of his superior officers, he exacted the same obedience from those under his command. Upon parade, and in all the duties of camp life his neatness as to uniform and equipments was an example to his men.

As to mastering the manual of arms and the new tactics and commands it was not an easy matter for him and very much of that duty devolved upon the Lieutenants and the non-commissioned officers.

October 11th, about midnight, an orderly from General Emory's headquarters galloped into the camp. We were immediately aroused, ordered to cook three days' rations and be ready to move early in the morning. It was reported that General Stuart with a large force of Confederate Cavalry had started upon a raid into Pennsylvania. On the 13th we reached Gettysburg. Marching out of the village on the Chambersburg Road, or as it is sometimes called, the Cashtown Pike, leaving the Seminary upon our left we descended the incline towards Willoughby Run, passing within a few rods of the spot where General Reynolds was killed, and crossing the little stream whose waters were afterwards reddened with the life-blood of both the Blue and the Gray, we were soon on the ground occupied by our Cavalry when the battle of Gettysburg opened. Proceeding along the Pike we passed the house which, during a portion of the battle, was General Lee's headquarters and bivouacked in the field

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where A. P, Hill's Corps was massed on the morning of July 1st, 1863, and from which position they advanced, crowding our army back, over Willoughby Run and up the slope until after having contested every foot of the ground over which we had marched, night closed upon the first day's battle with the Confederate line upon Seminary Ridge. How little we then knew of the future.

A few months later we were nearly a thousand miles from there, more than a third of our number dead or wounded, the survivors crowding the lines closer and closer around Port Hudson, while the greatest battle of the war was being fought where we then were, the rattle of musketry, the roar of cannon and the shriek of shell reverberating from hill to hill, as the messengers of death did their deadly work, until nearly every foot of the ground upon which we had trod was hallowed by the blood of those who fell.

After remaining over night, the general commanding having ascertained that the reported raid had been abandoned we retraced our steps, and on the 16th were again in camp at Druid Hill Park. November 5th we embarked upon boats and proceeding to Fortress Monroe, Virginia, found a large fleet assembling, destined for some distant service. Nearly a month in close quarters upon the boat was disastrous to the health of the regiment and one hundred and fifty-twelve of whom were from Company " A " were left in the hospital at Fortress Monroe, when "Banks' Expedition," of which we were a part, sailed December 4th. We had a very rough voyage and many vessels of the fleet were disabled in the storm, which we encountered. I shall never forget the kindness of both Captain Ira and Captain James Ayer upon the voyage. I was very low with typhoid fever. Once or twice daily each of them would visit me, bringing some little delicacy from the officers' table to tempt my appetite.

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To them and other comrades who cared for me and protected me from the storm I consider myself under obligations that I can never repay.

On the 13th we arrived at "Ship Island" where we temporarily went into camp, as our vessel was too large to cross the bar at the mouth of the Mississippi River.

I referred to Captain Ayer's exactness in obeying orders. A little incident will illustrate this: Christmas, 1862, Colonel Chapin allowed the enlisted men to elect their company officers from among their number, and they in turn to elect field officers, and, for that day, the officers so elected were to be absolutely in command of the regiment.

It was considered a good opportunity to show the officers how well we could discipline the regiment, and to that end many of them were arrested and ordered to perform some of the duties of a private soldier. Captain Ayer was found by the guard outside of camp, was brought before the proper company officer and as a penalty was ordered to do police duty; or to make it plain to you who are civilians, was ordered to clean the company streets. This was a matter in which he had always been very exacting, insisting that the streets and ground around the tents should be kept scrupuously clean.

Arrayed in the blouse of a private, armed with the necessary implements and escorted by the guard he proceeded to obey orders, and though the following day was the sixtieth anniversary of his birth I will venture to assert that the streets of Company "A" were never better cleaned than when he reported his task completed and was released from arrest.

The morning of the 30th we entered the mouth of the river and passed Forts Jackson and St. Philip, of whose capture by Farragut's fleet we had read when at home.

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We now had our first glimpse of real Southern scenery. Magnolia trees in full bloom and orange trees laden with fruit in mid-winter. Gorham Ayer, the older brother of our comrade, lived near the banks of the Mississippi, and I remember with what interest Captains Ira and James scanned the various plantations until they located their brother's home. We soon reached New Orleans, Louisiana, and passing on landed at Carrollton, five miles above the city. After about one month of the routine of camp duty we again embarked on steamer, and February 4th were at Baton Rouge, the capitol of the State.

This was our first advent into the enemy's country and active duty began. Pickets were thrown out, surrounding the city, all the roads were protected by a reserve force and cavalry videttes posted in advance. This, with the usual camp-guard duty and with company, battalion and brigade drills' gave us plenty of employment. The constant duty devolving upon a company commander and the great change of climate and mode of living were too much for a man over sixty years of age and we all realized that Captain Ayer was physically unfitted to endure the hardships when the heat of summer came.

I talked freely with him but he would say: "My boys enlisted to serve with me and I must stay."

After being quite unwell, and for several days unable to do duty, on the 24th of February he directed me to inform all the Sergeants that he desired to meet them at his tent that evening.

He then talked of his physical condition and of his fears for endurance of active service, and that he had concluded, if the "boys" did not object, to resign, believing it was best both for him and for the younger men of the company.

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He, however, expressed the same idea as before, that we had enlisted under him and if we so wished he would remain and perform his part as long as his strength would permit.

We all advised him to resign and return home, assuring him that it would be satisfactory and that we did not consider it the duty of one so far advanced in years to encounter the exposure and hardships of active service.

He soon resigned, and on the 3d of March left Baton Rouge for home.

I was with him most of the day March 2nd and remember the anxiety he manifested for all, and the recalling of those who started with us six months previous.

Twelve of our number were left at Fortress Monroe. Of these, four, James Cook, Bethuel Fuller, Philip Mumbach and Arthur Redmond were dead. Of the condition of the other eight we knew but little.

Seven were then sick and unable for luty, some of whom were in the hospital at Baton Rouge; three had been transferred to other commands and in the organization of the Regimental Band five members had been taken from Company "A," while three others were on detached service. Of the ninety-five enlisted men when we left Buffalo, taking out the necessary details for cooking and other camp duties we had only sixty-one to carry muskets. He talked of the future, of the expected advance upon Port Hudson, of his faith in the courage and discipline of the Company, and seemed to have implicit confidence that they would obey orders in any emergency. While he expected that danger and death was before some of us his greatest regret seemed to be that he would not be permitted to share the danger with us. Could he have foreseen the future and known that in less than three months his brother, Captain James Ayer, would be laid to

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rest in southern soil, and that thirty-two—over one half of the active members of Company "A" ould be numbered among the killed and wounded, the page would have been saddened many fold.

We went to the hospital and he took messages to the loved ones at home. I think he said a word of farewell to every comrade. The morning of March 3d I went upon picket and when I returned to camp he had gone and his active military life had ceased.

Let us now briefly recall the records of Company "A" and see how it fulfilled the expectations of our Captain.

Our first engagement was at Plains Store, Louisiana, May 21, 1863. This is an engagement unknown in the history of the war, merely referred to in official reports, and yet Plains Store is sacred to the memory of every member of our Regiment, and especially to Company "A." In the Mexican War the battle of Palo Alto was heralded all over the land as an important engagement. The entire losses of the American Army in that battle were nine killed and forty-seven wounded, while at Plains Store, our regiment had thirteen killed and forty-four wounded. The entire losses connected with the siege and capture of Vera Cruz were only sixty-four, while the losses of our brigade at Plains Store were eighty-five.

I cannot, however, dwell upon the Brigade or the Regiment only by way of the above comparison, but must confine myself to the losses in Company "A."

As heretofore stated, our Regiment lost thirteen killed 2 id forty-four wounded. Nearly one fourth of that number were from our company. We went into the battle with fif-y-seven officers and men, three were killed and eleven wounded, one of whom afterwards died. May 27th was the first assault upon Port Hudson. Volumeers were called for to organize

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a storming party Seventy-four officers and men from our Regiment respond , the Call, nine of whom were members of Compar ..."

In the unsuccessful assault of that day the loss of the regiment was twenty-two killed and eighty-five wounded. Three of the killed and fifteen of the wounded, three of whom afterwards died, were from the membership of Company "A."

June 19th another call was made for volunteers to organize a storming party and of the twenty-four that volunteered from our regiment, five were members of Company "A."

With ten companies in the regiment you will notice that each of the above comparisons show that our company not only suffered much more than an average loss, but that the number of volunteers for hazardous service speaks well for the courage of its members.

Our loss in battle of the original members during our entire service was eleven killed or mortally wounded, thirty wounded and one prisoner; or about seventy per cent. of the actual fighting membership of the company.

Of this loss during the nearly three years' service, thirtytwo of the forty-one killed and wounded received their injury in our first two engagements.

During our term of service fourteen died from disease, sixteen were discharged on account of disease or wounds, fifteen had been transferred or promoted from the company, and of the original number forty-two were mustered out June 8th, 1865, as members of Company "A." Of the members who enlisted from this town, three, Francis D. Ingersoll, George Herr and Ephraim Wooderson, were killed or mortally wounded.

Henry W. Raymond was discharged on account of sickness

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and died at Cairo, Illinois, on his way home. Charles Stanton was discharged for the same cause, reached home and soon died. Among the wounded, eight, John H. Dingman, Frank Bently, Jefferson White, Edward Barry, Eron V. Carr, Norman Carr, Thomas Hussey and myself were from the town of Evans.

I mention these names, not for the purpose of giving them any prominence over equally deserving comrades who enlisted from adjoining towns, but for the reason that they will be familiar to many of my audience to whom the names of others of the Company would be unknown.

Neither have I referred to the statistics by way of comparison with any other company of the regiment or of any other organization, but simply to show the service rendered by the men who rallied at the call of the comrade whom we this day seek to honor.

I believe that Captain Ira Ayer's exemplary Christian life as a man and an officer had much to do in the formation of character among the members of his command.

As I have stated they were mostly young, and impressions received were liable to be lasting. Sixty-one of the original ninety-nine are supposed to be living, They are scattered through twelve states, some living near the Pacific coast. I have endeavored to keep track of them and have never heard of a member of Company "A" who has not proven himself a good citizen in the place he has chosen for his home.

None of their names are found upon the records of the penal institutions of our country, while on the contrary many have held civil positions of honor and distinction, and one is an ordained minister of the gospel.

What better Memorial to him whom these services commemorate than to point to those whom he took from their

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homes as boys, and after having referred to their services as soldiers, look upon them in nearly twenty-five years of honorable civil life.

Standing, as I do, to speak for the comrades of the Company of which it is the proudest thing in my personal history to say I was a member, looking back along the chain of memory for more than a quarter of a century and re-calling all the honored names, speaking for every comrade whose name was borne on the rolls of Company."A," I feel that I am authorized to thank this large assemblage of citizens who, by their presence, and these comrades of the Grand Army of the Republic who, by these memorial services, have sought to honor the memory of Ira Ayer.

Of his life since the war you are familiar, as a citizen, a Christian, a comrade and a friend.

October 14th, 1869, he was united in marriage with Miss Bessie Cronkhite who, with his two children, Ira Jr. and Mrs. Sarah E. Tifft and one adopted child, Lolah, mourn the loss of the husband and father.

March 17th, 1881, he was one of twenty-seven comrades who were mustered as charter members of James Ayer Post, No. 202, Grand Army of the Republic, and in that organization where all rank is laid aside and where the only qualification demanded is honorable service and an honorable discharge from the Army or Navy of the United States, he was glad as occasion permitted to meet with his comrades.

At reunions of the Regiment no one was accorded a heartier reception than he, and wherever a member of the one hundred and sixteenth Regiment can be found, words of pleasant remembrance will be spoken of Captain Ira Ayer.

Having removed to the home where his last years were passed, he seemed to enjoy the beauties of nature and the

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boundless expanse of lake upon the one hand, while in the opposite direction the rolling landscape and distant hills were seen. It was my privilege on several occasions to visit him there. I remember once, while sitting in the door of a tent, reference was made to the soldier tents of long ago, and conversation was enjoyed regarding comrades who were with us.

About a year ago, when more than eighty-five years of age, he took up three courses of reading-first and foremost of all was the Bible; second, a book of religious meditations, and third, a course of secular reading as he termed it. During the summer of 1888, he completed Warren's Astronomy, United States History, and Winchell's Walks and Talks in Geology. Sitting with his loved ones as twilight gathered he would talk of his day's reading. Nothing seemed too abstract or scientific for him to enjoy, and as he once remarked-explanatory of his eagerness to grasp the knowledge he sought -"I have been so busy all my life I must hurry up now in order to acquire an education." Above all, however, he read his Bible, and when at one time he feared his eyes would fail he seemed to cling to that more closely, saying, "If I should become blind I want to be very familiar with my Bible and remember all I can."

At the last he had nearly completed a large volume devoted to the history of Methodism when he was taken sick, and his education, so far as earthly matters were concerned, ceased.

All who visited him during his sickness testify to the marvelous sweetness of his death bed experiences. Heaven seemed very real to him, and at one time conversing with his daughter, he said "If it would not seem presumptuous in me, I would say that I am now walking in Bunyan's Beulah Land" —as his wife came into the room he said in a faint voice, "Clusters of glory are around me, love; clusters of glory."

