

THE
QUARTERLY

Official Publication of the St. Lawrence County Historical Association

October 1990



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VOLUME XXXV

OCTOBER 1990

NO. 4

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Cover: Portrait of Linda Richards in Main Lobby of the Canton-Potsdam Hospital, Potsdam, NY.

This publication is made possible in part with public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts.

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The Quarterly is published in January, April, July and October each year by the St. Lawrence County Historical Association.

Extra copies may be obtained from the St. Lawrence County Historical Association, P.O. Box 8, Canton, N.Y. 13617, at \$3.00 each plus 75¢ postage and handling.

ISSN 0558-1931

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Linda Richards, Nursing's Forgotten Lady

by Richard J. O'Hanlon

Sitting at the head table, in a long black gown, her white hair neatly combed and brushed, she projected a certain dignity and an air of Victorian elegance. Then she was introduced as Miss Linda Richards, America's first trained nurse, but most people in the room had long forgotten her. Indeed, many attending the meeting of the Massachusetts Nursing Association that day in 1923 had never heard of her, for she had retired a full dozen years earlier, and had quickly faded into anonymity.

It was a pleasant summer day and the meeting was being held in a hotel on the Atlantic shore in Swampscott, a few miles north of Boston. Offered the opportunity to say a few words, she hesitated, seemed about to demur, then decided she did have something to say, rose slowly to her feet and in a high pitched, quivering voice began to speak. It was long before air conditioning, and because of open windows she had to talk over the sound of the surf pounding the beach outside, and the audience strained to hear.

This would be the last public appearance she would ever make, but her words that day served as a perfect description of the true nurse—a perfect description of Linda Richards' own life.

"The nurse is a human being, and the patient is a human being," she said. "All your skill will not make you a nurse if you do not have the right feeling in your heart for your patient."

"It is lonely to be sick. The nurse can help the sick person in his loneliness by being there to help not just with the head and the hands, but with the heart."

She sat down to complete silence, and for a moment feared that she had not even been heard. But then came the applause, then the standing ovation—and the old lady smiled appreciatively knowing she really had been heard after all.

Linda Richards initially secured her place in history by being the first trained American nurse, but after receiving her diploma, Sept. 1, 1873, from the New England Hospital for Women and Children in Roxbury, Mass., she went on to a varied and distinguished nursing career covering 38 years. Overcoming many obstacles, especially opposition from the doctors, she succeeded in establishing and supervising several nurse training schools at various hospitals throughout the east and one in Kalamazoo, Michigan.

She went to England and Scotland at the invitation of the renowned Flor-



This photo of Miss Richards and her Japanese rickshaw driver was taken outside the nurse training school she established in Kyoto, Japan. (Photo first appeared in her autobiography published in 1911)

ence Nightingale, and returned to introduce the Nightingale System into the curriculum of every hospital training school she would be associated with thereafter. In mid-career she traveled to Japan where she established that country's first nursing school, where in order to succeed she first had to learn a new and complicated language. A doctor familiar with her work there wrote after her death, "What Florence Nightingale did for England, Linda Richards did for Japan."

Later in her career she pioneered home care for the poor and needy in the tenement and slum areas of Philadelphia. This was the forerunner of today's visiting nurse associations. She spent most of her last working years establishing nursing schools in mental hospitals. In this she was far ahead of her time realizing that nursing for the mentally ill required a special type of training.

Linda Richards was what is today called a workaholic. Sixteen, 18 and even 20-hour work days were not unknown to her. Once in Japan when a baby with a severe eye infection needed constant attention, she stayed up around the clock bathing the infant's eyes every 20 minutes, never daring to doze even

for an instant lest she fall asleep and miss giving the next crucial treatment. The baby's eyesight was saved, one of countless times when this dedicated woman paid the price of service to another by taking it out on her own body. She had at least two physical breakdowns that required long convalescing periods, and found it necessary during her last 20 working years to limit assignments to two or three year periods to avoid further breakdowns.

Finally upon retirement in 1911, at the urging of colleagues and friends she wrote her *Reminiscences of America's First Trained Nurse*, for years the only biographical account of her life. She wrote, not out of lust for fame, fortune or acclaim, but as was revealed after her death, just to satisfy the many repeated requests of those who knew her accomplishments best and realized their historical significance. Though well-documented and marked with her own elegant style, the book was much too modest to do her justice. Dr. Edward Cowles, a physician who knew and worked with Miss Richards for many years, paid this tribute to her in the introduction:

Many American nurses likewise are entitled to high honor in es-

establishing the new profession of nursing and in extending the field of its beneficence; but Linda Richards, as her sisters all acclaim, outranks them all, not only in priority of her diploma's date, but also in the wide extent and variety of her services . . . But for those who have not known Miss Richards, and perhaps have never heard of her, and especially for those who know little or nothing about the wonderful development of modern nursing, something more is needed than her own modest story.

Linda Richards upon retirement seemed assured of a special place in history—not only for being the first trained American nurse, but for many years one of the best. Yet today she is remarkably unknown. In the main lobby of the Canton-Potsdam Hospital in Potsdam, N.Y. hangs a large colored portrait of her in an ornate, gold leaf frame. Beneath it a bronze plaque proclaims her “The First Trained American Nurse”, stating that she was born in Potsdam in 1841. Yet in this publicity conscious village of 7,000, home to both Potsdam State College and Clarkson University where everyone takes pride in their championship basketball and hockey teams, where a building on the Potsdam College campus is named for a former resident, the late Dr. Hervey Dexter Thatcher, inventor of the glass milk bottle, few people seem to have read that plaque. For hardly anyone in Potsdam recognizes the name Linda Richards—or knows who she was.

And this lack of recognition is not limited just to her birthplace. Examining the history of American nursing one finds her story, but mostly emphasizing her being the first trained nurse—just the chronological fact. If as one historian has stated, “Greatness can be measured by one's ability to do many things well,” then Linda Richards who certainly did many things well, deserves a measure of greatness—at least more than history seems to have given her.

In comparing the wealth of biographical material on such famed nurses as Clara Barton, Dorothea Dix and, the immortalized Florence Nightingale, one can not help noticing the lack of such abundance on Miss Richards. Why? Speculation suggests a few theories. First, those most familiar with Linda Richards, and most qualified to pass historical judgment on her life were neither historians nor writers. They were colleagues, doctors and nurses. These include the previously quoted Dr. Cowles who as chief resident physician at Boston City Hospital was her sole ally among the doctors there when she accepted his offer to establish a nurse-training school at that institu-



Members of nursing staff shown here assisting in surgery in this scene of a Bellevue Hospital ward in the 1870's. (Courtesy of Garrand Publishing Co.)

tion. In selecting her for the job, he stated he was confident he had picked the most qualified nurse in America. Dr. Alfred Worcester in an article written for *The New England Journal of Medicine* in May, 1930, a few weeks after her death, agreed, calling her a pivotal figure in establishing nurse training in America. He went on to compare her with Florence Nightingale.

If any complete story of her life shall ever be written, the comparison will at once suggest itself between the first American and first English trained nurse . . . Both of them were ‘born nurses’, that is from early girlhood each found her greatest delight in helping the helpless, and yet while they both longed for training as nurses, not until they were in their thirties was the way open for either of them. And then each within a few months time absorbed in full all of the art of nursing that had been accumulating during preceding centuries.

And following are the words of Florence Nightingale herself, introducing Linda Richards with a written note to the Matron of the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary in Scotland:

I have seldom seen anyone who struck me as so admirable. I think we have as much to learn from her as she from us.

This from the famous “Lady with the Lamp” who welcomed Linda Richards into her home not once but several times and was never known for either ingratiating compliments or private audiences. Linda succeeded where the famous, even royalty, had failed to breach the

great lady's privacy or to secure such unqualified endorsement.

Still, a definitive, third person biography was never devoted to Linda Richards. The most comprehensive account is her own. However, she was too modest. Unlike Miss Nightingale, whose biographers are legion and have been writing her life's story for nearly a century and a half, it has been only recently that Linda Richards has received any noteworthy literary attention, and that from two writers of juvenile literature—Rachel Baker and David Collins. Like most writers of this particular genre they were seeking role models and obviously believed they found one in Linda Richards.

Baker's *America's First Trained Nurse* published in 1959 is well documented, for the author who died in 1978 did not consider herself exclusively a writer for young people. She insisted, “I write for people”. But her biographies were most often sold to the youth departments of libraries throughout the country. Her speciality was biographies of famous people in medicine; her research flawless.

Collins' work, *Linda Richards First American Trained Nurse* was published in 1975 for a much younger audience. The author admits writing almost exclusively for children and has chosen such famous subjects as Charles Lindbergh, Abraham Lincoln and Harry Truman. What quality did Linda Richards share with such as these? David Collins must have noted some greatness in her, for he certainly placed her in great company.

That she was not much of a militant crusader might also have contributed

to her low historical profile. She certainly had the courage of her convictions, but when giving them absolute priority would lead only to controversy, then she advocated a more gentle approach. The story is told that as a student nurse she once had been assigned to a doctor treating a pneumonia patient at home. The doctor made it clear when Linda arrived that he didn't approve of women nurses and told her that she could be of little use to his patient.

