

The St. Lawrence County Historical Association
QUARTERLY

Volume XLI - Number 3 - Summer, 1996



The St. Lawrence County Historical Association at the Silas Wright Museum

The St. Lawrence County Historical Association is a private, not-for-profit, membership organization based at the Silas Wright Museum in Canton, New York. Founded in 1947, the Association is governed by a constitution, by-laws, and Board of Trustees. The Historical Association's membership meets annually to elect its officers and trustees.

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The St. Lawrence County Historical Association is an educational resource center and museum that researches, collects, preserves, and interprets St. Lawrence County history through collections development, publication, exhibition, and programming; whose purpose is to help establish the intellectual and cultural connections that expand awareness and place St. Lawrence County in its state and national context, while revealing its unique identity. The Association examines different aspects of life in St. Lawrence County from multiple and diverse resources through community partnerships and collaboration. SLCHA values quality, integrity, and accessibility and operates within established museum standards befitting its American Association of Museums (AAM) accredited status.

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CONTENTS

- Letters to Charlotte** 2
Janet M. Bullis and James D. Carl
- A Badge of Friendship?** 22
*Charles T. Creekman, Jr.
and Douglas B. Moore*
- From the Bookshelf** 31
Arthur Johnson

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Photograph of Charlotte Knapp Edmonds.

LETTERS TO CHARLOTTE: THE CIVIL WAR CORRESPONDENCE OF ORLANDO JAMES KNAPP

By Janet M. Bullis and James D. Carl

INTRODUCTION

Orlando James Knapp was a 24 year-old soldier of the Indiana 12th Volunteers when he began writing letters to his older sister, Charlotte. Orlando had many relatives who might have, and probably did, write letters to him, including in-laws from Indiana, parents, two brothers and four sisters, most of whom remained at home in the Colton-Pierrepont area of northern New York. But Charlotte was his most faithful correspondent throughout three years of military service. The death of four children in 1863 and her husband in 1864 had placed Charlotte as much in need of a sympathetic listener as the young, recently widowed soldier who campaigned in the deep south.

Orlando must have made a good soldier. The letters depict an even tempered, uncomplaining outlook and an objective and curious observer, though his writing skills were rudimentary. He knew his place in the military hierarchy and sought to reassure Charlotte that he was well treated. He took great pride in the regi-

ment, in its fighting capabilities, in the achievements of admired officers, and in compliments received from regular army officers

about the neatness of camp. He accepted the present, was confident about the future, and may have irritated his sometimes mo-

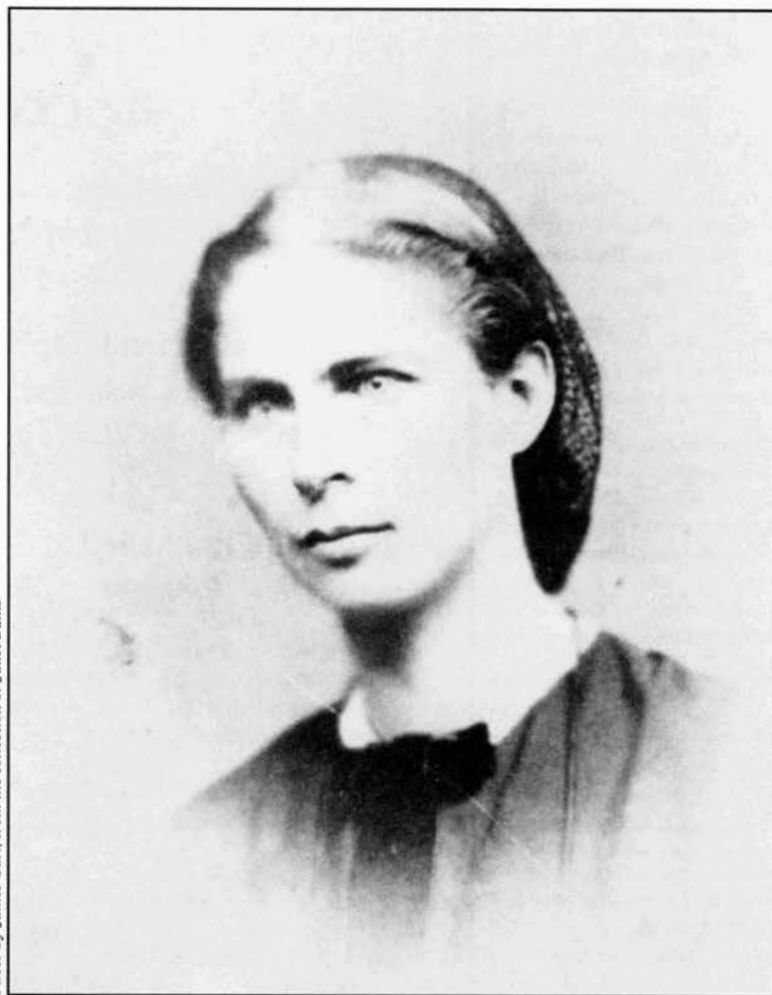


Photo by James Carl, from the collection of Janet Bullis

Undated photograph of Charlotte Knapp Edmonds, probably in her early 30's.

rose sister by admonishing her to accept what she could not change.