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When at last, Sunday morping, July 28th, he heard the rustling of the wings of the "angel of death" he was ready to receive his discharge—ready to cross the river and be mustered into the ranks of that illustrious host—who from every battle field of the Union and every prison per, of the south have pitched their tents upon the celestial plains,

"The sword and cross are both laid down,

Our comrade wears the victor's crown."

He had been permitted to see his country reunited and redeemed from the curse of slavery; the implements of war had been laid aside; the battle flags had been furled, and surrounded by loving friends he had passed quietly down the hill leading to the stream that lies upon the confines of life.

Nearly half of his boys of "1862" had preceded him, and with a long list of relatives and friends were ready to welcome him upon the other side.

"And I heard a voice from Heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed *are* the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them.

"They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; Neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.

"For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters : and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

Comrades: I have sought to fulfill the task you assigned me. I have endeavored to show some of the characteristics and mention some of the events in the life of our departed comrade. As scenes of twenty-five years ago have been recalled, thoughts have crowded your brain and mine, and many shadowy forms have appeared whom we left to moulder into dust far from home and friends.

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History relates that one Latour d'Auvergne, a private in the French army, had covered himself with glory in a hundred battles, and had been given the proudest title a French soldier can receive, that of the "First Grenadier of France." When at last he fell pierced by the enemy's bullets, a general order directed that his name should be kept upon the active roll of his company—should be called at every roll call—and that a private from the ranks should answer for him.

At every reveille and every tattoo the Sergeant called— "Latour d' Auvergne !" and a private stepping from the ranks saluted and answered—" Died on the field of honor."

While these services have sought to honor the memory of one comrade and in so doing reference has been confined to his immediate command, let us not forget that nearly two million eight hundred thousand comrades served in the armies of the Union—that more than four hundred thousand laid down their lives in defence of the flag, and while more than three hundred thousand (nearly one-half of whom are unknown), sleep in the national cemeteries to-day, thousands more rest in unknown graves scattered over every southern state.

If the muster rolls of that Grand Army were spread out before us; if the familiar names were called of every company and regiment whom you my comrades represent, each one within the hearing of my voice could rise in his place and 'answer not for one but for many, "Died on the field of honor."

May this memorial service teach the living to honor our dead by serving the country for which they died. May it teach the the living to be grateful to our dead by their readiness to help the widow and the orphan.

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While the floral tributes we place upon the graves of our departed comrades will wither, may the tender fraternal love which they symbolize endure until the touch of death shall chill the warm pulse-beat of our hearts.

May our charity be ever fruitful in good works, and our loyalty ever true to the flag under which we fought and from the shadows of whose folds our comrades were promoted.

May we in this sacred edifice—solemnly dedicated to the service of that Supreme Ruler who guided the nation through the perils of civil war—in the presence of these symbols of mourning and surrounded by this large assemblage of friends, pledge ourselves anew that, God helping us, the memory of our departed comrade shall inspire in us all a still more zealous and loyal patriotism.

Our best years are behind us, comrades; we do not walk with the same elastic step as when we marched to the music of the Union. Our brows are more deeply furrowed and grey hairs are creeping in even among the locks of us boys.

We are but the rear guard of that grandest army that ever rallied around a standard. Every twelve months a full brigade of more than four thousand men in obedience to orders from the Supreme Commander, fords the stream that lies upon the confines of life. May we so live that when our promotion comes and we are ordered to report at head-quarters, we can go forth as did our lamented comrade with a brave and manly heart, believing as he did that "out of death cometh life."

He is lost to our sight in the shadows on the other side. May he rest in peace until awakened by the last reveille, to answer to the last roll call and take part in the final grand review.

Letter from Ira Ayer, Jr.

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LETTER FROM IRA AYER, JR.

The following letter from the son of our deceased comrade supplies dates of commissions and interesting reminiscences of early military service not included in the Memorial Address, and is so full of interest that rather than glean from its pages I insert it in full—a fitting testimonial from the son who bears the honored name of Ira Ayer.

NEW YORK, Dec. 17th, 1889. MR. LEROY S. OATMAN, Buffalo, N. Y.: My Dear Comrade:

I would be very glad if in compliance with your request, I should be able to contribute anything in regard to the life and character of my revered father which would add to the interest of the Memorial by which the personal affection and respect of his army comrades seek expression.

To the immediate members of his family, the faithful and kindly manner in which the work entrusted to you-by the Grand Army Post of which he was a member has been performed, is a matter of grateful appreciation.

Father was perhaps most widely known by his military title and associations.

I have in my possession his Commissions : The first as Lieutenant in the 48th Regiment of Infantry, with rank from July 11th, 1827. This is signed by "DeWitt Clinton, Esq., Governor of our said State," the form of which seems somewhat quaint in contrast with those of more modern date.

Subsequent Commissions as Captain, Major, and Lieutenant Colonel followed, and on the 16th day of October, 1837, he was Commissioned

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Letter



possibly out foraging with the natural instincts of a soldier, and who got within range of the firing and was killed by a cannon ball that evidently overshot the mark.

This, I believe, was the extent of the casualties, but this short campaign was apparently pleasantly remembered by those who participated in it.

Well do I remember how, in my younger days, father was frequently called upon to respond to the warm and friendly salutations of passers-

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by who proved to be men of the 48th Regiment that had "served under him on Grand Island."

• These meetings, though brief, were exceedingly cordial, being generally accompanied with some remmiscence, and the parting was always one of hearty respect and good will.

Although I am writing of matters pertaining to a former generation, there are no doubt those still living, to whom the scenes and events described will be familiar.

They will probably agree with me that the spirit of those times savored strongly of the spirit of '76 which was not then so remote a date as it now is, and the memories of which had been revived and perpetuated, rather them dimmed by the War of 1812.

In giving these incidents I have remembered that I was speaking through you to the surviving members of Company "A" and to Grand Army friends who would probably feel interested in facts connected with his former military experiences.

I need not speak of his pure patriotism, his regard for the rights of man, or his stern devotion to duty, characteristics which were known and recognized in him as widely as he was known. And may I not here be indulged in a moment's digression? The memory of a beloved mother comes before me like that of an angel of light. A woman of superior intelligence and of sensitive and refined nature, she was not wanting in a full realization of the demands of the country in those dark and trying days of its history.

I have never forgotten her last words of approval when in June, 1861, during her last illne s, I bade her a final farewell to join my command.

A few more words and I close.

Father's religious character was well known, and from my sister Mrs. Tifft, and others, you have, no doubt, received accounts of his sayings and experiences near the close of his life. It was my privilege to be with him for a few days before his death. He died as the Christian only can die, with a firm reliance in the divine goodness, and an unswerving trust in the love of his God and Savior.

He spoke freely and in well chosen language of the glory that awaited him.

On one occasion that I particularly remember when speaking of his









Port Hudson, La., May 27. '63. Port Hudson, La., June 14, '63 Pleasant Hill, La., Apr. 9, '64. Cane River, La., Apr. 23, '64. Fisher's Hill, Va., Sept. 22, '64. Cedar Creek, Va., Oct 19, '64.

Cox's Plantation, La., July 13, '63. Sabine Cross Roads, La., Apr. 8, '64. Mansura Plains, La., May 16, '64. Opequan Creek, Va., Sept. 19, '64.

LOSSES.

Killed, II. Wounded, 32. Prisoner, I.

Comrades and Friends:

When requested to prepare a "Memorial Address" in memory of Captain Ira Ayer, I had no thought that what might be said would every appear in print. Having served under his command I appreciated the honor conferred in asking me to speak for the comrades of Company "A," and as the services were to be held in the town which, for more than a quarter of a century was my home, where my audience would consist of old friends and neighbors, I accepted.

I gathered much information regarding early reminiscences from the pages of a little book written by him.

It was, however, largely devoted to family history and very modest as regards personal allusions.

Though, as stated in the memorial address, he served as Colonel of a regiment in the Patriot war, and though at his advanced age he recruited, and as long as his health permitted, commanded the Company withwhich I had the honor to serve, not a reference is made by him of any military service. After having consented to prepare the address for publication I thought to make it of greater value, both to friends of the deceased and to comrades, by including some matters of military history.

I have, therefore, added a record of important events in the history of Company "A," with a complete muster roll, showing the casualties, and so far as possible, the address of each survivor. Following this will be found a brief memorial of Captain James Ayer, and a complete roster of James Ayer Post, No. 202, G. A. R., who have honored his memory.

Should the volume thus presented meet the approval of my comrades and be considered by the immediate family of our lamented comrade, a suitable memorial, I shall feel amply repaid for the labor involved.

LEROY S. OATMAN.

Historical Record of Company "A."

Company "A" of the One Hundred and Sixteenth Regiment, New York Volunteer Infantry, was recruited by Ira Ayer during the latter part of July and first ten days of August, 1862.

If I have correctly located the residence of each comrade before enlistment, the number from each of the seven towns represented, was as follows :

Evans, forty; East Hamburg, twenty-two; Hamburg, thirteen; Brant, thirteen; North Collins, four; Eden, four, and Aurora, three.

The Company rendezvoused at Camp Morgan (Fort Porter), Buffalo; N. Y., August 11th, and was mustered into the service of the United States, September, 3d, for three years. September 5th we left Buffalo, and proceeding to Baltimore, Maryland, went into camp. From the 11th to the 17th of October we were absent upon our "excursion," as we afterwards called it, to Gettysburg, Pennsylvania.

In the remarks at the memorial services I made some allusions to the ground over which we traveled.

It might be of interest to my comrades of Company "A" to know more in detail of the drama which was enacted where we then were.

Taking a position at the point on Seminary Ridge, where we marched over it on our way to Cashtown, I will endeavor, from the official reports and maps, to briefly picture some of the scenes which afterwards occurred and could be seen from that place.

A few hundred feet to the left was the Lutheran Seminary; a short distance in advance, the little stream known as Willoughby Run crossed the road on which we stood; on the left of the Pike and before reaching

Willoughby Run, was the McPherson farm house and stone barn, and at the left of that a wooded elevation known as McPherson's woods.

To the right ran the Mummasburg road, and still further to the right the Carlisle and Harrisburg roads, while looking past the Seminary to the left the Fairfield road could be seen.

Just right of, and running parallel with the Cashtown Pike, upon which we stood, was the cut of an unfinished railroad. In the front could be seen the fine farming country of Pennsylvania, and in the distance Cashtown, where Hill's Corps of Confederates were in bivouac the night of June 30th, 1863, while in the rear, nestling in the valley between Seminary Ridge, upon which we stood, and Cemetery Ridge, some two miles distant, was the village of Gettysburg.

General Buford, with his division of Cavalry, occupied Gettysburg the same evening that Hill did Cashtown and had posted Gamble's Brigade on the Cashtown Pike, and Devin's Brigade on the Mummasburg road, well in advance of the position where we stood.

Had we stood as spectators upon that spot the morning of July 1st, 1863 we would have seen Buford, the gallant cavalry commander as he ascended to the cupola of the Seminary and looked out upon the country before him. Hill's Corps could be seen advancing; his leading divisions on the Cashtowh Pike and the fields toward the Fairfield road, and a third division moving by the way of the Mummasburg road.

Buford quickly dispatched his orders and posted his men to meet the expected attack.

Covering the position of his cavalry as much as possible, dismounting his men and placing his light artillery in position to cover the roads, his division presented a strong line, with its skirmishers advanced, when about 9 A. M. the Confederates commenced the battle. Buford knew, however, that his small force of cavalry could not long withstand the assault of three of the best infantry divisions in the Confederate service and that they would soon be forced back from near Willoughby Run to the ridge where he was standing.

When the tide of battle seemed to be turning, and a retreat seemed inevitable, General Reynolds, who had left his corps, the First, a mile in

the rear, galloped across the fields, joined Buford, took a hurried observation, and mounting their horses both rode to the front. Seeing the pressing need of infantry he ordered Buford to hold his position at all hazards, dispatched his aids to hurry forward his division commanders and himself rode back to meet Wadsworth with his leading division, giving him instructions and hastening him to the front. Planting his batteries on the Cashtown Pike, Wadsworth was sent directly to the front and Doubleday to the right of the road. Over the ridge where we stood went Wadsworth's brave men on the double quick and down toward the little stream where Buford's gallant cavalrymen were vainly striving to resist the onslaught of an overwhelming force of Confederate infantry. Archer's Brigade of Confederates had crossed Willoughby Run and were moving to seize the elevated position mentioned as McPherson's woods. Recognizing the importance of that position Reynolds hurried the Iron Brigade forward and personally directed the charge into the woods, turning the enemy's right flank and capturing General Archer with nearly half his brigade, while the balance escaped and fell back across the stream.

Just as this charge was made and as temporary victory was crowning his leadership General Reynolds was hit by a Confederate sharp shooter and instantly killed, the army being thus deprived of its commander, at the very beginning of the battle.

The temporary advantage gained caused a lull in the battle and the Confederates hesitated and waited for the advancing divisions.

Doubleday assumed command of the field. From the cupola of the Seminary fresh Confederate troops could be seen marching into position in front, while in the distance, coming down the Carlisle and Harrisburg roads upon the right, advancing columns soon appeared which proved to be Ewell's Corps hastening to strike the right flank of our army.

The other two divisions of the First Corps had marched to the front and gone into position.

Sharp fighting had again commenced all along the line. About noon General Howard appeared upon the ridge, and assuming com-

mand, Doubleday hastened to his Corps. Ascending the cupola Howard's practiced eye quickly took in the situation and, dispatching his aids to hurry Sickles and Slocum—who were still some miles in the rear—to the front, he directed the formation of his, the Eleventh Corps—which now appeared on the field under command of General Schurz—in prolongation of the line of battle to the right of the First Corps, and posting one division, with two batteries of artillery on the ridge as a reserve and rallying point, waited for the assault which which was soon to come.