Slipping off her cape and standing by the patient's bedside she paused a moment, then replied. "If I can be of little use, it is better than being of no use at all. I will do my best to follow your orders, doctor."

The doctor allowed her to stay, and for a full week she visited the patient twice daily, preparing meals, giving the prescribed medicine, changing bedding, giving baths. On his next visit, the doctor was pleased and astounded to find that the man was almost completely recovered, and he praised Linda for it.

"I'm glad you think I helped your patient, Doctor," she said politely.

"Our patient" he corrected. Linda Richards' gentle brand of persuasion had gained another convert.

But as nursing evolved as a profession this style of advocacy did not always endear her to colleagues. Again quoting Dr. Alfred Worcester:

Her forte was in exemplifying her ideals of nursing, not in public pleading for their adoption, and controversy was entirely foreign to her nature. But no greater mistake could be made than to ascribe her preference for the line of least resistance to any weakness of character. Her complaisance was only the perfect fruit of her innate courteous consideration of those with whom she differed.

The question thus remains; did this pioneer nurse receive her just due from history? The answer lies in a more detailed look at Linda Richards whose life nearly bridged two centuries and whose career spanned the chasm between archaic and modern medicine.

She was christened Melinda Ann Judson Richards. Her father, an itinerant preacher, had named her for Ann Judson Hasseltine hoping that like her namesake she would one day become a missionary. She was the third eldest daughter of Sanford and Betsey (Sinclair) Richards, who after their marriage in Newport, Vt., sometime in the mid 1830's, moved to a northern New York farm not far from the banks of the Racquette River in a community now part of Potsdam.

When Linda was four, shortly after the settlement of the Black Hawk War and the opening of the Wisconsin Terri-



Group of visiting nurses starting their daily rounds sometime around the turn of the century. Linda Richards joined such a pioneer group and helped bring medical care to the slum areas of Philadelphia. (Courtesy of Garrard Publishing Co.)

tory, the Richards family moved there where Mr. Richards had purchased a tract of land which included what is now the entire city of Watertown, Wisconsin. There he built a cabin and intended to clear the land, but he had been weakened by a serious lung ailment, probably advanced tuberculosis, and the strenuous labor was too much for him. One night only six weeks after the family had arrived there he suffered a lung hemorrhage, and died.

Mrs. Richards and her three daughters returned to Newport, Vt. where for a time they lived with Linda's maternal grandfather, a kindly and religious man of whom Linda speaks with tender affection in writing about her early life. She tells of sitting on his lap and, "Brushing his snow-white hair and confiding in him all my school day joys and sorrows." Again in describing the Sunday afternoon walks where she had trouble keeping up with his long-legged pace:

He was thin and over six feet

tall, and I was small and stout, and had to trot to keep up with him. He seldom talked to me on these walks, but I could not have been hired to stay at home. No there was nothing hard in my young life; hardship began with hospital life, where the first years were indeed very hard.

These are the words of a woman obviously nurtured in childhood with an abundance of family love, which helped in molding her into the loving, caring nurse she became.

When Linda's grandfather remarried, Linda's mother bought a small farm just outside of town and she and her three daughters were once more on their own. Shortly thereafter, Mrs. Richards began showing symptoms of the same disease that had claimed her husband, and it fell to Linda to look after her. She nursed her mother for three years under the direction of the family doctor. And though only 13 when her mother died, Linda felt she had

failed; but the doctor assured her that she had been very capable and had displayed all the talents of a true "born nurse."

In those days in New England, nursing was considered an act of charity, and every community had its own "born nurse." She was a woman who had a natural way with the sick and by instinct rather than training attended them whenever and wherever she was needed. Someone else came in and took over her housework while she went to answer the call that had gone out "for the born nurse." Under the supervision of old Doc Currier, the family doctor who had cared for her dying mother, Linda learned whatever medical knowledge he could give her. In describing the qualities of the born nurse in her book she gives an insight into her own humanistic approach to nursing.

No compensation did she receive, save the honor of bearing the title "born nurse", the true meaning of which to my mind is the possessing of qualities which, with proper training, go to make the ideal nurse—a love of ministering to those in need, a quickness to observe symptoms which should be reported to the doctor, a gentle touch, a sympathetic nature, and a love of nursing work for the very work's sake.

After her mother died, Linda went to live with her kindly grandfather, and soon became the community's "born nurse." But after his wife died, leaving him a widower for a second time, he became concerned about Linda's future. He insisted she train as a school teacher, and at 15 she enrolled for a year's training in St. Johnsbury Academy 30 miles away.

She wasn't happy there. She was homesick, and news of the death of her tutor and old friend, Doc Currier, only deepened her sadness. But mostly she missed being needed and, as she would put it, "having someone to tend to". But the year went by, and she did manage to pass the state examinations. She returned to Newport and was hired as the teacher in the school she had attended herself only a few years before.

She had been teaching only a year when her grandfather died, and Linda was alone. Her older sisters had moved on to make their own lives. In 1858, she sold the farm and went to live with various families in the community where she received room and board as partial payment for her teaching services. One summer she went to live with a Mrs. Poole, an elderly widow who lived just outside of town. There she met George Poole, her landlady's handsome young nephew, and soon the two had fallen in love.

The following year was probably the

happiest of Linda's life. She was young, tall, attractive, very much in love, and the dark clouds and bitter sorrows of an approaching war were far removed from the beautiful Vermont countryside and the thoughts of Linda Richards during that wonderful, idyllic year of 1860.

Linda and George became engaged and plans were made for a May wedding. Then came the attack on Ft. Sumter, and George Poole went marching off to war with the First Vermont Brigade of The Green Mountain Boys. He returned in the summer of 1865 with a chest wound and a consumptive cough. He never regained his health, and though Linda nursed him for the next four years, they never married. Once again she was "the born nurse", this time to the only man she ever truly loved. He died in 1869.

She had to earn a living, and now she knew that teaching was not meant to be her life's work. Motivated by stories she had heard from George about the suffering and the need for nurses during the war, she went to Boston with the intention of becoming a nurse. There she was hired as an assistant nurse in the Boston City Hospital where she was appalled to discover that nurses there were no more than ward maids. She found the women working as nurses were for the most part ignorant, often heartless and practically unsupervised. With her health starting to fail, she left after three months, even though offered a head nurse position. She knew she didn't have adequate knowledge for such responsibility and was unlikely to learn more under those conditions.

It was nearly two years later that she saw a notice in a Boston book store that The New England Hospital for Women and Children planned to offer a nurse-training program. That very afternoon she went to the hospital and presented herself to the resident physician, Miss Susan Dimock, a tall, attractive woman who had been studying medicine since she was 15 and had studied surgery at the University of Zurich. Then 26, a full six years younger than Linda, it would be this woman who would sign that historic first diploma. It would be this woman who would teach her many of the skills she had been seeking. It would be the beautiful and talented Susan Dimock who, along with Florence Nightingale, would serve as inspiration to Linda Richards for the rest of her life. Linda signed up for the school that day, the first of five applicants who would eventually do so.

In describing her duties as a student nurse at this first American training school, Linda wrote:

We nurses did very different work from that done by pupil nurses nowadays. Our days were not

eight hours: they were nearer twice eight. We rose at 5:30 A.M. and left the wards at 9 P.M. to go to our beds, which were in little rooms between the wards. Each nurse took care of her ward of six patients both day and night. Many a time I have got up nine times in the night: often I did not get to sleep before the next call came: but, being blessed with a sound body and a firm resolution to go through the training school, cost what it might, I maintained a cheerful spirit. We wore no uniforms, the only stipulation being that our dresses should be washable.

The reason the "pupil nurses" were on ward duty almost continuously was that Dr. Dimock refused at first to hire "night watchers" to come into the hospital to care for patients during evening hours. Night watchers were untrained, usually uneducated, often women of low morals, with little or no concern for patients. It was this type of employee with whom Linda had become so disillusioned at Boston City Hospital two years earlier. Something had to be done, though, so the wise Dr. Dimock relented, and after six months a dependable night nurse was hired. And the "pupil nurses" were able to get some sleep, and eventually to graduate. Linda, the first to enroll, was first to receive her diploma—which today is in the archives of the Smithsonian Institution.

After her year of training, she was offered several different positions, including one from her alma mater as head nurse. She wanted very much to stay with Dr. Dimock, but felt the need for her services was greater elsewhere. So she accepted a position as night supervisor at Bellevue Hospital in New York City. There she came under the direction of another woman who had much to teach her, not in nursing, but in the skill and intricacy of hospital administration.

Sister Helen, a nun of the All Saints Order, had studied the Nightingale System in London and had recently taken over supervision of the newly-established training school at Bellevue where until recently the "night watchers" and ward maid nurses had badly neglected the indigent patients in that large crowded institution. However, all that was soon to change under the strict supervision of the efficient Sister Helen and the arrival of a newly graduated night superintendent.