About 3 P. M. Early's division of Ewell's Corps advanced upon the right flank of our line, crowding the First Division of the Eleventh Corps back, General Barlow, its commander, being severely wounded and falling into the hands of the enemy.

Soon the whole Confederate line was slowly, but surely forcing our lines backward, until at about 3:30 P. M. the order was given to retire through Gettysburg and form on Cemetery Ridge.

After sharply contesting the ground and holding Seminary Ridge long enough to perfect a partial withdrawal and formation of troops upon the new position the Union forces retired and the victorious Confederates swarmed up the slope of Seminary Ridge.

General Lee took possession of the cupola of the seminary which Howard had just vacated, and from there directed the movement of his troops and ordered them into position for the coming day's battle.

On the fields that were within range of our vision, within a radius of about a mile each way, ten thousand men had fallen in that day's battle.

The loss in Wadsworth's division alone approximated two thousand five hundred, while the Union losses were probably upwards of five thousand, killed and wounded, or about one-fourth of the entire force engaged.

The losses of the Confederates, as reported by themselves, was about the same number.

How little we realized of the scene to be enacted there as we passed over the ridge across willoughby run, and along the Cashtown pike, passing the low, $1\frac{1}{2}$ -story farm house, which was Lee's headquarters, during the latter part of the day.

How little we thought, as we marched along the pike to Cashtown that only a few months would elapse before we would be at Port Hudson, Louisiana, and one-third of our number among the killed and wounded, while the Army of Northern Virginia was advancing over the fields that we looked upon, and that three days later they would retreat over that self same road, and rallying their disorganized columns at Cashtown, start on their return to Virginia, having lost more than twenty-five thousand men at the battle of Gettysburg.

From the cupola of the Seminary the whole battle-field and does be seen where, during the three days' battle eighty thousand Union men and seventy thousand Confederates were engaged in deadly strire.

Our army lost in killed, wounded and missing, twenty-three thousand and three, and the Confederates reported their loss at twenty thousand four hundred and forty-eight, but the records at Washington bears the names of seven thousand and seventy-seven wounded and unwounded prisoners whose names do not appear in the Confederate report.

The losses of some particular organizations was enormous. I will simply mention two as illustrations.

The Twenty-fourth Michigan belonged to the Iron Brigade of Wadsworth's Division, and Reynolds's Corps, when it charged into McPherson's woods at the commencement of the battle of the first day and at the time General Reynolds was killed mustered four hundred and sixty-eight officers and men. Of that number sixty-nine were killed, two hundred and forty-seven wounded and forty-seven missing, many of whom were killed or wounded. Total loss, three hundred and sixty-three ; over three-fourths of its entire number.

In the second day's battle, the First Minnesota, which was in Hancock's Corps went into a charge with two hundred and sixty-two men and in twenty minutes time two hundred and twenty-four were numbered among the killed and wounded.

There were in the entire Union Army forty-five Regiments who had two hundred or more killed in action during their term of service. Of these regiments, thirty were engaged in the battle of Gettysburg.

The above brief statement and figures are compiled from the official

records of the war, and while not connected with the history of Company "A," will recall memories of the battlefield and of scenes which occurred upon the ground we traveled over.

Leaving Gettysburg we returned to Baltimore, where we remained until November 5th, when we embarked upon the ocean steamer Atlantic. After a stormy ocean voyage we reached New Orleans, Louisana, December 31, 1862, with Banks's expedition.

February 5th, 1863, we encamped at Baton Rouge, the capitol of the State.

Captain Ayer's health having failed he resigned, and Lieutenant Charles F. Wadsworth, of Company "D," was commissioned Captain of Company "A," to date from March 1st, 1863.

March 14th our division was sent to attract the attention of the Conederates at Port Hudson, while Admiral Farragut, with a portion of his fleet passed the batteries and opened communication with the army under General Grant who were at Vicksburg.

Active service really began with the Port Hudson campaign.

Leaving Baton Rogue May 20th, our first battle was fought May 21st, 1863, at Plain's Store, Louisiana. Company "A" was on the right of the regiment, and as the enemy attacked us while marching by the flank through a narrow road in the woods our position was such that we suffered severe loss, one-fourth of the casualties in the regiment being from Company "A." The only allusion to this battle in the official report of General Banks is as follows. Mentioning Augur's Division as leaving Baton Rouge May 20th, he says : "He encountered the enemy at Plain's Store, about four miles from Port Hudson, repulsing him with a loss of one hundred and fifty killed, wounded and prisoners."

This is all the record our Commanding General saw fit to make of an engagement which to us was of great importance, and where the Regiment had thirteen killed and forty-four wounded, several of whom died.

His report of causalties is also in excess, as the best information only reports a total loss of eighty-two in the disvision, of whom fifty-seven were from our regiment.

Port Hudson was soon surrounded and during the two assaults, May

27th and June 14th, the heaviest losses were in Augur's Division, our regiment and company suffering its full share of loss.

In the various operations connected with the seige of Port Hudson commencing at Plain's Store, May 21st, and closing with the occupation of the Confederate stronghold, July 8th, nearly one-half of the active members of Company "A" were killed or wounded.

The evening of the day that we took possession of Port Hudson our division embarked on river steamers, landing at Donaldsonville Louisiana, the next day near where, on the 13th of July, we took part in the batte of Cox's Plantation, soon after which we returned to our camp at Baton Rouge.

In September we went with the unsuccessful expedition to Sabine Pass, Texas, but failing to effect a landing returned and entered upon the campaign in western Louisiana, proceeding north as far as Opelousas, and soon after the first of January, 1864 retraced our steps to Franklin, a beautiful town on the Bayou Teche, where we went into winter quarters.

March 15th, 1864, we started upon the Red River campaign with Shrevesport as our objective point, intending from there to invade Texas.

For reasons over which we had no control the object sought was not attained, and after participating in the battles at Sabine Cross Roads, Pleasant Hill, and Cane River we found ourselves, April 25th at Alexandria, on the Red River.

We were among the few regiments that assisted in the work of constructing the famous "Red River Dam" by means of which the water was raised sufficiently to float our gun boats over the rapids and save them from falling into the hands of the enemy.

Leaving Alexandria on the 13th of May we marched towards the Mississippi, and having taken part in the battle at Mansura Plains on the 16th we reached the banks of the river and went into bivouac on the 21st.

Captain Wadsworth having left us after the Port Hudson campaign, his resignation was afterwards accepted, and April 12th, 1864, Lieutenant

Jacob C. Newton was commissioned Captain of our company. Early in July we left Louisiana, and embarking on an ocean steamer, landed at Washington, D. C., the eve of July 13th 1864, during which day the Brigade, commanded by Colonel D. D. Bidwell, of the Forty-Ninth New York, an Erie County Regiment had charged upon the enemy, who were laying seige to Fort Stevens, one of the outer defenses of the city, routing them and driving them from their position. With the Sixth Corps we started in pursuit of the retreating Confederates, fording the Potomac at Edwards's Ferry and climbing over the mountains at Snicker's Gap.

In August we became a part of the Army of the Shenandoah and under command of General Sheridan participated in his successful battles at Opequan Creek, near Winchester, Virginia, and at Fisher's Hill, Virginia, following the retreating Confederates up the Valley of the Shenandoah and capturing many prisoners. Captain Newton having gone north on a leave of absence, his health having been impaired, he was finally mustered out and Lieutenant George H. Shephard, of Company "K" was commissioned Captain of Company "A," succeeding Captain Newton and remaining in command during the balance of our term of service.

October 19th when in camp at Cedar Creek, Virginia, we were surprised before daylight and the whole army forced back several miles, until Sheridan, who was at Winchester, "twenty miles away," met the retreating army, and by his masterly generalship turned defeat into victory and sent the Confederates fleeing up the valley.

This was our last engagement. We remained in the Valley of the Shenandoah until the surrender of Lee and the assassination of President Lincoln, when we were ordered to Washington, D. C., and assigned to duty guarding the "Old Capitol" and "Carroll Place" prisons until June 8th, 1865, when we were mustered out of the service.

We left Washington June 11th, and the afternoon of June 13th arrived at Buffalo.

At Baltimore we were in the department commanded by Major-General Wool.

Soon after our arrival a Brigade was formed, which was commanded by General William H. Emory.

The Regiment was comme ded by Colonel E. P. Chapin. When we left Baltimore we were under the command of General N. P. Banks and soon after our arrival in Louisiana the troops in the Department of the Gulf were constituted the Nineteenth Army Corps, whose badge was the "Cross of the Legion of Honor."

We were never attached to any other corps. When the Regiment reached Baton Rouge, Louisiana, it was attached to General C. C. Augur's division and Colonel E. P. Chapin was assigned to the command of the Brigade, Lieutenant-Colonel Robert Cottier assuming command of the Regiment.

At the assault on Port Hudson, May 27th, Colonel Chapin was killed and Colonel Charles J. Paine became Brigade Commander. Lieutenant-Colonel Cottier having resigned Major George M. Love was commissioned Colonel, but being absent, wounded, Lieutenant-Colonel Higgins was in command of the Regiment.

At the close of the Port Hudson campaign General C. C. Augur was ordered to Washington, and at the battle of Cox's Plantation we found our Division under command of General Godfrey Weitzel. Soon after that engagement, Colonel Paine was assigned to another Brigade and Colonel Love, who had just rejoined the Regiment was assigned to the command of the Brigade.

In August, 1863, Lieutenant-Colonel Higgins was sent north on detached service and Major John M. Sizer assumed command of the Regiment.

Other troops having arrived within the limits of the Department of the Gulf, which was under command of General Banks, about September 1st, 1863, he issued orders assigning Major-General W. B. Franklin to the command of the Nineteenth Army Corps, which position he held until near the close of the Red River campaign. The expedition to Sabine Pass, Texas, was under his command.

General Weitzel remained in command of the Division until about June 1st, 1864, when he was ordered north, and General Emory assumed command.

For a short time in the winter we were attached to the Third Brigade, under Colonel Lew Benedict, but about March 1st were again in the First Brigade, First Division, with Colonel Love in command of the Brigade, which position he held until we reached Alexandria on the Red River campaign, when he was relieved by General Dwight, and resumed command of the Regiment.

General Dwight remained in command of the Brigade until after the battle at Pleasant Hill, Louisiana, in April, 1864, when he was assigned to duty as Chief of Staff to the Department Commander and Colonel George L. Beals succeeded him.

In May we were again assigned to the Third Brigade, with Colonel Love as Brigade Commander, and Lieutenant-Colonel Sizer commanding the Regiment. During the same month a new military division was formed, comprising the Department of the Gulf and all other troops west of the Mississippi, of which General E. R. S. Canby was commander. General Franklin having gone north, General Emory was assigned to the command of the Nineteenth Army Corps, and General Dwight succeeded him as Commander of the First Division. June 20th we were again returned to the First Brigade, First Division, and Colonel Love resumed command of the Regiment.

On our arrival at Washington we started with the expedition in pursuit of the fleeing Confederates under command of Major-General Q. A. Gillmore, but he having received an injury, the command devolved upon Major-General H. G. Wright. After a short time we found Major-General David Hunter in command, but this was of brief duration, as August 7th Major-General Philip H. Sheridan assumed command of the Department of the Shenandoah. In the latter part of September our Brigade Commander left and Colonel Davis assumed command. At the battle of Cedar Creek General Wright was in command until General Sheridan's arrival upon the battle field.

In the spring of 1865, when General Sheridan joined the army in front of Petersburg, General W. S. Hancock was placed in command of the Department and Colonel Love, having been brevetted Brigadier General was assigned to command of a Brigade: Lieutenant-Colonel Sizer was

Diary

HISTORICAL RECORD OF COMPANY "A."

on duty at Corps Headquarters and Major Carpenter was in command of the Regiment.

In March, 1865, the Nineteenth Army Corps was dissolved, and General Emory, who had been our Brigade, Division and Corps Commander, was ordered to the Department of the Cumberland, Lieutenant-Colonel Sizer returned to the Regiment and remained in command until our discharge. When ordered to Washington, D. C., we were detached from General Dwight's Division and ordered to report to General C. C. Augur, who was in command of the defences at Washington.

We remained under his immediate command until orders were received directing our Regiment to be mustered out of the service.

The following memorandum of dates and events have been made from a perusal of the diary kept by me while in the service. While not complete in many respects, I think that so far as mention is made of particular places or individual comrades it will be found correct and if the records bring to the minds of my comrades of Company "A" asvivid remembrances of service in Louisiana and Virginia as they have to me while writing them I am sure they will add to the personal value of this Memorial Book :

1862.

Aug. 11.	Rendezvoused	l at Camp	Morgan, ((Fort Porter), Buffalo.
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26. Picnic with friends who visited us in camp.

Sept. 3.

. Mustered into the service of the United States for three years

- by Lieutenant Sturgeon, United States Army, 5. Left Buffalo via, the Erie Road,
- Left Buffalo via. the Erie Road.
 Arrived at Baltimore, Maryland.
- 7. Arrived at Baltimore, Maryland.
- 8. Encamped near Druid Hill Park, "Camp Chapin."
- 21. First Lieutenant Jacob C. Thompson resigned.

Oct. 9. Brigade organized to which we were assigned.

- 12. Started on the expedition to Gettysburg, Pennsylvania.
- 13. Arrived at Gettysburg.
- 14. Marched through village. Biouvacked near Cashtown.
- 15. Left Gettysburg on our return.


 Charles F. Wadsworth of Company "D," commissioned Captain ; Second Lieutenant Orton S. Clark, First Lieutenant, and orderly Sergeant Jacob C Newton Second Lieutenant, though neither of the Lieutenants were mustered until June 1st. 3. Captain Ira Ayer started for home. 14. Started towards Port Hudson. 15. Steamer Mississippi exploded at 2 A. M. We retraced our steps and bivouacked at Morticeno Bayou. 16. Marched to Baton Rouge and embarked on boat. 17. Landed at Winter's Plantation and marched through the swamp on a reconnoissance. 18. Companies "A." and "C." sent on a reconnoissance to False River. Captured ten guerrillas and returned lader with poultry, riding horses and mules and driving cattle. 22. Returned to "Camp Banks," Baton Rouge. April 3. Detachment of men left at Fortress Monroe arrived. Fou of the twelve sent to hospital, James Cook, Bethuel Fuller Philip Mumbach and Arthur Redmond had died. 4. Moved to "Camp Niagara." 12. John W. Hamlin commissioned Lieutenant U. S. C. I. May 2. Grierson's Cavalry arrived at Baton Rouge. 20. Started the second time towards Port Hudson. 21. Battle of Plain's Store. Loss in regiment, thirteen killee and forty-four wounded. Three of the killed and elever of the wounded were from Company "A," as follows Killed—Francis H. Ingersoll, Corrad Schamel and William W. White ; wounded—Samuel Leonard, LeRoy S, Oatman Robert B. Foote, Eron V. Carr, Norman Carr, A M. Wil liams, John Roberts, N. J. Swift died in hospital a Baton Rouge from the effects of wound. 	March 1	Captain Ira Ayer's resignation accepted. First Lieutenant
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24 Port Hudson surrounded	24.	Port Hudson surrounded.

HISTORICAL RECORD OF COMPANY "A."

- 25. Volunteers to form a storming party called for. Seventy-four responded from the regiment, nine of whom viz.: Captain Charles F. Wadsworth, Rollin C. Hubard, Authur F. Smith, John H. Dingman, Isaac Colvin, Charles E. Paine, John Farrell, William H. Sawdy and Wallace Calkins were from Company "A" and also Lieutenant Warren T. Ferris of Company "K," who was originally a member of our company.
- 27. Assault on Port Hudson. Loss in regiment, twenty-two killed and eighty-five wounded. Three of the killed—George Herr, Charles Riald and Henry White, and fifteen of the wounded Authur F. Smith, Ephraim Wooderson, Wallace Calkins, Edward Barry, H. S. Butts, John H. Dingman, John Farrell, Charles H. Grant, Thomas Hussey, Charles E. Paine, William Ross, William H. Sawdy, Egbert Smith, Charles Strassing and Jefferson White were from Company "A." The three first mentioned as wounded died from their wounds in hospital at New Orleans, Louisiana.
- June 6. On skirmish line in front of Port Hudson.
 - Second assault on Port Hudson. Loss in regiment, five killed and twenty-three wounded—none from Company "A."
 - Captain Wadsworth left under orders to report at Washington and subsequently resigned.
 - 19. Volunteers called for to organize a storming party for the third assault. Twenty-four of the regiment responded, of whom five, Frank Bently, Isaac Colvin, Philip Linebits, Daniel Covensparrow and Andrew Cook were from Company "A,"
- July 2. Marched nearly to Plain's Store, where a wagon train had been attacked, to reinforce the escort.
 - 6. Rumors that Vicksburg had surrendered.
 - 7. Rumor confirmed. Flag of truce received from Port Hudson.
 - 8. Port Hudson surrendered.
 - 9. Marched inside the works, embarked on boat in the evening and moved down the river.

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- 10. Landed at Donaldsonville, Louisiana.
- 13. Battle of Cox's Plantation. Loss in the regiment, five killed, twenty-three wounded and twenty-one prisoners. From Company "A": Wounded—First Lieutenant Orton S. Clark, Frank Bently, Channing Smith and George Taylor Prisoner, Rollin C. Hubbard.
- 16. First Lieutenant Ferris of Company "K" promoted to Captain of Company "K" with rank from May 22.
- The "Imperial"—first boat from St. Louis since the river was opened—passed down or its way to New Orleans.
- 22. Alarm on picket, called in line at 11 P. M.
- 23. News received that N. J. Swift had died.
- 23. Charles E. Paine promoted to Second Lieutenant, Company "G."
- Aug. 1. Embarked on steamer "Excelsior" and landed at Baton Rouge. Company "A" detailed to unload boat.
 - News received that of four comrades wounded May 27th and sent to New Orleans, three, Arthur F. Smith, Ephraim Wooderson, and Wallace Calkins were dead.
 - 10. Flag presented to Regiment by Captain D. P. Dobbins.
 - 17. Daniel Covensparrow died at Baton Rouge, Louisiana.
 - 23. Isaac Colvin died at Baton Rouge, Louisiana.
 - 25. Rollin C. Hubbard, who was taken prisoner at Cox's Plantation exchanged and reported for duty.
 - 30. H. M. Raymond discharged. George Taylor and Ira Ayer furloughed. Raymond died at Cairo, Illinois on his journey and Ayer died at his home in East Hamburg, September 15.
- Sept. 1. Rollin C. Hubbard ordered to recruit a company for the U. S. C. I.
 - 2. Embarked on steamer "Iberville" and proceeded down the river.
 - 3. Reached New Orleans. Transferred to the "Alexandria" and started with the Sabine Pass expedition.

HISTORICAL RECORD OF COMPANY "A."

- 7. Sighted the coast of Texas at Sabine Pass.
- 8. Gunboats disabled and we started on our return.
- 9. On half rations and becalmed in the gulf.
- 10. On half rations and becalmed in the gulf.
- 11. Gunboat towed us toward the mouth of the river.
- 12. Entered the mouth of the Mississippi.
- 13. Landed at Algiers. opposite New Orleans.
- 16. Ride on cars to Brashear City.
- 17. Crossed Berwick Bay to Berwick City.
- 24. Charles Paine, Second Lieutenant Company "G," resigned.
 - 26. Passed through Pattersonville, Louisiana.
 - 28. Reconnoissance to Centerville, Louisiana.
- Oct. 3, Passed through Franklin, Louisiana.
 - 6. Passed through New Iberia, Louisiana.
 - 9. Skirmish at Vermillion Bayou, Louisiana.
 - 11. Passed through Vermillionville, Louisiana.
 - 15. Skirmish at Carrion Crow Bayou, Louisiana.
 - 21. Passed through Opelousas, Louisiana and to Bayou Barri Croquet.
- Nov. 2. Returned to Vermillionville, Louisiana.
 - 4. Awakened at 1 A. M. and a forced march to Bayou Grand Coteau to reinforce Burbridge's Division of the Thirteenth Corps.
 - 5. Returned to Vermillionville.
 - 9. Guarded a forage train into the country.
 - 13. Guarded a forage train into the country.
 - 17. Returned to New Iberia, Louisiana.
 - 21. Guarded a forage train into the country.
- Dec. 2. H. E. Stambach discharged and appointed clerk in Quartermaster's Department at Corps Headquarters.

HISTORICAL RECORD OF COMPANY "A."

1864.

Jan.	6.	Awoke to find two inches of snow on the ground.
	7.	Marched from New Iberia towards Franklin, Louisiana.
	9.	Reached Franklin, Louisiana.
	15.	Moved for winter quarters to " Camp Emory."
	18.	LeRoy S. Oatman detailed as Regimental Ordnance Sergeant.
Feb.	5.	Pole and flag raising at Franklin, Louisiana.
	8.	Ordered out with forage train, as escort.
100	9.	All companies working on some ornament. We have an arch
		across the street, nicely lettered "Company A,' One Hun-
		dred and Sixteenth New York Volunteers, Lieutenant J. C.
		Newton.
	19.	Charles Stanton and Eron V. Carr discharged.
Marc	h 5.	George Taylor returned from furlough, and with Lim came
		James Smith from Hospital.
	15.	Started on Red River campaign.
	17.	Crossed Vermillion Bayou.
	18.	Crossed Carrion Crow Bayou.
	19.	Passed through Opelousas and Little Washington, Louisiana.
	22.	Crossed Contableau Bayou and through Holmesville,
		Louisiana.
	23.	Passed through Cheneyville, Louisiana.
	25.	Reached Alexandria, Louisiana, on the Red River.
	28.	Started, following the banks of the Bayou Rapides.
	29.	Entered the pine woods of Louisiana.
	31.	Crossed Cane River.
April	2.	Reached Natchitoches, the oldest town in the State.
	6.	Left Natchitoches, following the advance troops.
	. 7-	Reached Pleasant Hill, Louisiana.
	8.	Battle of Sabine Cross Roads, Louisiana, Regiment lost, two
		killed, nineteen wounded and one missing. Company "A"
		Lieutenant J. C. Newton and John H. Dingman, wounded.
	9.	Battle of Pleasant Hill, Louisiana. Regiment lost two killed
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	HISTORICAL RECORD OF COMPANY "A."
	and ten wounded. Company "A," Andrew Burley
	wounded.
	10. Left Pleasant Hill at 2 A. M.
	11. Reached Grand Ecore, Louisiana.
	12. First Lieutenant O. S. Clark promoted to Captain of Company
	"H;" Lieutenant Jacob C. Newton promoted to Captain
	and William Tibbetts of Company "C" to First Lieutenant
	of Company " A."
	21. Orderly Sergeant Samuel Leonard promoted to Second Lieu-
	tenant Company "B."
	22. Withdrew from Grand Ecore. Marched at 4 A. M.
	23. Halted near Cane River at I. A. M., having marched forty-five miles in twenty-one hours.
	23. Battle of Cane River, Louisiana. Regiment lost one wounded,
	none from Company "A."
	*. Entered the Pine Woods on our return.
	25. Reached Alexandria, Louisiana.
	28. Moved our camp nearer the city.
ay	2. Ordered out with a foraging expedition.
	5. John Roberts transferred to the United States Navy.
	5. Commenced work on the "Red River Dam."
	9. Dam broke early in the morning. Several of the gunboats
	passed over the rapids
	12. Balance of fleet passed the rapids. We crossed the river to
	Alexandria.
	13. Started towards the Mississippi River.
	16. Battle of Mansura Plains, Louisiana. No losses.
	17. Crossed the Atchafalaya at Simmsport.
	21. Reached the Mississippi at Morgansia.
	23. William Ross returned from detached service.
ne	8. Charles H. Grant went home on furlough.
	14. Reviewed by General Sickles, Inspector General U. S. A.
	21. H. E. Stambach left for Pensacola, Florida, as chief clerk to
	Post Quartermaster.

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and the second		
		O. B. Johnson transferred to the United States Navy.
	25.	John Heinendinger died at Morgansia, Louisiana.
	27.	Moved camp a little down the river.
July	2.	Embarked on river steamer "Colonel Cowles."
July		Arrived at New Orleans.
	3. 4.	Transferred to ocean vessel "Mississippi."
	4· 5·	Left New Orleans and proceeded down the river.
		Passed Key West and rounded Cape Sable.
	0. 12.	Reached Fortress Monroe, Virginia, and ordered on to Wash-
	12.	ington, D. C.
	13.	Landed at Washington, D. C. at 7 P. M. President Lincoln
		and Secretary Stanton drove down to the landing.
	14.	Marched to Tennallytown in the night.
	16.	Forded the Potomac River at Edwards's Ferry.
	18.	Over the mountains at Snicker's Gap.
	20.	Forded the Shenandoah River and at night back again and
		over the mountains at Snicker's Gap.
	23.	Crossed the Chain Bridge and bivouacked within the defences
		of Washington.
	24.	William H. Bartlett returned from furlough,
	26.	David H. Carrier of Evans, visited the camp.
	26.	Marched by way of Rockville, Turnpike.
	28.	Crossed the Monocacy River and to Frederick, Maryland.
	29.	Passed through Harper's Ferry and to Bolivar Heights.
		Virginia.
	30.	Marched back through Harper's Ferry, Virginia.
	31.	Arrived at Frederick, Maryland.
Aug.	5.	On the cars at Monocacy and off for Harper's Ferry.
Sec.	6.	Climbed Maryland Height, then down we marched through
		Harper's Ferry, Virginia, and up Bolivar Heights.
	7.	General Philip H. Sheridan arrives and assumes command.
	10.	Passed through Charlestown, Virginia.
	11.	Marched to White Post, Virginia.