At Bellevue Linda came in contact with the poor and indigent from the slums. This was a new experience for her as most patients at the New England Hospital had been private patients, educated and refined. Here they came from the teeming tenements and littered



A physician teaches students proper method of applying bandages in this drawing of an early nurse training school class. (Courtesy of Garrand Publishing Co.)

slums of New York City. They included the desperate, the defeated, the drunken. At first she feared them, but then the true spirit of the "born nurse" prevailed, and she realized that these were the poor and the sick she had always sought to serve. She expressed, it this way:

But this feeling [of fear] soon passed away, giving place to one of profound pity, and later in many cases to true affection. There in the midst of all the sin and poverty were found real pearls: and no true woman can come in daily touch with a ward filled with patients without soon learning to look for and find the jewels, and thereby make of herself a stronger woman.

And a stronger woman she became as she championed the cause of these indigent patients against the sometimes tyrannical and bureaucratic inefficiency of administrative policies. Her earliest battle was waged over the policy

of turning off the gas lights immediately after the day nurses went off duty. Night nurses then had to care for patients under candlelight and each ward was allocated but two candles a week. At midnight all heat was turned off and the patients lay shivering in the dark until 3 a.m. when with loud hissing and banging of pipes the steam was turned on again. After one hectic experience, treating an accident victim under candlelight in the frigid cold, she found herself in Sister Helen's office pleading for the good nun's support in overturning this "cruel and inhumane practice".

"Go tell the warden, what you told me," said the nun. This Linda did, and although she had to promise never to use more gas than absolutely necessary, the night duty nurses at Bellevue never worked in the dark again.

It was during her duty at Bellevue that she devised the first method of charting and maintaining individual

medical records for each patient under her care. This is such standard hospital procedure today that it is difficult to imagine a time when it didn't exist, but until Linda Richards instituted such a system, all reports on each patient were relayed verbally to the doctor or oncoming duty nurse. Even the famed Nightingale System benefited from this particular innovation.

Another innovation that occurred during her term at Bellevue was adoption of student-nurse uniforms. Initially, just as during Linda's own training, a simple, washable calico dress was considered adequate attire. Then a suggestion was made for student uniforms. Perhaps it was Linda's idea, but more likely Sister Helen's. At first the students resisted, considering it a demeaning move to put them in a type of livery uniform. However, one class member, a tall beautiful young woman from an aristocratic family, must have been persuaded. One day after a short leave from the school, she appeared in a neatly tailored blue striped dress and a stylish white bonnet perched atop her auburn curls. She cut an attractive figure, and shortly thereafter, the other young students were all similarly attired. Linda Richards sensed the importance to the profession of nurse uniforms, and made them standard attire in her other supervisory assignments. In Japan she designed and sewed them herself.

In November, 1874 Linda was appointed Superintendent of the Boston Training School, later to evolve into the Massachusetts General Hospital. The training program there was floundering. The school had been in existence only a year, and two previous superintendents, although excellent nurses, had been unable to show satisfactory results. The committee running the school was considering closing it, but then Linda accepted the position, and during the next two and a half years, drawing on her administrative experience under Sister Helen, she gradually improved the program which eventually was praised as one of the best in the country.

Then, having accomplished her mission at Massachusetts General, Linda Richards characteristically was ready to seek new horizons. She had long cherished the idea of visiting St. Thomas's Hospital in London to study first-hand the Nightingale System at the hospital that Miss Nightingale herself had established after returning from her harrowing experiences in the Crimean War. Through correspondence of a hospital board committee with Florence Nightingale, arrangements were made for such a visit. It was like a dream come true for Linda when on April 1, 1877, she set sail for England

for seven months of intensive work and study.

At St. Thomas's she came under the direct supervision of one of the great hospital matrons of the time, perhaps all time, in the sternly efficient, self-disciplined, and appropriately named Mrs. Wardproper who was Miss Nightingale's personal choice to run St. Thomas's. In her book, Linda would later write of Mrs. Wardproper that she never saw her out of uniform, "... and she always wore black kid gloves, and was as much at home in writing in gloves as the ordinary individual without them."

Linda, a few years later, heard from a friend that Mrs. Wardproper had spoken most kindly of her saying that she thought Linda was a good woman to have gone over as the first American nurse, that she made no trouble and seemed to appreciate the advantages given her. These remarks pleased Linda, but in *The Story of Nursing*, author, Bertha Dodge wondered:

What had Mrs. Wardproper expected in an American nurse? A feathered Indian, perhaps? One can only be grateful that Linda Richards, all unknowing, was able to quiet her fears.

Given the choice of merely observing or actually working as a "probationer" (the British term for student nurse) Linda chose the latter. She found some of the customs strange, but she soon grew used to the cheerful, busy environment of a Nightingale hospital. She spent two fruitful months at St. Thomas's, working a week in each of eight different wards, observing surgical operations, attending clinics and lectures, attempting to absorb all the medical knowledge she possibly could.

However, the highlight of her entire stay took place a few days after her arrival, when she was invited to visit Florence Nightingale at her home. She hadn't expected that as Mrs. Wardproper had advised her that Miss Nightingale never received visitors—but the invitation came, and the first American nurse finally came face to face with her British counterpart and life-long heroine. In her autobiography she would write:

Many and varied blessings have come to me through the years of my hospital life, but never one greater than the privilege of having seen and known Miss Nightingale. I have never ceased to appreciate the benefits from that first visit. I was very sorry to leave, and very grateful for all the kindness received.

It was at this meeting that Miss Nightingale suggested that Linda also spend time at King's College Hospital and the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary.



Linda Richards as she appeared just prior to leaving for England in 1877. (Courtesy of Archives Potsdam Museum)

Prior to this her plans included only St. Thomas's. But with the "lady-in-chief", as she was always referred to by the staff at St. Thomas's, opening necessary doors, plans were quickly made for Linda to visit these hospitals as well.

At King's College Hospital she lived under the strict discipline of the St. John's Sisterhood, an Episcopal order in charge of nursing. There she learned the value of unquestioned discipline, even in trivial matters. On her first day of duty she was mildly reprimanded by the nun in charge when she unknowingly used a stairway reserved exclusively for doctors. She would later say that rules never bothered her or seemed irksome or out of place after learning discipline at the hands of the Sisters at King's College Hospital.

From there she went on to Edinburgh and the Royal Infirmary where the noted Dr. Joseph Lister was doing his historic work with antiseptic surgery.

It was his then radical assumption that microorganisms caused the preponderance of infections following most surgery, and he developed a method of performing surgery under a constant spray of carbolic acid. It was jokingly stated that before each operation he would address his fellow doctors with a solemn, "Gentlemen, Let us spray." A second method he later developed keeping harmful organisms away from the operating area entirely became known as aseptic surgery and was the forerunner of today's sterilization procedures. There she observed first-hand the latest methods then being used to prevent the spread of disease. Dr. Lister was away during her stay there, but his work was being carried on by his capable assistant, Dr. Joseph Bell, who gave weekly clinics exclusively for the nursing staff. Dr. Bell, a tall, rugged man with a brilliant inquiring mind, greatly inspired her. In this she was not alone, for this was the same Dr.

Bell who served as inspirational model for one of his medical students, Arthur Conan Doyle, in creating the famous fictional detective, Sherlock Holmes. It is not known whether Linda Richards ever knew of this strange coincidence.

On her return to London from Edinburgh Miss Nightingale had instructed her coachman to meet Linda at a small way station near Lea Hurst and bring her to her summer home for a few days visit and a final farewell. Linda was very pleased, and those few days remained in her memory forever. They were never to meet again but remained close and maintained a friendly correspondence for many years.

Upon her return from Europe in January, 1878, Miss Richards assumed the matronship of the Boston City Hospital where she accepted Dr. Cowles' offer to establish a nurse-training school. If she had rested a few months longer she might have avoided the physical breakdown that came within six months and lasted two years. But upon her recovery she resumed her position at Boston City Hospital in September, 1881. There, where 19 years earlier she had been so appalled at the incompetence of the untrained nursing staff, she brought that training school within three years up to a standard of excellence that made it one of the best in the world. This was the accomplishment both Dr. Cowles and Dr. Worcester called her greatest triumph. Perhaps it was. Then satisfied that her job in Boston City Hospital was complete, she again felt more needed elsewhere—this time on the other side of the world. So, in December, 1885, under the auspices of the American Board of Missions, she left for Japan to establish that country's first nurse-training school. She would be gone five years.

Linda Richards loved Japan, and her five years there were probably the happiest of her professional career. Arriving in January, 1886, she immediately undertook an intensive study of the language. In the fall she opened the nurse-training school at the Doshita Hospital in Kyoto. The school followed the same two-year program as American training schools and used translated American texts.

Initially, she had to teach through an interpreter, but soon mastered the language sufficiently to be able to instruct her students in their native tongue. She was impressed by the kindly little Japanese student nurses with their abundance of patience. "They are always cheerful, and courteous, and they win their way where they could not enforce it," she said. She did have problems getting them to understand their persuasive role in convincing male patients to follow doctors' instructions. It was counter to Japanese cul-

ture for a woman to give orders to a man, and in this regard she often had to intervene herself. Still, the Japanese women made excellent nurses, and Linda soon had them dressed in the traditional blue-striped uniform of the American training schools. The hospital was small and hospital beds limited, but Linda sent her students out to the homes of the sick where they provided excellent service. The small school grew and improved gradually. Shortly after Linda left for home, it was turned over to the Japanese authorities, and it continued to turn out well-trained nurses for many years.