HISTORICAL	RECORD	OF CO	MPANY "A."
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13. Marched to	Cedar	Creek, 1	Virginia.
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- 15. Marched back to Winchester, Virginia.
- 18. Marched back to Charlestown, Virginia.
- 22. Marched back to Bolivar Heights, Virginia.
- 26. Reconnoissance.*
- Sept. 4. Skirmish near Berryville.
 - News received that Captain Newton had been discharged for disability. Lieutenant George H. Shephard of Company "K" promoted to Captain of Company "A."
 - 17. General Grant visited the army.
 - Battle of Opequan Creek, near Winchester, Virginia. Regiment lost nine killed and thirty-eight wounded. Company "A," wounded, E. V. Horton, Jefferson White and Edward Barry.
 - 20. Crossed Cedar Creek and nearly to Strasburg, Virginia.
 - 21. Advanced through Strasburg to support a battery.
 - 22. Battle of Fisher's Hill, Virginia. Regiment lost one killed and nine wounded. Company "A," Edward Barry, wounded.
 - 23. Advanced up the valley. Captain Newton reached the Company, not knowing he had been discharged.
 - 24. Advanced as far as New Market, Virginia.
 - 28. Captain Newton left the Regiment and went home.
 - 29. Marched to Mount Crawford, Virginia.
 - 30. Marched to Harrisonburg, Virginia.
- Oct. 6. Returned to New Market, Virginia.
 - 7. Regiment on duty as rear guard of the army.
 - 8. Crossed over Fisher's Hill.
 - 9. Rollin C. Hubbard who was captured while recruiting for the U. S. C. I., returned to Company, having escaped.
 - 10. We reached Cedar Creek and bivouacked.
 - 15. Regiment on Reconnoissance.
 - Frank Keiser, who was left at New Orleans sick and Alfred Agard from Evans, a recruit, arrived.

HISTORICAL RECORD OF COMPANY "A,"

- Battle of Cedar Creek, Virginia, Regiment lost seven killed, 19. forty-four wounded and ten prisoners. Company "A," three wounded, Christian Keinzle, Thomas Kelley and Philip Linebits. The last named died at Baltimore, Maryland. 20. Reconnoissance and skirmish at Fisher's Hill, Virginia.
- Nov. 9. Fell back to Middletown, Virginia.
 - 12. Skirmish at Newtown, Virginia. Alfred Agard wounded.
 - 14. R. B. Train returned from furlough.
 - 30. Moved back near Stevenson depot, Virginia.

1865.

Jan. 12.	Flag presented us by Buffalo Board of Trade.
13.	J. H. Dingman promoted to First Lieutenant Company "K."
Feb. 3.	Seely's Gun Cappers issued. Company "A" had thirty-two
1000 5	muskets and the Regiment two hundred and eighty-four.
14.	Joseph Martin from Evans visited camp.
March 1.	First Lieutenant William C. Tibbetts promoted to Captain
	Company "I," and John G. Dayton of Company "F," to
	First Lieutenant Company "A."
6.	Moved nearer to Stevenson's Depot.
23.	Knapsack drill.
· April 4.	Advanced up the Shenandoah Valley.
7.	In bivouac one mile from Winchester, Virginia.
9.	Received news of the surrender of Lee's Army.
10.	Moved back to Summit Point, Virginia.
15.	Received news of the assassination of President Lincoln.
20.	Started on cars for Washington, D. C.
21.	At 8:40 A. M. met the funeral train ; at 9:45 reach Wash-
	ington, D. C.
.30.	Ordered to report to General Augur and went into camp on
	Capitol Hill.
May 1.	Assigned to duty as guard of . "Old Capitol " and " Carroll
	Place" prisons.
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HISTORICAL RECORD OF COMPANY "A."

- 23. Lyman Oatman, Elbridge Bundy and Josiah Southwick of Evans visit the Company. Grand Review of the "Army of the Potomac."
- 24. Grand Review of Sherman's Army.
- 26. Evans visitors left for home.
- 28. Governor Fenton visited the Regiment on Dress Parade.

June 5. Order received directing our muster out.

- 8. Mustered out of the service.
- Left Washington at 1:25, reaching Baltimore, Maryland, at 7 and leaving there at 11:30 P. M.
- Arrived at Elmira, N. Y. at 5 A. M. and at Buffalo, N. Y. at 3
 P. M. Permitted to go home until the 19th.
- 19. Reported to Camp Morgan.
- 24. Reported to Camp Morgan.
- Reported to Camp Morgan, received our pay and finally discharged from the service.

Muster Roll of Company "A."

In the preparation of the following Muster Roll I have relied upon the Muster-in Roll of the Company for the main facts though in correspondence with comrades a few changes have been made as some were credited to the wrong town.

The roll as published herewith may not be perfect in that respect but from the opinion of comrades from every town I have made it as near so as our united judgment could determine.

The address of nearly all is given. A few I was unable to ascertain.

Following each name will be found the town of which the comrade was supposed to be a resident, and his age at enlistmeut.

I have arranged the original ninety-nine members (except the commi ioned officers who head the roll) in alphabetical order, and following them, the names of the eight comrades who, by promotion or enlistment, became members of Company "A," during our term of service.

A * prefixed to a name indicates that the comrade is dead:

* Captain Ira Ayer-Evans, 59.-Resigned March 1st, 1863.

- First Lieutenant Jacob C. Thompson-Brant, 31.-Resigned September 21st, 1862. Residence unknown.
- Second Lieutenant Warren T. Ferris-East Hamburg, 19.—Promoted to First Lieutenant Company "K," November 23d, 1862 and to Captain July 16th 1863. Mustered out with Regiment. Address Buffalo N. Y.

Akeley, John-Brant, 42.-Mustered out with Regiment as wagoner. Address, Medusa, N. Y.

- *Ayer, Ira—East Hamburg, 21.—Corporal. Died at East Hamburg, N. V., September 15th, 1863, while home on furlough.
- Barry, Edward—Evans, 22.—Wounded at Port Hudson, Louisiana, May 27th, 1863, at Opequan Creek, Virginia, September 19th, 1864, and at Fisher's Hill, Virginia, September 22d, 1864. Mustered out with the Regiment as Corporal. Address, Angola, N. Y.
- Bartlett, William H.—Brant, 19.—Mustered out with the Regiment as Sergeant. Address, Silver Creek, N. Y.
- Bartoo, Luce—Eden, 21.—Transferred to Veteran Reserve Corps August, 22d, 1863. Address, Titusville, Pa.
- *Beach, Henry C.—Hamburg, 26.—Died of disease at New Orleans, La., October 15th, 1863.
- Bentley, David—Evans, 19.—Mustered out with Regiment. Address, Buffalo, N. Y.
- Bentley, Frank—Evans, 18.—Wounded at Cox's Plantation, La., July 13th, 1863. Mustered out with Regiment as Sergeant. Address, unknown.
- *Bourne, Francis-Brant, 32 .- Mustered out with Regiment.
- * Bundy, Harlan E—Evans, 21.—Mustered out with Regiment as musicial.
- Bundy, Leroy G.—Evans, 20.—Corporal. Transferred to Veteran Reserve Corps April 30th, 1864. Address, Evans, N. Y.
- Burley, Andrew—North Collins, 27.—Wounded at Pleasant Hill, La., April 9, 1864. Mustered out with Regiment. Address, North Collins, N. Y.
- *Butts, Herschell S.—Brant, 31.—Wounded at Port Hudson, La., May 27th, 1863. Arm amputated. Discharged December, 15th, 1863.
- *Calkins, Wallace—East Hamburg, 19.—Wounded at Port Hudson, La., May 27th, 1863, and died from the effects of the wound at New Orleans, La., June —, 1863.
- Carr, Eron V.—Evans, 22.—Wounded at Plain's Store, La., May 21st, 1863. Discharged as a musician February 19th, 1864. Address, Montague, Mich.

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- Carr, Norman—Evans, 20 Wounded at Plain's Store, I.a., May 21st, 1863. Member of Regimental Band. Mustered out with regiment. Address, Franklin, Ind.
- Claghorn, Josiah L.—Evans, 29.—Promoted to Regimental Commissary Sergeant at organization September 3d, 1862. Discharged in September, 1863 and mustered as Quartermaster of the Eightyninth Regiment, U. S. C. I. Address, Waseca, Minn.
- * Clapp, Daniel W.—East Hamburg, 26.—Died of disease at Baton Rouge, La., June 5, 1863.
- *Colvin, Isaac—East Hamburg, 21.—Corporal. Died of disease at Baton Rouge, La., August, 23, 1863.
- Cook, Andrew-Evans, 18.-Mustered out with Regiment. Address Springville, N. Y.
- * Cook, James—Evans, 20.—Died of disease at Fortress Monroe, Va., December 26th, 1862.
- *Covensparrow, Daniel—Hamburg, 18.—Died of disease at Baton Rouge, La., August 17th, 1836.
- Davis, George H.—Evans, 21.—Mustered out with Regiment as Sergeant. Address, North Collins, N. Y.
- Dingman, John H.—Evans, 22.—Wounded at Port Hudson, La., May 27th, 1863 and at Sabine Cross Roads, La., April 8th, 1864.
 Orderly Sergeant and promoted to First Lieutenant Company "K," January 13th, 1865. Mustered out with Regiment. Address, Titusville, Pa.
- Duffy, James H.—Evans, 21.—Mustered out with Regiment. Address, Irving, N. Y.
- Farrell, John—Hamburg, 21.—Wounded at Port Hudson, La., May 27th, 1863, and discharged on account of same, September, 20th, 1863. Address, Bradford, Pa.
- *Fenner, John—Aurora, 28.—Died of disease at Franklip, La., January 6th, 1864.
- Foote, Robert B.—Hamburg, 18.—Corporal. Wounded at Plain's Store, La., May 21st, 1863. Fingers amputated on both hands and discharged July —, 1863. Address, Hamburg, N, Y.

- Frochley, Joseph—Evans, 21.—Member of Regimental Band. Mustered out with Regiment. Address, Angola, N. Y.
- * Fuller, Bethuel—Brant, 18.—Died of disease at Fortress Monroe, Va., December 27th, 1862.
- Fuller, George—Brant, 19.—Mustered out with Regiment. Address, Angola, N. Y.
- Glouser, Anselem—Evans, 26.—Mustered out with Regiment. Address, Boston, N. Y.
- Gottschalk, Jacob—Hamburg, 18.—Wounded at Plain's Store, La., May 21st, 1863. Mustered out with Regiment. Address, Lancaster, N. Y.
- Gould, Homer F.—Evans, 18.—Mustered out with Regiment. Address, Fredericksburg, Iowa.
- * Grant, Charles H.—Brant, 22.—Sergeant. Wounded at Port Hudson, La., May 27th, 1863. Died of disease at Buffalo, N. Y., while on furlough.
- Hambleton, Wallace—East Hamburg, 20.—Discharged from hospital at Fortress Monroe, Va., on account of disability. Address, Orchard Park, N. Y.
- * Hamlin, John W.—Aurora, 18.—Corporal. Discharged April 12th, 1863 and mustered as Lieutenant, U. S. C. I.
- * Heaton Voltaire—East Hamburg, 20.—Died of disease at New Orleans, La., September 19th, 1863.
- * Heinendinger, John—North Collins, 27.—Died of disease at Morgansia, La., June 26th, 1864.
- * Herr, George—Evans, 21.—Killed May 27th, 1863, at Port Hudson, La.
- Hines, William H.—Evans, 22.—Mustered out with Regiment. Address, Alliance, Ohio..
- Horton, Elgeva V.—Eden, 22.—Color Guard. Wounded at Opequan Creek, Va., September 19th, 1864. Mustered out with Regiment. Address, Lena Valley, Kansas.
- Hubbard, Rollin C.—Hamburg, 20.—Taken prisoner at Cox's Plantation, La., July 13th, 1863. Discharged as Sergeant and mustered as

Captain U. S. C. I., September 1st, 1864. Address, Omaha, Neb.

Hussey, Thomas—Evans, 28.—Wounded at Port Hudson, La., May 27th, ' 1863. Mustered out with Regiment. Address, Anniston, Ala.

Jackson, Frederick—Evans, 21.—Mustered out with Regiment. Address, McPherson, Kan.

Johnson, Oscar B.—Eden, 24.—Transferred to United States Navy, June 25th, 1864. Address unknown.

- Jones, Seneca A.—Hamburg, 27.—Corporal. Transferred to Veteran Reserve Corps, November 1st, 1863. Address, Silver Creek, N. Y.
- Keinzle, Christian—Hamburg, 20.—Wounded at Cedar Creek, Va. October 19th, 1864. Mustered out with Regiment. Address Fort Wayne, Ind.
- Keiser, Frank-East Hamburg, 25.-Mustered out with Regiment. Address unknown.
- Kelly, Thomas—East Hamburg, 21.—Wounded at Cedar Creek, Va., October 19th, 1864. Mustered out with Regiment. Address, Buffalo, N. Y.

Lawton, Ambrose S.—Evans, 16.—Member of Regimental Band. Mustered out with Regiment. Address, Oregon City, Or.

- Leonard, Samuel—East Hamburg, 26.—Wounded at Plain's Store, La., May 21st, 1863. Orderly Sergeant and promoted to Second Lieutenant Company "B," April 21st, 1864. Mustered out with Regiment. Address, Council Bluffs, Ia.
- Lepper, William—East Hamburg, 24.—Mustered out with Regiment as Corporal. Address, Bell's Camp, Pa.
- * Linebits, Philip—East Hamburg, 19.—Corporal. Wounded at Cedar Creek, Va., October 19th, 1864 and died from the effects of wound at Baltimore, Md., October 27th, 1864.

March, John-Eden, 23.—Transferred to Second Louisiana Cavalry February 10th, 1863. Address, Eden, N. Y.

^{*} Ingersoll, Francis H.—Evans, 19.—Killed May 21st, 1863, at Plain's Store, La.

*Martin, John-Evans, 24.—Promoted to principal musician and leader of Regimental Band. Mustered out with Regiment.

- *Mumbach, Philip—Hamburg, 18.—Died of disease at Fortress Monroe, Va., January 4th, 1863.
- Newton, Jacob C.—East Hamburg, 22.—Orderly Sergeant, Promoted to Second Lieutenant March 1st, 1863 and to Captain March 12th, 1864. Wounded at Sabine Cross Roads, La., April 8th, 1864. Resigned September 8th, 1864. Address, Los Angeles, Cal.
- Oatman, LeRoy S.—Evans, 18.—Wounded at Plain's Store, La., May 21st, 1863. Detailed as Regimental Ordnance Sergeant January 18th, 1864. Mustered out with Regiment. Address, Buffalo, N, Y.
- Paine, Charles E.—East Hamburg, 22.—Wounded at Port Hudson, La., May 27th, 1863. Promoted to Second Lieutenant Company "G," July, 1863. Resigned September 24th, 1863. Address, Bell's Camp, Pa.
- *Raymond, Henry M.—Evans, 37.—Discharged on account of sickness August 30th, 1863, and died at Cairo, Ill., while on his way home.
- *Redmond, Arthur—Brant, 26,—Died of disease at Fortress Monroe, Va., January 16th, 1863.
- *Riald, Charles—Brant, 21.—Killed May 27th, 1863, at Port Hudson, La.
- Ridout, Ezra T.-Evans, 29.-Mustered out with Regiment, Address, Grand Rapids, Mich.
- Roberts, John—Hamburg, 33.—Wounded at Plain's Store, La., May 21st, 1863. Transferred to United States Navy May 5th, 1864. Address, Buffalo, N. Y.
- *Ross, William—North Collins, 20.—Wounded at Port Hudson, La., May 27th. 1863. Mustered out with Regiment as Corporal.
- *Sawdy, William H.—Evans, 44.—Wounded at Port Hudson, La,, May 27th, 1863. Discharged from hospital, date unknown.
- *Schamel, Conrad—Hamburg, 20.—Killed May 21st, 1863, at Plain's Store, La.

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- Schamel, Henry-Hamburg, 21.-Mustered out with Regiment, Address, South Bend, Ind.
- *Sensor, John-East Hamburg, 25 .- Mustered out with Regiment.
- *Smith, Authur F, Aurora, 18.—Corporal. Wounded at Port Hudson, La., May 27th, 1863, and died from the effects of wound at New Orleans, La., June 9th, 1863.
- Smith, Channing—East Hamburg, 18.—Wounded at Cox's Plantation, La., July, 13, 1863. Mustered out with Regiment as Corporal. Address unknown.
- Smith, Egbert—North Collins, 22.—Corporal. Wounded at Port Hudson, La., May 27th, 1863. Transferred to Veteran Reserve Corps January 10th, 1865. Address, North Collins, N. Y.
- Smith, Harvey A.—Brant, 19.—Mustered out with Regiment. Address, North Collins, N. Y.
- Smith James-Brant, 19.-Mustered out with Regiment. Address, Karns City, Pa.
- Stambach, Henry E.—East Hamburg, 24.—Corporal. Discharged December 2d, 1863 and appointed to clerkship in Quartermaster's Department. Address, Buffalo, N. Y.
- *Stanton, Charles A.—Evans, 19.—Member of Regimental Band. Discharged on account of sickness February 19th, 1864, and died soon after reaching home.
- Strassing, Charles—East Hamburg, 26.—Wounded at Port Hudson, La., May 27th, 1863. Mustered out with Regiment, Address, Brecksville, O.
- *Swift, Nathaniel J.—East Hamburg, 24.—Wounded at Plain's Store, La., May 21st, 1863 and died from the effects of the wound at Baton Rouge, La., July, 1863.
- *Taylor, George—Brant, 18.—Wounded at Cox's Plantation, La., July 13th, 1863. Discharged with rank as Corporal on account of sickness, January 3d, 1865.
- Train, Benjamin R.—Evans, 27,—Mustered out with Regiment, Address, North Collins, N, Y.

- Trevitt, Lobeski C.—East Hamburg, 22.—Wounded at Plain's Store, La., May 21st, 1863. Mustered out with Regiment. Address, Webster's Corners, N. Y.
- *Webster, Albion—Evans, 28.—Died of disease at Washington, D. C., July 31st, 1864.
- *White, Henry—East Hamburg, 22.—Killed May 27th, 1863 at Port Hudson, La.
- White, Horace W.—Hamburg, 23.—Mustered out with Regiment as Orderly Sergeant. Address, Hamburg, N. Y.
- White, Jefferson—Evans, 22.—Wounded at Port Hudson, La., May 27th, 1863 and at Opequan Creek, Va., September 19, 1864. Mustered out with Regiment as Corporal. Address, Blasdell, N. Y.
- *White, William W.—Evans, 23.—Killed May 21, 1863 at Plain's Store, La.
- Wilcox, John F.—Evans, 43.—Discharged on account of sickness July 8th, 1864. Address, Hamburg, N. Y.
- *Willett, Homer B.—Evans, 31.—Sent to hospital sick August 27th, 1863 and discharged, date unknown.
- Williams, Abner M.—Evans, 18.—Wounded at Plain's Store, La., May 21st, 1863. Discharged from hospital, date unknown. Address, Bradford, Pa.
- Wolf, Andrus-Evans, 19.-Wounded at Plain's Store, La., May 21st 1863. Mustered out with Regiment. Address, Solomon City, Kan.
- *Wooderson, Ephraim—Evans, 18.—Wounded at Port Hudson, La., May 27th, 1863 and died from the effects of the wound at New Orleans, La., June 10th, 1863.
- Woods, Robert H.—Evans, 18.—Mustered out with Regiment with rank as Corporal. Address, Wooton, Kan.
- Yochum, Peter-Evans, 27.-Discharged on account of sickness, February 14th, 1863. Address, Buffalo, N. Y.
- Young, William H,—East Hamburg, 23.—Mustered out with Regiment with rank as Corporal. Address, Gowanda, N. Y.

In addition to the foregoing original members the following officers and men were at some time during the term of service borne upon the rolls of Company "A."

Captain Charles F. Wadsworth-A resident of Buffalo and First Lieutenant of Company "D," was promoted to Captain of Company

"A," March 1st, 1863, succeeding Captain Ayer. Resigned in August 1863, Address, Livonia, N. Y.

- Captain George H. Shepard—A resident of Evans and Orderly Sergeant of Company ''K'' was promoted to Second Lieutenant of that Company July 18, 1863 and to First Lieutenant July 18, 1864. He was promoted to Captain of Company "A" September 8th, 1864, succeeding Captain Newton, and remained in command until our discharge. Mustered out with Regiment. Address, Clymer, N Y.
- First Lieutenant Orton S. Clark—A resident of Buffalo, was a member of Company "C" and promoted to Sergeant-Major at organization of Regiment. He was promoted to Second Lieutenant Company "A" November 8th, 1862 and to First Lieutenant June 1st, 1863. He was promoted to Captain Company "H," April 12th, 1864 and commanded that Company until discharged. Wounded at Cox's Plantation, La., July 13, 1863. Mustered out with Regiment. Address, Minneapolis, Minn.
- First Lieutenant William Tibbetts—A resident of Buffalo and Orderly Sergeant of Company "C." He was promoted to First Lieutenant Company "A" April 12, 1864. Promoted to Captain Company "I" March 1st, 1865 and remained in command until discharged. Wounded at Port Hudson, La., May 27th 1863. Mustered out with Regiment. Address, Toledo, O.
- *First Lieutenant John G. Dayton—A resident of Springville and Orderly Sergeant of Company "F." He was promoted to First Lieutenant March 1st, 1865, and as a vacancy occurred in our Company on account of the promotion of Lieutenant Tibbetts he was mustered and borne upon the rolls of Company "A" though he performed duty as a Lieutenant of Company "F." Mustered out with Regiment.

*Alfred Agard—A recruit from the town of Evans. Reported to Regiment October 16, 1864. Wounded at Newtown, Va., November 12, 1863. Mustered out with Regiment.

Bee Stout—A recruit from New York City. When the Regiment was mustered out of the service he was transferred to the Ninetieth Regiment New York Volunteers as his term of enlistment had not expired.

 Henry DeLancey—A *Contraband* was enlisted at Baton Rouge, La. and employed as cook. When the Regiment was mustered out of the service he was transferred to the Ninetieth Regiment New York
 Volunteers, his term of enlistment not having expired,

Ten of the eleven comrades killed and twenty-two of the thirty-two wounded received their injury either at Plain's Store, La., May 21st, 1863, or May 27th, at the first assault on Port Hudson.

Our loss, especially in the first engagement, was due to our exposed condition, of which previous reference has been made.

As a comparison with another company; at Plain's Store our loss was four killed and in wounded, while Company "B," whose position was on the left of the Regiment, only suffered a loss of one wounded.

At Opequan Creek, Va., our loss was only three wounded, while Company "B" had two killed and four wounded.

At Cedar Creek, Va., we lost but one killed and two wounded, while Company "B" had three killed and five wounded.

Other comparisons might be made with other companies, showing that except in the first two engagements our losses were not more, and many times not equal to theirs.

The official records of the War Department gives the casualties in the Regiment as follows:

Killed or mortally wor	unded		-		-	-		- 96
Wounded			 -	-	-	•		248
Total loss in battle	-	-	-	-	•		1	- 344
1	+ (mital							



With ten companies in the regiment our proportion would be

Killed or mortally wounded - 9.6	While our loss was 11
Wounded 24.8	While our loss was 32
Total 34.4	Total 43

Showing that our loss was considerably more than the proportion to each Company.

Twelve members of the Regiment were wounded more than once and⁴ of that number three were from Company "A."

The losses in killed and wounded by engagements were as follows:

KILLED MORTALL WOUNDER	WOUNDED.
Plain's Store, La., May 21, 1863 4	10
Port Hudson, La., May 27, 1863 6	12
Cox's Plantation, I.a., July 13, 1863	4
Sabine Cross Roads, La., April 8, 1864	2
Pleasant Hill, La., April 9, 1864	. I
Opequan Creek, Va., September 19, 1864	3
Fisher's Hill, Va., September 22, 1864	1,
Cedar Creek, Va., October, 19, 1864 1	2
Newtown, Va., (skirmish) November 12, 1864	1
Total	

The foregoing table of losses accounts for thirty-six wounded instead of thirty-two. This is explained from the fact that two of our members were wounded twice and one three times, while the loss would figure thirty-six there were actually only thirty-two comrades wounded according to the records.

It will be noticed, that a very large percentage, over two-thirds of our entire loss occurred in the first two engagements.

Our entire loss in battle was killed or mortally wounded eleven; wounded thirty-two; prisoner one: total loss, forty-four.

In the preceding portion of this volume reference has been made to the large number of boys and young men in Company "A." Six of the killed and eleven of the wounded were less than twenty-one, while the

entire number killed and twenty-five of the thirty-two wounded had not seen their twenty-fifth birthday.

Of the five comrades who left Buffalo as Sergeants, one was killed and the other four wounded. From entries in my diary as to the whereabouts of members who were absent in hospital or otherwise relieved from active duty, I think that sixty-seven comrades are all that participated in any of the battles.

If this is correct nearly two-thirds of the comrades engaged were either killed or wounded.

It should also be stated that some of the companies left Buffalo with only eighty to ninety men—possibly some smaller than that—while Company "A" had ninety-eight.

These facts are mentioned in justice to my comrades of the One Hundred and Sixteenth New York Volunteers, who were connected with other companies. As a member of Company "A," I have no desire to claim any record of service by our Company superior to that of the whole Regiment.

That our losses were greater in proportion was the fortunes of war, due to our location in the line.

I am sure that no comrade of Company "A" desires any greater honor, or more honorable record of service than is accorded him from the fact that he was a member of the One Hundred and Sixteenth New York Volunteers and as such performed his duty and helped his comrades of other companies to make that record an honorable one.

As to the location of our losses, ten were killed or mortally wounded and twenty-eight wounded in Louisiana and one was mortally wounded and seven wounded in Virginia.

The following schedule shows the total membership of the Co	mpany
and how they were accounted for on the muster out roll:	
Original number recruited, officers and men 99	
Recruits received during our term of service	
Promoted from other companies and mustered as officers of	
Company "A" 5	
Total	107
Killed or mortally wounded II	
Died from sickness while in service 14	
Discharged on account of wounds received 5	
Discharged on account of sickness 8'	
Discharged to accept Clerkship in Quartermaster's Department	
Resigned	
Promoted and mustered in other companies 6	
Promoted and mustered in the U. S. C. I 2	
Appointed Regimental Commissary Sergeant I	
Appointed Regimental Ordnance Sergeant I	
Appointed Regimental Leader of Band I	
Transferred to the United States Navy 2	
Transferred to Second Louisiana Cavalry I	
Transferred to Veteran Reserve Corps 4	
Transferred to the Ninetieth New York when the Company	
was discharged 2	
Total	63
Mustered out as active members of Company, June 8th, 1865 -	44

Of the original ninety-nine members sixty-one are supposed to be living. Of that number thirty-one are still residents of the State of New York, twenty-six of them in the County of Erie and ten are residents of the same town from which they enlisted.

Of the other thirty, seven are in Pennsylvania, four in Kansas, two in Michigan, three in Indiana, two in Iowa, two in Ohio, one in Minnesota, one in Nebraska, one in Alabama, one in California and one in Oregon. Five I have been unable to locate and possibly some one or more of them may be dead.

I cannot give statistics regarding all and so refrain from any personal allusions to honors conferred upon comrades in civil life.

Many have been placed in positions that demonstrated the confidence of the people and none of them have proven unworthy of the trust reposed in them.