However, the climate in Japan had weakened her. At the end of her five year commitment in March, 1891, she returned to America. There within a month she was back at work, this time in charge of the Philadelphia Visiting Nurse's Society, again a pioneer in a new and much-needed field. She had long been an advocate of home care for the sick, especially in large cities. Now she devoted all her skill and energy to this cause. However, at 50, and in weakened health she found after six months that she could no longer trudge the busy streets and climb long flights of tenement stairways carrying her heavy bag. Reluctantly she gave up this duty.

Subsequently, she founded a training school at Philadelphia's Methodist Episcopal Hospital and reorganized and strengthened those of the New England Hospital for Women and Children (her alma mater), the Brooklyn Homeopathic Hospital and the Hartford Hospital in Connecticut. Then followed a two year tour as superintendent of the training school at the University of Pennsylvania Hospital in Philadelphia.

Thereafter, she dedicated her efforts to still another new cause, improving standards of nursing care in mental hospitals. She served as director of training schools at the Taunton (Mass.) Insane Hospital (1899-1904), Worcester (Mass.) Hospital for the Insane (1904-1905) where she founded the school, and the Michigan Insane Asylum in Kalamazoo (1906-1909). Then she returned to the Taunton school for a year before her retirement in 1911 at age 70.

After retirement Linda Richards received a few early honors. Her book published in 1911 enjoyed moderate success, and the American Nurses Association had her likeness engraved on its corporate seal. But then she faded quickly from the professional scene. For a few years she lived with a cousin on a farm near Lowell, then with other relatives in Foxboro. In 1922 she was the honored guest at the 50th anniversary of the founding of the nursing school at the New England Hospital for Women and Children. The following summer

she appeared at the nurses association meeting in Swampscott where she had spoken briefly, yet so eloquently.

Shortly thereafter she suffered a severe stroke and was admitted to a nursing home in Foxboro. The New England Hospital staff, upon hearing of her illness, sent an ambulance and brought her home to the hospital that gave America its first trained nurse, and there they took care of her until she died on April 16, 1930. During the last five years of her life she was a total invalid. Yet until nearly the very end she maintained her ideal of the true nurse. A few days before her death she inquired from an attending nurse, "Do the nurses still perform their duties with nicety?" She seemed pleased when assured that indeed they still did—just as this gallant but forgotten lady had performed her duties with such special nicety for a lifetime.

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Press Coverage of the 1940 War Games

In response to Arthur Johnson's article in the April, 1990, number of *The Quarterly*, "When Roosevelt Came to the North Country," we recently received the materials printed below from a former contributor, Virginia Duffy McLoughlin, and her sister, Elizabeth Duffy Hawkins, whose grandparents and great grandparents, you might recall, had a farm for many years in North Lawrence. Their father, Ward E. Duffy, was in August, 1940, managing editor of the *Hartford (CT) Times*. He sent the copies of Associated Press photos to his family, then summering at Lake Ozonia, where they were in the midst of the "hostilities." He was also able to send his 18-year-old daughter Betty, then trying her hand at news coverage, with a regular staff reporter to cover the maneuvers of the First Army in St. Lawrence County under the command of Lieutenant General Hugh A. Drum.

The war games started in the middle of July and continued until the last day of August. Every day the Public Relations Division of the First Army Headquarters at Ogdensburg published a general information bulletin in addition to press memoranda that were more directly concerned with specific activities of the troops. Bulletin No. 30, August 14, 1940, for example, consisted of four pages. On the first were drawings of soldiers and their weapons in the Spanish-American War of 1898 and several paragraphs of commentary by General Drum making the point that the army in 1940 is not what it used to be. "Our soldiers must know not only the techniques and tactics of modern warfare and the use of cross-country routes and cover, but also how to operate tanks, how to handle airplanes, and how to fire modern weapons accurately. In other words, they must not only be field soldiers, but also competent mechanics and engineers." Pages 2 and 3 presented, in effect, the news of the day in brief: Nazi parachutists are reported to have landed in England; the Senate considers enabling the evacuation of English children to the US; in Washington Secretary of the Navy Knox argues for conscription; President Roosevelt urges college students to finish their education because the nation will need well-trained citizens; in New York City an unnamed man tries to buy information about the Brooklyn Navy Yard from a sailor; and so on. Announcements of transfers of officers, the danger of grass fires, band concerts in the Ogdensburg Park, and what was playing at the movie house—something like "When the Daltons Rode" with Randolph Scott and Kay Francis. A special press mem-

orandum for public as well as military distribution announced a Military Field Mass to be held on the football field at St. Lawrence University on Sunday, August 18, with General Drum in attendance and the Most Reverend John F. O'Hara, former president of Notre Dame University, delivering the sermon.

The last page of Bulletin 30 for August 14, 1940, was a supplementary list of additional press representatives observing the maneuvers of the First Army, about 70 newspaper and radio reporters, from the major networks and press services, papers from Washington, D.C. to Massachusetts, and of course about every village newspaper in the county. Without knowing the total count of newsmen, one can safely conclude

from this partial list that the press coverage of the maneuvers that summer really put St. Lawrence County on the map. Fledgling reporter Betty Duffy sent home a number of breathless accounts of her own attempts to locate and keep on top of the action of just the 169th from Connecticut. Whenever she did find them, in spite of false reports, "blown-out" bridges, and indeed invitations from young officers to lunch, they were invariably "in reserve," until of course the day "the war ended."

First Army Headquarters in Ogdensburg seems to have known pretty clearly what was going on, or should have been, at almost any hour of the day or night. The following is a typical example of a tactical press release.

**PRESS SECTION
PUBLIC RELATIONS DIVISION
FIRST ARMY MANEUVERS, 1940
OGDENSBURG, N.Y.**

PRESS MEMORANDUM

NO. T-4

8-15-40

10:30 P.M.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

(FOR FURTHER DETAILS SEE MAP IN TACTICAL SECTION)

I CORPS

No report since release of Bulletin T-3

II CORPS

Forward elements of the opposing Divisions, 44th (Red) and the advance cavalry of the 27th Division (Blue) gained contact late this afternoon along Grass River east and west of Russell.

Strenuous fighting occurred southwest of Russell between advanced infantry elements of the 87th Brigade and Mechanized Cavalry Units of the Blue force. The fight for the line of the Grass River between these covering detachments of the opposing divisions was still going on at dark. The advantage seemed temporarily at least to be with the elements of the Red 44th Division.

In rear of these covering forces, the bulk of the main bodies of both divisions was bivouaced in wooded areas around which anti-mechanized units had thrown a perimeter outpost line.

Respective Division Staffs were busy developing the basic decisions of opposing commanders into mature plans of operation for tomorrow. Sufficient is known of these plans to indicate that a major engagement will be fought tomorrow morning, August 16, at daylight, in the vicinity of Kimball Hill and along the line of the Grass River. Air Units were active for both forces.

III CORPS

The Blue 29th Division drove in advance elements of the Red 28th Division and pushed on north of the Flackville road. As night fell the Blue 58th Brigade was facing the Red 55th Brigade about two and a half miles north of Flackville and about six miles from the St. Lawrence River. Off to the east the Blue 91st Brigade was facing the 56th Brigade along the ridges about two miles south of Lisbon. Security detachments of the Red and Blue forces were engaged off the Blue east flank and north of Woodbridge Corners.

A motorized reconnaissance detachment of the Red 28th Division had marched unopposed to a position about two miles to the east and south of the Blue right flank.

Reconnaissance and security detachments of both Blue and Red forces continued active during the early evening hours. Some elements of both Blue and Red Divisions were still moving forward on the road. Preparations for an early attack, probably at daybreak, were evident in both divisions.

A combat patrol of the Blue 58th Brigade had penetrated between the Red 55th and 56th Brigades and at last report was about one half mile in rear of the Red front line.