Honors in veteran organizations of various kinds have been extended. In our One Hundred and Sixteenth New York Veteran Association nine comrades of the Regiment have held the position of President. Of those thus honored, Robert B. Foote, Warren T. Ferris and LeRoy S. Oatman were original members of Company "A," while George H. Shepard was Captain of our Company at the date of the muster out, having commanded us during the Shenandoah campaign.

Those who fell in battle have been remembered, and though their remains were laid to rest far from the home of their childhood, their names have been honored and will never be forgotten so long as the Grand Army, of the Republic shall exist. Two Posts of this County have honored the memory of two comrades.

NATHANIEL J. SWIFT, POST No. 440 was mustered at Hamburg, N. Y., January 2d, 1884.

Comrade Swift whose name it bears was once of the first members of Company "A," to receive the enemies bullets. He was wounded a Plain's Store, La., May 21st, 1863 and died in the hospital at Baton Rouge, La., about July 4th, 1863.

AUTHUR F. SMITH, POST No. 506 was mustered at Aurora; N. Y., August 20th, 1884.

Comrade Smith, whose name it bears was one of the members of Company "A" who volunteered and served as a member of the forlorn hope in the assault on Port Hudson, La., May 27th, 1863. He there received his mortal wound and died in the hospital at New Orleans, La., June 9th, 1863.

Forty comrades whose names have been borne on the muster rolls of Company "A" are known to be dead. Thirty-eight are from the original ninety-nine members.

Twenty-three of them were laid to rest in a soldier's grave far from home and friends.

The resting places of many are unknown to us.

As we strew flowers upon the graves of our soldier dead may we ever remember those who sleep in unknown graves. May we recall their loyalty, their heroism, their suffering in camp, on the march, on the battle-field and in the hospital, that the flag under which they fought and from the shadow of whose folds they were promoted might never be dishonored. No more will the roar of cannon, the beating of the long roll, or the bugle call disturb their slumbers. They have completed their term of service, have received their final discharge and have been mustered into the Grand Army above.

"Perhaps in God's Army our missing will gather,

- "Unknown will be known when they answer their names,
- "Not one be unseen by the all-seeing Father,
 - "Though sleeping in woodland, on mountain, or plains.

"Perhaps He will point to that emblem of freedom, "As out o'er the dome its broad stripes are unfurled, "And say to those heroes, those battle-scarred chieftains: "Your work made that flag to enlighten the world."



In Memoriam

In Memoriam









James Ayer Post, No. 202, G. A. R.

JAMES AYER POST, NO. 202,

DEPARTMENT OF NEW YORK,

GRAND ARMY OF THE REPUBLIC,

MUSTERED MARCH 17th, 1881.



OFFICERS.

G. O. VELZEY,	· · · · · · · · Commander.
E. J. STANCLIFT, S. V. C.	EDWARD, BARRY, J. V. C.
WM. TOWNSEND, ADJT.	JOSEPH FROCHLEY, Q. M.
B. F. EASTMAN, SURGEON.	R. W. LINCOLN, . CHAPLAIN.
C. C. ROBINSON, O. D.	PETER RIEFLE, O. G.
S. M. BARNHART, S. M.	JACOB FRIEND, Q. M. S.

PAST POST COMMANDERS.

J. G. THOMPSON. GEO. W. CARR.' WM. TOWNSEND.

Memorial James Ayer



THE G. A. R.

This memorial volume would be incomplete without reference to the Grand Army of the Republic under whose direction the memorial services were held and by whose request this record is published. While ex-members of the One Hundred and Sixteenth New York Volunteers and other local organizations by re-unions and social gatherings would keep alive memories of scenes with which they were familiar, how little they would have known of comrades in their immediate vicinity who endured equal and in many cases greater hardships, had it not been for the Grand Army of the Republic, where all comrades who wore the blue and received an honorable discharge, can meet around the altar and renew the bonds of Fraternity, Charity and Loyalty. With all these circumstances existing I imagine that the comrades of James Ayer Post little realize the volumes of un-written history of the war contained within their Post room.

There were enrolled in the Union Army as shown on the muster rolls of over two thousand regiments 2,772,408 soldiers. Many of these were re-enlistments and it cannot be accurately determined how many different men actually served, but probably more than two and a half millions.

Of that number 110,070 were killed or mortally wounded, and 275,175 wounded. Making the total loss in battle 385,245; 249,458 died in the service beside those killed, making the aggregate deaths 359,538.

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The following organizations suffered the heaviest loss in killed from each branch of the service mentioned during their term of enlistment: Seventh Wisconsin Infantry, two hundred and eighty; First Maine Cavalry, one hundred and fifty-nine; First Maine Heavy Artillery, four hundred; Battery "B" of the First Pennsylvania Light Artillery, twenty-one.

The actual number killed, however, does not clearly determine the proportionate loss as the number enrolled in the regimental organizations materially differed.

The heaviest percentage killed during the term of service was in the Second Wisconsin, amounting to 19.7 per cent. of the entire enrollment.

The First Minnesota, however, is entitled to the honor of having the largest percentage killed and wounded in a single engagement.

It went into the charge at Gettysburg during the second day's battle with two hundred and sixty-two officers and men and in a few moments time seventy-five were killed or mortally wounded, and one hundred and forty-nine others wounded, a loss of eighty-two per cent. of the number engaged, over twenty-eight per cent. having been killed, a percentage not equalled in the records of any regiment in any war.

Frequent reference is made to losses in foreign wars. The charge of the Light Brigade at Balaklava has become famous and the poet has wrought its achievements into verse so readily recalled to the minds of all that the six hundred who rode into the valley of death have been looked upon as the military heroes of the world.

I presume many suppose that they were annihilated. Let us compare the records :

The Light Brigade went into that charge with six hundred and seventythree officers and men and lost one hundred and thirteen killed, and one hundred and thirty-four wounded; total, two hundred and forty-seven, or 36.7 per cent. less than one half the percentage of the loss which the First Minnesota sustained at Gettysburg.

This regiment, however, does not stand alone when compared with the losses of the Light Brigade as there were in the Union Army sixty-two regiments, each of whom in some one of the numerous engagements

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suffered a loss of over fifty per cent. killed or wounded, and of that number fifteen regiments sustained that percentage of loss at Gettysburg.

The loss of the Light Brigade in killed was 16.8 per cent.

There were fifty-one regiments in the Union Army who, in some one of the numerous battles, lost in killed from seventeen to twenty-eight per cent. of the number engaged.

Ten regiments suffered that loss at Gettysburg, while at Wilson's Creek and Belmont in 1861, at Fort Donelson, Shiloh, Mansasas, Fair Oaks, Anteitam and Fredericksburg in 1862; at Port Hudson and Chickamaugua in 1863; at Spotsylvania, Pleasant Hill, Cold Harbor, The Wilderness, Cedar Creek and Petersburg in 1864, and in numerous other engagements of lesser prominence one or more regiments suffered a greater loss in killed than the Light Brigade at the battle of Balaklava.

Compared with the losses above stated the charge of the Light Brigade is not entitled to the especial prominence that has been accorded it.

There were forty-five regiments in the Union Army who during their term of service lost two hundred or more killed in action; two hundred and thirty-nine regiments whose losses in killed were fifty or more in a single engagement and over three hundred regiments whose losses in killed and wounded during their term of service amounted to one hundred and thirty or upwards.

Let us now consider the part taken by the few comrades who are members of James Ayer Post. I find that they were former residents of six States; they represent twenty-seven New York, four Illinois, two Wisconsin, one Ohio, one Michigan and one Massachusetts organization.

They enlisted in various branches of the service; forty-nine having served in Infantry, eight in Cavalry, three in Heavy Artillery, two in Light Artillery, two in Sharpshooters, one in Mounted Rifles, one in the Engineer's Corps, one in the Regular Army and one in the Navy. Six belonged to two different commands, thereby showing re-enlistment.

As to where they served, a re-search of the history of regimental organizations develops the fact that they represent the First, Third, Fifth, Sixth, Ninth, Tenth, Eleventh, Twelfth, Seventeenth Eighteenth, Nineteenth, Twentieth and Twenty-fourth Army Corps and
seven of the Cavalry Divisions of the Army. They served in every department and helped to fight the battles of the Union in twelve different States and in two hundred and thirty-two of the two thousand two hundred and sixty-one battles of the war.

I do not intend by this to say positively that comrades of this Post were present in that number of battles, as from wounds or sickness some might have been absent, but the organizations of which they were members took part in that number of engagements, and probably in many more that re-search of the written history of the war has not brought to my attention.

In order to understand something of the duties performed and the location of these commands, let us re-call, as briefly as possible, some of the commanders and some of the services performed by éach of the thirteen Army Corps and the six divisions of Cavalry mentioned:

THE FIRST CORPS was commanded by McDowell during the Peninsular Campaign and at Manassas, and by Hooker at South Mountain and Anteitam. Reynolds succeeded to the command before Fredericksburg and on to Gettysburg, where he was killed and Doubleday succeeded to the command until he was succeeded by Newton. Among the prominent officers who were Division Commanders at some time in the may be mentioned Meade, Franklin, McCall, Robinson and Wadsworth. In March, 1864, the organization was discontinued and attached to the Fifth Corps.

> Its record of service will ever be remembered with pride by the survivors.

THE THIRD CORPS was commanded by Heintzleman on the Peninsula and at Fredericksburg by Stoneman. At Chancellorsville and

> Gettysburg Sickles was in command, and later in its service French. Among its Division Commanders were Hooker, Fitz John Porter, Kearny, Carr and Birney. In March, 1864, the Third Corps was discontinued, the First and Second Divisions being transferred to the Second Corps and the Third Division to the Sixth Corps.

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It did good service and suffered severe losses. Among the killed was General Kearney.

THE FIFTH CORPS was organized during the Peninsular campaign with Fitz John Porter in command. Its loss during the Seven Days' Battle was half of the entire loss of the Union Army amounting to over seven thousand, while at Manassas it again suffered severely. Butterfield succeeded to the command and Meade succeeded Butterfield until just before Gettysburg, when he was given command of the Army of the Potomac and Sykes, of the Corps. During the Wilderness campaign it was commanded by Warren and during all its service and until the close of the war it had a record as one of the fighting corps of the army of the Potomac. A portion of the First Corps was consolidated with it in 1864. Wadsworth was killed while leading his Division at the Wilderness.

THE SIXTH CORPS, under Franklin, Smith, Sedgwick and Wright bore a prominent part in the battles of the Union from Gaines' Mills to Petersburg. It numbered many prominent officers among its Division Commanders : Smith, Slocum, Newton, Terry, Getty, Ricketts and Russell. Sedgwick was killed at Spotsylvania while commanding the Corps. Russell was killed at Opequan and Bidwell, formerly Colonel of the Forty-ninth and a citizen of Buffalo was killed at Cedur Creek. Its record is a series of brilliant achievements. The successful assault at Mary's Heights, the capture of the rifle pits at Rappahannock Station, its desperate struggle in the thickets at Spotsylvania, where the fighting was the most desperate of any recorded during the whole war, its sortie from Fort Stevens where, under the eye of the President, Bidwell's Brigade forced the confederates to retire, and thus saved the National Capitol from threatened capture, its successful campaign in the Shenandoah Valley and its prominent part in the assault on Petersburg, thence pursuing Lee's army as

they withdraw towards Appomattox; all these have crowned the Sixth Corps with enduring honor.

THE NINTH CORPS, under Burnside, Reno, Cox, Wilcox, Sedgwick, Smith,

- Parke, Potter, Burnside again and then Parke until the close of the war, had a particularly eventful career. It has been well named the "Wandering Corps." Its dead lie buried in seven States. From Roanoke Island, N. C., to Anteitam. Md.; from Fredericksburg, Md., to Vicksburg, Miss.; from Knoxville, Tenn., to the Wilderness of Virginia, and from Cold Harbor to the final assault at Petersburg, where it was the first to place its flag over the public buildings of the captured city, it was ever in the front and ever doing valiant service. Reno was killed at South Mountain, Rodman at Anteitam and Stevenson at Spotsylvania. Among its division commanders were Crittenden and Hartranft.
- THE TENTH CORPS was commanded by Mitchell, and originally located in South Carolina, Georgia and Florida. Mitchell died and Brannan succeeded him. Hunter succeeded Brannan and Gilmore succeeded Hunter. It took part in the various operations about Charleston Harbor, and made the assault on , Fort Wagner, where two Brigade commanders, Strong and Putnam, were killed. Joining the Army of the James, it participated in some of the fighting under Butler and two divisions were at Cold Harbor under command of Devens. Crossing the James it was under Birney and after his death Terry succeeded to the command. In December, 1864, the Tenth and Eighteenth Corps were consolidated, forming the Ames's Division and Abbott's Brigade, Twenty-fourth. however, were detached and under General Terry took part in the expedition and capture of Fort Fisher. In March, 1865, these troops, with three Brigades from Grover's Division of the Nineteenth Corps and Paines's Division of Colored troops were consolidated and known as the Tenth Corps, with General Terry in command.

THE ELEVENTH CORPS was originally the First Corps, comprising what was known as the "Mountain Department," and under command of Fremont. Sigel commanded the Corps at Manassas and soon after its change to the Eleventh Corps, Howard succeeded him, remaining in command until after Gettysburg. Soon after, one Division was sent to Charleston Harbor and the other two with the Twelfth Corps were sent to Tennessee and consolidated as the Twentieth Corps, and thence participated in many engagements; notably Missionary Ridge and Knoxville. It did gallant service and suffered heavy losses especially at Gettysburg. This was largely a German Corps, half of its Regiments being almost entirely Germans, and among its division commanders were Schurz, Von Steinwehr, Schenck and Schimmelfennig.