"Brass Hats" are shown during a discussion of war maneuvers of the First Army at Winthrop, N.Y. on Aug. 9. In front of the tank are (left to right): Brig. Gen. Karl Truesdale, Commander of the First Division; Col. James Muir of the 26th Infantry; Col. Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., also of the 26th Infantry; and Brig. Gen. S.M. Harrington of the Marine Corps, attached to the Boston Company. New England troops joined in the maneuvers. (Associated Press Photo, August 9, 1940—Courtesy of Virginia D. McLoughlin)



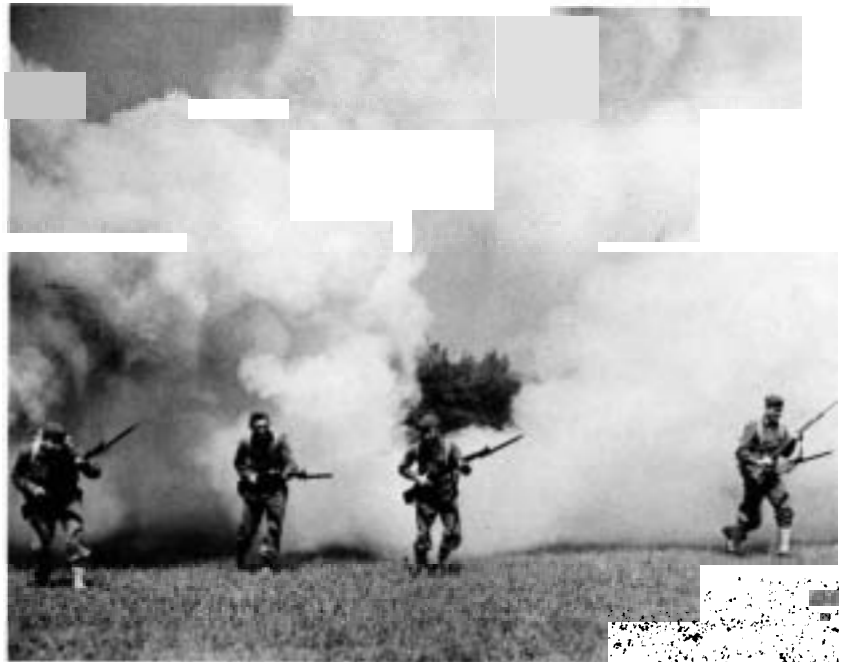
Three tanks in the foreground, reinforced by a "tank" from the service of supplies in the background, are shown in "action" as an "enemy" plane flies overhead during maneuvers Aug. 9 at Winthrop, N.Y. This picture depicts maneuvering by the 45th Tank Company from Hartford, Conn. The First Army combined with New England troops in maneuvers. (Associated Press Photo, August 9, 1940—Courtesy of Virginia D. McLoughlin)



With a 40 pound radio outfit strapped to his back, Private John Gallagher of Arlington, Mass., A National Guardsman, stays in two-way communication with his headquarters as he walks the roads and fields of the Ogdensburg, N.Y. war games area. Gallagher is shown with his outfit Aug. 13. (Associated Press Photo, August 13, 1940—Courtesy of Virginia D. McLoughlin) Betty Duffy identifies the site as Route 11B between Potsdam and Hopkinton. She recalls eating lunch with the troops in a field on the north side of the road.



Troops are shown racing after the "enemy" behind four dummy "tanks" and three real ones during First Army maneuvers Aug. 9 at Winthrop, N.Y. New England troops joined in the maneuvers. (Associated Press Photo, August 9, 1940—Courtesy of Virginia D. McLoughlin)



Troops are shown practicing an advance through a smoke screen during First Army maneuvers Aug. 9 at Winthrop, N.Y. (Associated Press Photo, August 9, 1940—Courtesy of Virginia D. McLoughlin)

Mrs. McLoughlin and Mrs. Hawkins have made a gift to the St. Lawrence County Historical Association of the photos used in this publication.

The 106th New York Volunteers in the Last Year of the Civil War: A Family's Loss and the Nation's Loss of its President

by Captain Charles T. Creekman Jr. USN

*The following is the last two chapters of a longer work by Captain Creekman entitled **The 106th New York Volunteers: A Civil War Heritage** (1985), which is both a brief history of the regiment formed at Ogdensburg in August, 1862, and an account of the service in the Civil War of three of his St. Lawrence County ancestors: Lieutenant Charles William Shepard, born at Ogdensburg 24 October 1842, a clerk in Morristown upon his enlistment at the age of 19; Colonel Edward Christopher James (1841-1901), born in Ogdensburg, where he was a journalist when he enlisted at the age of 21; and Captain Alfred Ives Hooker, born at Morristown 8 December 1836, a merchant when he enlisted at the age of 25. Colonel James does not figure in these episodes of the history. The second part of this article is primarily a letter and a journal of Charles Shepard's sister, Julia Adelaide Shepard (1840-1929). Their sister, Laura Susanna Shepard, (1853-1922) married Henry Augustus Chapman (1850-1916), which couple became the parents of Charles Shepard Chapman (1879-1962), the well-known Morristown artist, and George Augustus Chapman, II (1876-1950) who was the father of Virginia Chapman Creekman (b. 1923), the mother of the author of this article. We are grateful to Mrs. Virginia Chapman and her son, the author, for permission to print papers in their possession, and we look forward to publishing more of Captain Creekman's history of the 106th Volunteers in the coming year.*

The Editors

Part I

In late 1863 the Federal Army went into winter quarters, with the 106th located near Brandy Station. Sporadic skirmishing continued during the winter, with Lt. Charles W. Shepard of Morristown reporting to his family some excitement in February 1864 as the Army staged a demonstration along the Rapidan.¹

HEAD QUARTERS,
COMPY I, 106TH REGIMENT,
NEW YORK VOL. INFANTRY
Camp 106 NY Brandy Sta Va
Feb 14 1863 [actually 1864]

Dear Mother

We have had some excitement during the past week. Last Friday at 4 AM we received orders to be ready to march at 7. So all packed up in a hurry no one knowing whether forward or backward we were to go. All day the booming of distant cannon was very distinct and at 5 PM we received orders to "Fall in" the noise of a distant battle was very distinct and the sight of the different columns winding across the fields was rather warlike. we arrived at Culpepper about dark and marched forward in the mud and rain till about midnight, when we halted thru ourselves down on rubbers and rested for the morrows battle. Dawn again started us forward and came to a halt about a mile from the Rapidan. Rested here all day and just at dusk fell in to go back. this was the hardest march we ever made about 15 miles, mud to the knees. well by noon the next day all were in camp and Tuesday started for pickett lost our way travelled about 20 miles staid out three days and are again home. OK. The result of the fighting was about give and take, our men charged thro' the river up to the chin, and a great many were drowned but the accounts are so exaggerated that we have to consult our papers for the fact's. the 3rd Corps were

not engaged. But the old boy's laugh about it and have given to Maj Gen Sedgewick the factitious nickname of "Jhonny Stick in the mud" as they said when we came back from Mine Run that that was the "soft bread retreat" Yours of the 5th with Julias and the pictures of Judge P and lady came duly to hand.

I am very glad of the pictures as they look homelike and are so natural the papers come regularly to hand and are carefully read by myself as well as others. I suppose Uncle B is in O by this time I am sorry he could not come down to see the Army of the P. as I am sure he would not regret it.

I have not as yet seen Mrs Capt H, but Capt Robertson of O, 106th Cleveland QM Sergeant, AMWilson of Depeyster and Wells of Lisbon are now in camp.

We had a *white glove* parade last night, to lionize some ladies visiting Col Smith Brig Cmdnt' they thot it would be a pity for bullets to come amongst so nice a Regt' but I expect they will before long Excuse this and attribute it to a scratching pen

Yours truly
CWShepard

With the VI Corps, February 1864 - April 1865

As the Army of the Potomac prepared to take the offensive under Grant in the spring of 1864, some important organizational changes were made. In order to consolidate the five infantry corps into three, the I and III Corps were abolished and the 106th in Morris' Brigade was transferred with the rest of their division to form Rickett's 3rd Division of Sedgewick's VI Corps.²

In May 1864 the Army of the Potomac began its last great drive to defeat Lee's Army of Northern Virginia. Within the space of one month the 106th took part in innumerable skirmishes and three major battles.



2nd Lieutenant Charles W. Shepard of the 106th N.Y. Volunteer Infantry Regiment was killed June 1, 1864 at Cold Harbor. (Courtesy of the author)

In the Wilderness, 5-7 May, the 106th played a central part in blunting Confederate General John B. Gordon's surprise flanking effort on the evening of 6 May, as Brigade Commander Morris personally led the 106th and two other regiments to support the right wing of the Federal Army.³ At Spotsylvania Court House (8-21 May) the 106th joined the VI Corps in the savage fighting around the salient in the Confederate



The Battle of Cold Harbor, June 1, 1864. (Reprinted from Frank Leslie's Famous Leaders and Battle Scenes of the Civil War, New York, 1896—Courtesy of the Canton Free Library)

lines known as the "bloody angle." Finally, the opposing armies met at Cold Harbor where, late in the afternoon of June 1st, Rickett's Division was the only VI Corps unit to break the Confederate line.⁴

During this assault, Charles W. Shepard, out in front of his company, was struck in the head by a rifle bullet and died instantly. His family didn't hear of his death until the 8th of June, and learned the details in a letter from "a young Irish lad" of the 106th to his family:

Camp on Battle Field
12 miles from Richmond
June 2d 1864

Dear Brother:

You are all anxious to hear from me and I am very anxious to hear from you. Brother I have cried to-day and I mourn the loss of some of the bravest men that ever handled a musket. yesterday a terrible battle was fought Our loss must be 5000. The 106th is all cut to peices. Last night while the fight was raging the hottest an order came to Col Townsend saying "You will charge the enemies works" Townsend rushed to the front of his regiment Macdonald to the left. The Col says. "Boys of New York you are ordered to charge. Let every man do his work well." A cheer was his answer. On went the brave boys to victory or death. Oh God! but it was a fearful charge! Grape and canister & bullets thinned the ranks of the brave. They captured the first line of rifle pits and 250 prisoners just as soon as over the pits Townsend cheering his band falls dead. Lieut Banes falls dead, Lieut Munsen falls dead, Capt Mc Broome falls wounded. The prisoners sent to the rear and our band all cut up An order came—the 106th charge and capture a second line of breast-works. It was hard but the men went willingly. "Forward" cries one Adjutant. *A yell.* They charge awfully. The

men fall like rain, but the boys press onward. Lieut Shepard of Ogdensburgh falls dead. Lieut Blackman falls dead. The boys are in the works Cheer after cheer rends the air from the small band. There was nothing in the rear to support the regiment. An order came for them to fall back. They did so. Macdonald is missing I expect wounded & prisoner Lieut Hepburn wounded. Sergeant Major Lang mortally wounded Lieut Snyder killed. The loss of the 106th between 100 and 150 killed and wounded. The 142 was fighting along side of us. Charley Shepard was shot in the temple. The boys mourn for Townsend and Macdonald and the rest of the officers.

Two subsequent letters gave Shepard's family additional details:

City Point Va
June 19 18/64 8 P.M.

My Dear Friend Sheppard

I recd yours this morning and as I was unwell I kept My bed all day and to night I am down to answer your Letter and give you all the Information in my power in relation to poor Chas he Fell while Fighting nobly at the head of his Company he discharged his duty so Say all those who were present at the terrible charge of June 1st his body was Found on the 3 day and buried alongside of Lieut Bane his body was to Long in the sun to be sent home but at some other time he can be found it was at the risk of their Lives that some of his company crawled out to the Enemys Lines and brought his body in poor Chas if he had Lived until after the Battle was over he was going to be promoted his Company suffered very much in the Charge the Bulk of his who are Left regret his death as they said they did not know his wirth untill after he was gone from them a thing which is to often the case but one thing is certain Chas was gaining friends very fast. I remember when I Last talked with him he was very Lively more so than

usual acted different was not in that homesick mood which you will so often see among Soldiers he was feeling very well the private who stood at his side when he fell is sitting at my side now so that it will be rather hard to put together as he says that the Col gave the order to charge and Chas Drew his Sword and stepped out in front to repeat the order when he was shot through the Brain Ball going in in front he never spoke poor Fellow he is gone to him that doeth all things well he is mustered into service with a General who will show no Partiality but will reward according to works his Effects has gone to Adj Lieut Aldrich who is acting Quartermaster of 106 in my place as I am acting Brigade QM 1st Brigade Lieut had taken an inventory of all and Put them into his valise but must wait till we can get them to Washington as no Express is running and we cannot get any thing through we will send all Baggage of Disceased officers at once just as soon as we can Chas they tell me had 18 dollars in his pocket but they took it from him his grave is marked with a Board and will be easily identified Now Friend Sheppard I believe I have given you all that has come to my Knowledge in relation to your son and permit me to Say that I Sympathise with you and his afflicted mother and His Much Loved Sister for Chas Loved to talk of his home and friends we sat many an hour talking over home and friends he was affectionate Kind hearted and unassuming and suffice it to say that he died Lamented by Both his Company and all his Brother officers now if you will be kind Enough to Remember Me to My wife say that I am well and will write her tomorrow if nothing happens Divs moves to night and we will be Quite Likely to have to move before morning Now I will bid you good Night and May God help you his parents to bear this great calamity

I am r, M P. Stohenen

106th Regiment N Y V I
August 9th 1864

Chas Sheppard Esq.

Dear Sir

Yours under date July 28th 1864 is duly to hand, I would have replied so soon as I received it, but I was not then able to give you all the information required respecting your son's effects. I took the first opportunity to see our acting Quarter Master, under whose care the Officers baggage is placed, and he told me that Lieut Sheppard has 2 Valises, but that one was completely useless, and he had taken everything out that he wanted and had thrown the Valise away. He also told me that he had forwarded to you everything in his possession belonging to Lieut Sheppard. During an active campaign, there are two wagons allowed to each regiment for Baggage, those wagons are with the train, and it sometimes happens that they do not come up to the regiments for two or three weeks, and then the Officers take out what change of clothing they require, and in most cases those they take off are thrown away, for it is impossible to get them washed. Such has been the case during this summer's campaign, more than ever before, both Officers and men have been compell'd to throw away their clothing for want of time and convenience to clean them. I saw your Son's body recovered, it had lain on the field two days before we could get far enough advanced to recover it, but soon as the bodies were perceived a small party went out early in the morning and brought in several and among them was Lieut Sheppard's. He had on at the time, his round Jacket, a pair of light blue officers pants and a fine flannel shirt, all of which were buried with him. He had on neither Sword or revolver, I presume the Rebs had taken those from him as they did all others they could get, also all ornaments such as finger rings, Corps pins & badges. We buried him behind our line of works and placed a head board with his name and regiment upon it. He lies beside Lieut James Bayne whose body was recovered a short time previously. Had there been any possibility of doing it his remains would have been sent home, but I assure you it could not be done. John Coughlin is mistaken in supposing the baggage wagons to be under my care, but they never come to the regiment without my seeing them, and I looked the wagon over 2 days ago, and could not find anything belonging to the Lieut left in it. If I can give you any further information respecting the matter I will not fail to do so, or if there is any thing you would wish to know respecting him, I beg you will not hesitate to apply to me, for I assure you I shall be happy to oblige you if it is in my power to do so. You have Sir one consolation, and that is the Knowledge that your son when alive did his duty nobly, and when he died it was at the head of his company.

I have the honor to be
Sir
Yours very truly
James Green

The Union Army's determined advance forced the Confederates to continue falling back until in June Grant faced Lee's troops dug in at Petersburg. With the prospect of a long siege before

them (the futility of assaulting well-prepared earthworks having been amply demonstrated over the previous month's campaigning), the Army of the Potomac settled into their trenches. In an effort to relieve the pressure of his army and distract the Federal high command by threatening Washington and Maryland, Lee sent General Jubal Early down the Shenandoah Valley. Grant detached the Third Division, VI Corps to join with Washington Garrison troops in opposing Early. Embarking in transports at City Point, Va. on July 6th, the Division landed in Baltimore the 8th in time to march west and clash with the advancing Confederates at the battle of Monocacy on 9 July. Among other casualties, Capt. Alfred Ives Hooker of the 106th and Morristown was killed during the battle.

The rest of the VI Corps joined the Third Division and blunted Early's drive. Along with other units now comprising the Army of the Shenandoah under Sheridan, they relentlessly pursued the Confederates up the Valley. The 106th reports of the battles of Opequon and Fisher's Hill describe the Union success:⁵

*Reports of Capt. Peter Robertson,
One hundred and sixth New York Infantry,
of operations September 19-22 and
October 19.*

**HDQRS. 106TH NEW YORK
VOLUNTEER INFANTRY,**

September 27, 1864.

CAPTAIN: In obedience to orders from headquarters First Brigade, Third Division, Sixth Army Corps, calling for a synopsis of the operations of this command in the engagements of the 19th and 22d of September, I have the honor to forward the following report:

At 2 a.m. the morning of the 19th of September this regiment, with the brigade, broke camp at Clifton Heights and took up the line of march in a southwesterly direction for the Opequon Creek, keeping to the right of the Berryville and Winchester pike. At 7 a.m. cannonading was heard in the direction of the crossing, and it was soon found that the cavalry had effected a crossing and forced the enemy back a distance of two miles or more, when the infantry immediately crossed, and following the pike a distance of one mile and a half or more we took up a position on its left, with the right of our regiment resting on the left of the front line of the Second Brigade of the Third Division. Here we remained until about 10 a.m., when the charge was sounded and the regiment moved forward in fine style under a heavy fire from two of the enemy's batteries, which made sad havoc in our ranks. Notwithstanding this terrible fire of shot and shell the men kept steadily on, drove the batteries from their positions, and in conjunction with the rest of the brigade would have captured them had we been supported on the right by the Nineteenth Corps. The failure of this obliged us to fall back some distance. Rallying again, we regained our old position under a heavy fire,

capturing in this charge about sixty prisoners, forty of whom we hold receipts for. Holding the position we had thus regained, heavy musketry was kept up till 4 p.m., when, the lines being reformed, we made a second charge, which decided the action of the day. In each charge the One hundred and sixth was in the front line, and too much praise cannot be given to both officers and men for their bravery and steadiness under a murderous fire from both front and flank. In both charges we lost 2 officers wounded and 51 enlisted men killed and wounded, which attests the hard fighting we sustained. We went into the fight with about 200 muskets. At sunset we entered Winchester and rested for the night.

In the fight of Fisher's Hill this regiment was again in the front line and participated in all the fighting of the brigade and division. This command assisted in the capture of the fort near Fisher's Hill and captured one Parrott gun from the enemy and fifty-eight prisoners, for which we hold receipts. Since then, captain, the actions of this command are well known to you, and in connection with its sister regiments have, I venture to say, reflected high credit to the brigade and its commander.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,
PETER ROBERTSON,
Captain, Commanding Regiment.