THE TWELFTH CORPS has the record of continuous service without the loss of a battle-flag or a gun. Under Banks in the Shenandoah Valley and Mansfield at Cedar Mountain and Antietam, where he was killed ; under Slocum at Chancellorsville and Williams at Gettysburg and then by consolidation with the Eleventh succeeding to the Twentieth Corps, it participated in the battle at Lookout Mountain and thence marched to the Sea, returning with Sherman's victorious army to participate in the Grand Review, proudly bearing the same colors and escorting the same cannon that they had protected from loss in many hard fought battles. Shields, Augur, Williams, Ruger, Greene and Geary were among the Division Commanders.

THE SEVENTEENTH CORPS was under Grant's command when he was a Brigadier General and before the organization of Army Corps. As a Corps it was under command of McPherson, and from Port Gibson to the seige of Vicksburg was in the front line of battle. Logan's Division was accorded the honor of first entering the city and receiving its formal surrender. One Division was then transferred to the Fifteenth

Corps and two Divisions: under Blair went with Sherman to the Sea, while one Division under A. J. Smith was with Banks on the Red River campaign and afterwards at Nashville, Tenn.

- THE EIGHTEENTH CORPS originally included all the troops in North Carolina under Foster and then joined Butler's army at Yorktown with Smith in command of the Corps and afterwards under Ord and Weitzel took part in many engagements until December, 1864, when the Tenth and Eighteenth were consolidated as the Twenty- Fourth.
- THE NINETEENTH CORPS originally included all the troops in the Department of the Gulf under Banks. It took part in all the battles in Louisiana; notably the seige of Port Hudson and the Red River campaign. Two Divisions were then sent North and joined the Army of the Shenandoah, participating with Sheridan, in all his engagements in the valley, losing nearly twenty-five per cent. of their number, killed and wounded, during that short campaign, and fighting their last battle at Cedar Creek, where they did good service. One Division remained in Louisiana, and early in 1865 the two Divisions that were in the Shenandoah Valley were sent to Savannah, Ga. Banks commanded the Corps at Port Hudson, Franklin on the Red River campaign and Emory in the Shenandoah Valley. Among its Division commanders were Augur, Sherman, Grover, Dwight, Birge and Paine.
- THE TWENTIETH CORPS was a consolidation, in 1863, of portions of the Eleventh and Twelfth Corps, under command of McCook. It performed grand service at Chickamaugua, where its losses in battle were over one third of the number engaged.
- THE TWENTY-FOURTH CORPS was a consolidation of the Tenth and Eighteenth with Ord in command, and later under Gibbon's leadership. They took part in the assault on Petersburg, and thence pursued the fleeing Confederates having the honor of making the last Infantry fight of the Army of

the Potomac, as they were hotly engaged during the forenoon of April 9th, 1865, with Lee's troops at Appomattox. Devin's Division was left with one Division of the Twentyfifth Corps in front of Richmond and under command of General Weitzel advanced on Richmond when the Confederate Army withdrew, and entering the City April 3d, hoisted the Stars and Stripes over the Confederate capitol.

Of the Cavalry Divisions Arnold's was in the department of the Gulf, Averill's was in West Virginia contending with Mosby's Guerrillas, Greggs's, Merritt's and Wilson's were with the Army of the Potomac, Kautz's with the Army of the James and Grierson's with the Army of the Tennessee, making the memorable raid from La Grange, Tenn., traveling througn the very heart of the Confederacy and joining our forces at Baton Rouge, La., having destroyed millions of dollars worth of various munitions of war and captured more prisoners.than his entire command numbered.

From the above you can see something of the service rendered by the members of James Ayer Post; as to where the one comrade who was in the Navy served, I cannot say and as this portion of the volume has been prepared after most of it was in type, I had no opportunity to ascertain.

How many reminiscences are stored away in the memory of the few comrades who are thus banded together. Many of the Regiments represented have been considered worthy of special mention in compiling the official records of the war.

Among the forty-five Infantry Regiments who had the largest number killed in action is found the Fifty-first New York, with an honor roll of two hundred and two.

The Fourteenth New York Heavy Artillery also had two hundred and twenty-six killed.

Of the Regiments who lost in killed more than ten per cent. of their membership are found the Forty-ninth, Fifty-first and Seventy-second New York and the Seventh Ohio.

Of the Regiments who had more than fifty men killed in one action are found the Twenty-first New York at Manassas, the Forty-ninth New

York at Spotsylvania, the Seventy-second New York at the Wilderness, the Eighth Illinois at Fort Donelson, the Seventh Ohio at Cec... tain and the Fourteenth New York Heavy Artillery at rsburg.

Of the sixty-two Regiments who lost in killed and per per cent. or more of the men engaged in any one battle mention is made of the Seventh Ohio at Cedar Mountain, where their loss was one hundred and eighty-two; 59.2 per cent. of the total number engaged.

Among the Regiments which suffered the heaviest lossess in particular engagements, I find that the comrades are well represented.

The Seventy-second New York at Williamsburg, One hundred and Sixteenth New York at Plain's Store, One Hundred and Fifty-fourth New York at Rocky Face Ridge, One Hundred and Eighty-seventh and One Hundred and Eighty-eighth New York at Boydon Road, Second New York Mounted Rifles at Petersburg, Eighth New York Cavalry at Bradford's Ford, Ninth New York Cavalry at Trevillian Station and at Brandy Station, Tenth New York Cavalry at Middleburg, and Hawes Shop, at Poplar Springs Church and at Boydon Road, Eighth Illinois at Fort Donelson, Ninety-fifth Illinois at the first assault on Vicksburg, Second Ohio at Kernstown and at Cedar Mountain and Fourteenth New York Heavy Artillery at Bethesda Church at Petersburg, at Petersburg Mine, at Welden Railroad and at Fort Stedman.

Mention was made of the loss of the Light Brigade as 16.8 killed.

Among the Regiments represented in James Ayer Post I find that at Shiloh the Ninth Illinois lost seventeen per cent. at Spotsylvania, the Forty-ninth New York lost eighteen per cent. and at Cedar Creek the Seventh Ohio seventeen per cent. of their number killed, entitling the survivors to rank among those whose dangers excelled the famous "Six Hundred." Among the comparatively few Regiments whose Colonels were killed while in command of the Brigade I find the Third New York Cavalry at Petersburg, Va., the One Hundred and Sixteenth New York at Port Hudson, La., and the Seventh Ohio at Ringold, Ga.

Other statistics and comparisons might be made, but to follow all the avenues that could be traversed would be attended with much research of records and history.

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I have sought to indicate the composition of one, and to demonstrate the pertunity that exists in each of the many Grand Army Posts, to as certain from living witnesses, facts in connection with the great struggle

In the Memorial address reference was made to the Company which our comrade commanded, as that gave his record, his muster into the service of the United States and his honorable discharge; without which he could never have been entitled to the honors due a comrade of the Grand Army of the Republic.

It is now proper to supplement this with what has been said regarding the men who composed that grandest of all armies that ever rallied around a standard, and having given some of the records of service which the comrades of James Ayer Post are entitled to consider as theirs, I will now speak of the organization and history of the Post and of him whose name it bears.

I well remember the night when I visited Angola and assisted in mustering twenty-seven comrades as members of the Grand Army of the Republic, and thereby helped to institute James Ayer Post, No. 202, Department of New York. Henry E. Stambach, a Past Commander of Bidwell-Wilkeson Post, No. 9, of which I am a member, and an ex-member of Company "A," One Hundred and Sixteenth New York Volunteers, was detailed by the Department Commander as mustering officer. At the "Camp Fi e" held that evening it was my privilege to speak briefly of the services and death of Captain James Ayer, and to express my opinion that the Post had honored themselves by honoring one whose civil and military life had ever exemplified the principles of Fraternity, Charity and Loyalty.

I am glad of this opportunity to allude briefly to the life and services of one whom I knew so well.

Captain James Ayer was the youngest brother of Captain Ira Ayer. He was born in what is now the town of Evans, August 14th, 1813, and died in camp at Baton Rouge, La., May 22, 1863.

I have heard it stated at various times, though I am not prepared to substantiate the fact from any records, that James Ayer was the first white

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male child born within the present limits of the town of Evans. His early life, like that of his older brother, developed military ability.

When a young man he was Captain and afterwards, by uccessive promotions, Major, Lieutenant-Colonel and Colonel of a sigiment of New York State Militia.

He resided all his life in the town and upon the same farm where he was born.

As a citizen he was honored and beloved by all. In a long acquaintance with him and with those among whom he resided I never heard other than words of esteem spoken of him as a neighbor, a friend and and earnest and exemplary Christian citizen.

Like his brother he had been called to pass through great affiiction.

A short time before he offered his services to his country he buried his wife and was left with two motherless children of tender age to care for.

He, however, did not falter in his convictions of duty and receiving authority to recruit a company he soon found himself mustered into the service as Captain of Company "K," One Hundred and Sixteenth Regiment, New York Volunteer Infantry. He was an efficient officer and had he lived would undoubtedly have gained promotion, as he had the entire confidence of his superior officers,

In the service he exhibited the same spirit of kindness and solicitude for others welfare that had ever been a prominent trait in his life and character and the more intimately the members of his company came to know him the stronger was their attachment to him as a friend and their admiration of him as an officer.

A few days before we left Baton Rouge on the Port Hudson campaign, he was taken sick and much against his wish compelled to remain in his tent, not wishing to go to the hospital.

Comrade Elijah P. Smith of his Company was allowed to remain and care for him. Comrade John F. Wilcox of Company "A" was also compelled to remain in camp from inability to perform duty and they were with him attending to his wants and affording him all possible aid.

His symptoms, however, grew more alarming. He was taken with fever,

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followed by inflammation of the best 's and at 5 P. M. of May 22d he passed away.

As I was among the wounded at Plain's Store. I.a., on the 21st of May I have vivid respections of the 23d of that month, when passing through the streets of Baton Rouge in an ambulance on my way to the hospital I met an army cart and marching by its side Comrades Smith and Wilcox.

I feared that the remains of one whom I had known so long and loved so dearly were being borne to a soldier's grave, and asking the driver to stop the ambulance I called one of the comrades and learned of Captain James Ayer's death, and that the rough coffin contained his body.

After the war had ceased his remains were removed from Southern soil and placed by the side of his beloved wife in the town where he was born.

The influence of his life is not lost and of Captain James Ayer it can be truly said, "He being dead yet speaketh."

> "Ne'er to the chambers where the mighty-rest Since their foundation came a nobler guest."

The Post which honored themselves by honoring his name was organized March 17th, 1881, with twenty-seven charter members.

Nine of the members had served in his Company, and Captain Ira Ayer, with three of Company "A" were among the charter members.

There were many bonds which united Companies "A" and "K;" aside from the fact that they served with the same Regiment in the same campaigns and battles.

They were recruited from the same towns ; the Captains were brothers; George W. Carr, Horace P. Ingersoll and Ira White were members of Company "K," while others of their immediate family were in Company "A." There was also an interchange of officers. Warren T. Ferris who left Buffalo as Second Lieutenant of Company "A" was promoted to First Lieutenant and then to Captain of Company "K," while George H. Shepard, who left home as Orderly Sergeant of Company "K" returned as Captain of Company "A" and John H. Dingman, who enlisted in Company "A" was mustered out as First Lieutenant of Company "K."

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e reco of casualties ment 'K'' show that four ' ed and one taken prisone'. Welve died from kness ische ged on account of words received or discuse con the vice. Over two-thirds of their loss in action occurred' Po Hudson campaign. At the battle of Cane Fiver, La pril 23d, 1864, the only member of the Regiment wounded a s William Tromler of Company "K," whose limb was taken off by a cannot find the

As the names will be familiar to many members of the Post and others whom this volume will reach, I will mention the casualties as they appear upon the muster out roll.

Killed or mortally wounded-Corporal unk M. Judson; Privates Charles Bramiller, Milton H. Hill and Andre

Wounded—Orderly Sergeants D. C. Conger and Charles H. Ballard; Sergeants Job B. Sherman and Henry W. Eno; Corporals Horace W. Paxon, Harvey M. Crawford, William Naigel and David Weissenger; Privates Ashael E. Ames, John Black, Daniel Crawford, Joseph A. Ewers, George A. Freeman, Frank E. Griffith, John A. Haggerty, Charles Iback, Alonzo F. Killom, Lewis Ludlow, Charles B. Mills, Peter Reifel, Theodore Slater, William Tromler and Wendell Tice.

Prisoner-Charles E. Craig.

Died from disease—Captain James Ayer, First Lieutenant Elisha B. Cottier; Privates Bela Crawford, Ariel Evans, James H. Fails, Lyman M. Frary, George H. Hawks, Charles E. Kingsley, George N. Ostrom, Theodore Slater, Franklin Sooy and John A. Thomason.

I cannot speak with the same minuteness regarding the living as I have of the Company with which I served. About forty are residents of Erie County and nearly half that number reside in the town of Evans.

Eighteen are members of James Ayer Post, No. 202, and their names with six other comrades of the One Hundred and Sixteenth New York will be found upon the following roster.

They seek to perpetuate the memory and emulate the virtues of him whose name they bear by a practical exemplification of the principles of

FRATERNITY, CHARITY AND LOYALTY.

Roster James Ayer Post

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