Taken by surprise by a determined Confederate assault on 19 October the Union Army, rallied personally by Sheridan on his ride from Winchester, inflicted the final defeat on Early's Army:⁶

**HDQRS. 106th NEW YORK
VOLUNTEER INFANTRY,**

November 1, 1864.

CAPTAIN: In obedience to orders from headquarters First Brigade, Third Division, Sixth Army Corps, calling for a synopsis of the operations of this regiment during the action of the 19th of October, I have the honor to forward the following report:

At daybreak on the morning of the 19th of October, this regiment, with the brigade, was aroused by heavy musketry firing on our left front, which proved to be an attack in force by the enemy on the left of the Eighth Corps. Reveille was immediately sounded, and shortly afterward musketry firing was heard on our right and center. The order to strike tents was then sounded from brigade headquarters, and shortly after orders were received to stand to arms. The brigade was then formed into line, and stood to arms for a few minutes, when orders came for the brigade to move, which it did by the right flank, filing right, and formed into line, fronting toward the Middletown pike. After remaining in this position a short time the brigade was moved to its first line again. It was then moved again, and formed line of battle with its right near the Middletown pike and fronting toward Strasburg. Here it was broken through and driven back some distance by the retreating columns of the Eighth and Nineteenth Corps, but rallying again, they succeeded in forming a junction with the Second Brigade of the division, when some sharp fighting ensued, the division falling back in good order, closely contesting every foot of ground. This regiment, with part of the brigade, supported Battery

M, (Fifth U.S. Artillery,) and succeeded in recapturing two of their pieces of artillery which had been captured from them by the enemy in the early part of the action. This regiment, with the brigade and corps, continued to fall back slowly until beyond Middletown, when the advance of the enemy was checked. When the advance upon the enemy's lines by our troops was ordered by Major-General Sheridan, this regiment was in the front line, which position it continued to occupy during all the subsequent charges made upon the lines of the retreating enemy.

This regiment lost during the action its commanding officer and 2 line officers wounded, also 8 enlisted men killed on the field, and 42 enlisted men wounded.

This regiment had about forty-five recruits, most of whom had joined the regiment only two days previous, and who behaved all through the action in the most praiseworthy manner.

Both officers and men of this and other regiments of the brigade deserve great praise for their cool and steady bravery during the action. The great number of casualties in a regiment so small as the One hundred and sixth New York Volunteer Infantry plainly shows how stubborn the contest was on that eventful day.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,
PETER ROBERTSON,
Captain, Commanding Regiment.

With the last Valley campaign over, the VI Corps returned to the Petersburg siege lines in December 1864 and went into winter quarters. Sporadic skirmishes and feints characterized the trench warfare until April 1865 when the final assault drove Lee's Army from both Petersburg and Richmond.⁷

*Reports of Col. Andrew N. McDonald,
One hundred and Sixth New
York Infantry.*

**HDQRS. 106TH REGIMENT
NEW YORK VOLUNTEER INFTRY.,**

April 9, 1865.

MAJOR: I have the honor to report that the One hundred and sixth Regiment New York Volunteer Infantry left its camp on the morning of the 2d of April, 1865, and with the rest of the brigade participated in the assault upon the enemy's lines. This regiment, with the Tenth Vermont Volunteer Infantry, formed the first line of battle for the brigade and were the first to enter the enemy's lines, assisting to capture about fifteen guns and a large number of prisoners. After the main line of the enemy had been carried the regiment was reformed and wheeled to the left, advancing up the line of works, taking several batteries. The regimental colors were the first to be planted on the second battery taken from the enemy.

The loss in this regiment during the engagement was 9 enlisted men killed and 33 wounded.

The regiment participated in all the movements of the day, building a line of breast-works in front of the town of Petersburg at night.

In the operations of the day this regiment was commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Briggs, who was ably assisted by Maj. E. M. Paine, and I would most respectfully

request that these officers be recommended for their gallantry and the manner in which they accomplished the duty assigned them. The line officers, without exception, were active and efficient during the entire operations.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,
A. N. McDONALD,
Colonel, Commanding.

In hot pursuit of Lee's retreating Army, the 106th fought its last battle of the war at Sailor's Creek:⁸

**HEADQUARTERS 106TH NEW YORK
VOLUNTEERS,**

April 10, 1865.

MAJOR: I have the honor to make the following report of the operations of this regiment since the morning of the 3d of April until the evening of the 9th of April, 1865:

Leaving the strong lines of works, which we threw up before the city of Petersburg on the night of the 2d, we commenced on the morning of the 3d a series of rapid and fatiguing marches, taking a westerly direction and following closely on the heels of the demoralized and retreating rebels. Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday wore away with no incidents of special importance and no battles. Thursday, about 4 p.m., we came suddenly upon the enemy, when, the brigade breaking into a column of regiments, we commenced one of the finest and most successful charges in which it was ever our lot to participate. My regiment was the third line, and gallantly and steadily did it move forward, forgetting all the pains of blistered feet and cramped and stiffened limbs in the excitement of the coming contest. The enemy opened a brisk and heavy fire; still we pressed on, driving them rapidly back for nearly a mile and a half. Here the enemy, taking advantage of a strong position on the opposite side of Sailor's Creek, made a desperate stand to prevent the capture of their trains. My regiment was now placed in the first line of battle, and moving rapidly forward, we commenced crossing the creek under a galling musketry fire from the enemy. The ground on both sides of the creek was very soft and marshy, the men frequently sinking to their hips in its miry depths. Here we had 11 men wounded, but none killed. Moving rapidly around to the right after crossing, we were soon on the enemy's left flank, when we were stopped in our gallant advance by the surrender of the enemy.

The conduct of both the officers and men of this regiment was highly meritorious. Early Friday morning we again resumed the pursuit, marching through the village of Farmville, where we camped for the night. Saturday the pursuit was kept up, and Sunday till about 2 p.m., when we halted near Clover Hill, and here received the glorious intelligence that Lee had surrendered his whole army. This regiment still remains encamped near Clover Hill.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,
A. N. McDONALD
Colonel, Commanding Regiment.

Lee surrendered on 9 April 1865—the war was over. The 106th went home, and in June 1865, was mustered out of U.S. Service.

Part II

Julia's Odyssey, April-May 1865

The story doesn't end quite yet, for Charles Shepard's hasty grave on the remote Cold Harbor battlefield led his sister Julia on a journey south to recover his body for reburial at home in New York. En route she stopped off in Washington, DC and stayed with relatives. One evening she attended a White House reception, and then on the night of 14 April she went to Ford's Theater to see "Our American Cousin." It was during that performance, of course, that John Wilkes Booth assassinated President Lincoln, and Julie described the experience in a letter home to her father:⁹

"Hopeton" near Washington April 16th, 1865

Dear Father:

It is Friday night and we are at the theatre. Cousin Julia has just told me that the President is in yonder upper right hand private box so handsomely decked with silken flags festooned over a picture of Washington. The young and lovely daughter of Senator Harris is the only one of the party we can see, as the flags hide the rest. But we know that "Father Abraham" is there; like a father watching what interests his children, for their pleasure rather than his own. It has been announced in the papers he would be there. How sociable it seems, like one family sitting around their parlor fire. How different this from the pomp and show of monarchical Europe. Every one has been so jubilant for days, since the surrender of Lee, that they laugh and shout at every clownish witticism. One of the actresses, whose part is that of a very delicate young lady, talks of wishing to avoid the draft, when her lover tells her "not to be alarmed for there is no more draft," at which the applause is long and loud. The American cousin has just been making love to a young lady, who says she will never marry but for love, yet when her mother and herself find he has lost his property they retreat in disgust at the left of the stage, while the American cousin goes out at the right. We are waiting for the next scene.

The report of a pistol is heard....Is it all in the play? A man leaps from the President's box, some ten feet, on to the stage. The truth flashes upon me. Brandishing a dagger he shrieks out "The South is avenged," and rushes through the scenery. No one stirs. "Did you hear what he said, Julia? I believe he has killed the President." Miss Harris is wringing her hands and calling for water. Another instant and the stage is crowded—officers, policemen, actors and citizens, "Is there a surgeon in the house?" they say. Several rush forward and with superhuman efforts climb up to the box. Minutes are hours, but see! they are bringing him out. A score of strong arms bear Lincoln's loved form along. A glimpse of a ghastly face is all as they pass along....Major Rathbone, who was of their party, springs forward to support [Mrs. Lincoln], but cannot. What is it? Yes, he too has been stabbed. Somebody says "Clear the house," so every one else repeats "Yes, clear the house." So slowly one party



The assassination of President Lincoln at Ford's Theatre on the night of April 14, 1865. (Reprinted from Harper's Weekly, April 29, 1865)

after another steals out. There is no need to hurry. On the stairs we stop aghast and with shuddering lips—"Yes, see, it is our President's blood" all down the stairs and out upon the pavement. It seemed sacrilege to step near. We are in the street now. They have taken the President into the house opposite. He is alive, but mortally wounded. What are those people saying. "Secretary Seward and his son have had their throats cut in their own house." Is it so? Yes, and the murderer of our President has escaped through a back alley where a swift horse stood awaiting him. Cavalry come dashing up the street and stand with drawn swords before yon house. Too late! too late! What mockery armed men are now. Weary with the weight of woe the moments drag along and for hours delicate women stand clinging to the arms of their protectors, and strong men throw their arms around each other's neck and cry like children, and passing up and down enquire in low agonized voices "Can he live? Is there no hope?" They are putting out the street lamps now. "What a shame! not now! not to-night!" There they are lit again. Now the guard with drawn swords forces the crowd backward. Great, strong Cousin Ed says "This unnerves me; let's go up to Cousin Joe's." We leave Julia and her escort there and at brother Joe's gather together in an upper room and talk and talk with Dr. Webb and his wife who were at the theatre. Dr. W. was one of the surgeons who answered the call. He says "I asked Dr. _____ when I went in what it was, and putting his hand on mine he said, 'There!' I looked and it was 'brains.'"

After a while Julia and Mr. W. came in and still we talked and listened to the cavalry rushing through the echoing street. Joe was determined to go out, but his wife couldn't endure the thought of any one going out of the house. It was only in the early hours of

the dawn that the gentlemen went to lie down, but Julia sat up in a rocking chair and I lay down on the outside of the bed beside Cousin Ginny for the rest of the night, while Cousin Joe and his wife's young brother sat nodding in their chairs opposite. There were rooms waiting for us but it seemed safer to be together. He was still living when we came out to Hopeton, but we had scarcely choked down our breakfast next morning when the tolling bells announced the terrible truth.

Last Thursday evening we drove to the city, and all along our route the city was one blaze of glorious light. From the humble cabin of the contraband [a former slave who had fled to the North] to the brilliant White House light answered light down the broad avenue. The sky was ablaze with bursting rockets. Calcium lights shone from afar on the public buildings. Bonfires blazed in the streets and every device that human Yankee ingenuity could suggest in the way of mottoes and decoration made noon of midnight. Then as the candles burned low and the rockets ceased, we drove home through the balmy air and it seemed as though Heaven smiled upon the rejoicings, and Nature took up the illumination with a glory of moonlight that transcended all art.

To-day I have been to church through the same streets and the suburbs with the humble cottages that were so bright that night shone through the murky morning, heavy with black hangings, and on and on, down the streets only the blackness of darkness. The show of mourning was as universal as the glorying had been, and when we were surrounded by the solemn and awe-stricken congregation in the church, it seemed as though my heart had stopped beating. I feel like a frightened child. I wish I could go home and have a good cry. I can't bear to

be alone. You will hear all this from the papers, but I can't help writing it for things seen are mightier than things heard. It seems hard to write now. I dare not speak of our great loss. Sleeping or waking, that terrible scene is before me.

Despite the tragedy, Julia continued south, arriving by steamer in Richmond on May 12, just a month after the end of the war. Fragments of her diary describe the scene and her movements.

May 11th '65

Left Washington 11 a m arriving at Baltimore for dinner at Eutaw House with Lieut Hall & bride Thunder storm on Chesapeake Bay all night.

May 12th

Hurried out before breakfast to see Fortress Monroe. Mr. Knowles brot us some green box as a trophy Change boats here Pass ancient Jamestown and sail up the serpentine route of the muddy James Meet boats loaded with Shermans boys going home will wave handkerchiefs they hurra. At City Point a fine looking body of negro soldiers are disembarking. At Hamsons landing a wharf runs out from the sandy beach The Hamson mansion a large brick building stands back from the shore. Sunken steamers & other obstructions along our route Yankees have a little flag on them. Butters watch tower seen from three different places Also Dutch gap. After going seven miles around come to it again. Taury Bluff Hihen's landing Chafllins farm At Richmond just as the sun is sinking Gen Patrick on dashing black horse We all have to register our names & residences and getting into an ambulance ride to Mr Knowles residence on 7th street

May 13th

Drove out past Jefferson Davis house which is heavily draped in mourning for Lincoln, now occupied by Gen Halleck At the corner of Grace & 94th street we stop while Sherman's boys go marching on beside us. We waved our handkerchiefs & clap our hands as the battle torn flags are carried by. The soldiers smile and present colors, a compliment only paid to Generals Are introduced to Mr & Mrs. Van Lew Some of the genuine F.F.V.'s who have been true to the Union thro all. Then past a church where Patrick Henry used to attend in the yard of which he made the celebrated speech. To Church Hill called the Lovers retreat a most romantic spot. A group of Sesesh ladies in deep mourning sit weeping while watching Sherman's army crossing on a pontoon bridge beneath. Then past Battery 4 of the river defences to where Confederate soldiers are thickly buried while beside are Federal graves fenced in by Christian commission. Past negro pens on the Shockhol creek. The African



Julia Shepard in her later years. (Courtesy of the author)

church of 3000 members The monumental church on the side of the Theatre where 600 were burnt. 1825

Sunday May 14th '65

Attended Dr More's church The minister prayed for *those who bear rule* over us but not the President of the U. S. Blue coats & grey were sitting side by side but most of the women dress in black & are thickly veiled. One whom Mr Knowles knew drew herself back as we passed down the aisle saying "I don't want to touch them" We went to the African church in the afternoon to hear the singing & were amused by the grotesque costumes of the hundreds of negros. Coming home thro the streets dilapidated Rebs on crutches sat scowling on their doorsteps while unbleached America went rollicking past singing

"Down with the traitor

"Up with the star"

Everybody was talking about the news of the capture of Jefferson Davis which has just come. A Mr Mason who just called said he heard the news of the capture just as Gen Lee passed. Lee stooped to hear & then passed by with a sneer Mr Yale a young gentleman born & bred up in Richmond called also. Mr Morton brot me a bouquet from Miss Van Lew of lovely roses

May 15th '65

Thro Franklin st to Hollywood cemetery. There we saw the iron catafalque over the granite tomb of Monroe. And a magnificent view of Belle Isle The river runs up hill at this point Here we met

two soldiers who had been confined five months in Belle Isle prison Getting into the carriage we drove to Mrs Yarness one of the true and tried Unionists who gave us most beautiful roses Then to Gamble Hill where we alighted for another view of the burnt district and saw the castellated cottage Mr Pratts Tacon style of 16 century Over the pontoon bridge to Manchester where are 9 story mills with confederate grey cloth yet drying on the dye racks. Then up thro the massive ruins of the late fire the walls 5 bricks thick past castle Thunder a time stained building to Libby prison We entered and were taken thro the wide low rooms with grated windows. Shown the hole thro the wall and the tunnel that came up on the opposite side of the street and the broken bar of a tower window thro which Yanner the previous keeper for the Rebs escaped the other night; but he is just re-taken somewhere out of town. Giving the guard some of our roses we drove to Miss Van Lew She was not able to see us but we waited for her on the spacious verandah from which was a most magnificent view way down the river James. Saw a book of painted flowers over two hundred years old. Old family portraits, and a likeness of Napoleon & Eugenie they brot from France which was lovely. Past a low stone house with dormer windows where George Washington lived at one time. Past the large stone church Mr Knowles attended which burnt from the steeple taking fire first [the remainder is

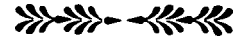
missing]...

Accompanied by soldiers of the 106th (who gave her as a memento a blue felt Greek cross—the 3rd Division, VI Corps badge), Julia located her brother's battlefield grave and returned with his body to New York.

Epilogue

"Arrived at Fairmount about noon & marched across the river where we again started our fires for dinner—which over, some laid down in the shade, while others wandered over the hills to examine the historic grounds of the late fight. immediately across the river upon the mossy bank under a grove of noble trees a small mound of upturned earth marks the grave of David Brown of Co D from Richville the first man killed in battle of the 106th. Here where he so nobly fell let him rest in his last calm sleep while the quiet waters flow by his feet and the summer winds murmur among the trees above"

—Copied from
one of Charles W. Shepard's letters



NOTES

¹ Frederick H. Dyer, *A Compendium of the War of the Rebellion* (Des Moines: Dyer Publishing Co., 1908), p. 1447.

² Bruce Catton, *A Stillness at Appomattox* (New York: Washington Square Press, 1958), pp. 55-56.

³ Robert G. Scott, *Into the Wilderness With the Army of the Potomac* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), p. 174.

⁴ Bruce Catton, *A Stillness at Appomattox*, p. 173.

⁵ U. S. War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (70 vols., Washington: Government Printing Office, 1880-1901), XLIII, Part 1, p. 236.

¶ *OR*, XLIII, Part 1, p. 237.

¶ *OR*, XLVI, Part 1, p. 987.

¶ *OR*, XLVI, Part 1, p. 988.

¶ Julia A. Shepard, "Lincoln's Assassination," *The Century Magazine*, April 1909, pp. 917-918. See also Jim Bishop, *The Day Lincoln Was Shot* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1955), pp. 198-199, 212.



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