The Civil War letters are the correspondence between the third and sixth children of the family of Isaac and Margaret Knapp of Pierrepont, New York. Besides being brother and sister, Orlando James and Charlotte Ellen were tied to each other in another fundamental way. Each had married a brother and sister of the Edmonds family of tiny Steuben County in the northeastern corner of Indiana. Charlotte was 31 years old in August, 1862, when the Civil War letters began. She was married to Thomas Edmonds, 35, of Angola, Indiana, and the couple was living in the Pierrepont area with four small children. Her brother, Orlando, had married Armina C. Edmonds, a sister to Thomas. They had lived in Indiana with two small children when Armina died in May, 1862. By August, Orlando and Thomas had become soldiers in the Union Army.

The Knapp family traced its roots to Isaac Palmer Knapp of Westport, New York, and Margaret Chase Knapp of Stoddard, New Hampshire. The couple, their baby Charlotte, and three other children had lived in Westport, the town of Isaac's birth on Lake Champlain, until the family moved to the Pierrepont area sometime between 1832 and 1834. Pierrepont village lay among sparsely populated hills that were being cleared of a heavy

forest cover. Formed as a town on April 15, 1818, the village lay on the boundary between the Adirondack highlands and lowlands. It was situated on the St. Lawrence Turnpike that connected Plattsburgh with Carthage, New York. During the War of 1812, the road was used to move troops and equipment to the naval base at Sackets Harbor. One could make a straight run from Pierrepont, much of it downslope on what is now State Highway 68, toward the larger village of Canton about nine miles to the northwest. From Canton, roads connected with Potsdam and other villages in the St. Lawrence Valley.

There was promise of decent farmland on the relatively flat terraces and patches of sandy, glacial lake sediment and soil that covered the crystalline Adirondack bedrock. These terraces extended northward from the bedrock hills, and the Knapps either built or bought a home on Coon road, near the intersection with the Plains road, just east of the Beech Plains cemetery where the couple is buried today. By 1868 the Knapps owned 72 acres of flat land at Beech Plains.

Margaret was fruitful on the "Plains," and by 1840 Orlando and two other children were born into the Knapp family. The parents would remain at their farm, living into their mid 80's. Their offspring would scatter to nearby villages and farms, and the chil-

dren and grandchildren would write letters when they could not visit. Two of three sons would serve in the Union Army, and one, Orlando, would write the letters that are excerpted in these pages.

Orlando Knapp and Thomas Edmonds, his brother-in-law and Charlotte's husband, joined the Indiana 12th Volunteers in the 16th month of the Civil War. The letters to Charlotte began from Indianapolis where the men were mustered into the regiment in August, 1862. The letters also end from Indianapolis, but only Orlando lived to muster out in June, 1865. Orlando participated in the siege of Vicksburg, the Atlanta campaign, and in General Sherman's march across Georgia to Savannah and the sea.

Northern farm hands who soldiered in the south had more than their share of ailments and diseases. From the beginning, Thomas was plagued with diarrhea and other illnesses whose progress can be followed in the letters. They caused great pain, absence from guard duty, recuperation in hospitals, railroad rides to catch up with the regiment, and eventually his death in May, 1864, in a hospital in Scottsboro, Alabama.

Thomas's death, however, occurred in the aftermath of tragedy at his Pierrepont home. Within eight months of her husband's departure, Charlotte had lost, one

by one, all four children to diphtheria. Letters announcing the deaths have not survived, but we have letters of sympathy from relatives of the Knapps and Edmonds.

The loss of her children and husband was a prelude to years of personal and financial crisis for Charlotte. Some relief may have come in the mail by way of a calm, unflappable voice that is preserved in Orlando's 63 letters addressed to Charlotte and his parents. This article reproduces some of the 1863-64 letters that offer condolences for the death of the children and describe the deteriorating condition of Pvt. Thomas Edmonds as he struggled to keep up with his regiment.

The letters record a *preoccupation with small things*; beginnings and closings are repetitive and formal, and they cover large parts of small writing paper. Orlando assured Charlotte that he was most fortunate to receive letters, and common phrases included "I would like to see you first rate," and "I would like to have a play spell with Nettie," his daughter. He wrote the letters from camp, field hospital and Army headquarters, some in the rain and others to

the sound of artillery bombardment. Writing was cut short by guard duty and the need to move with the regiment. Orlando was at the mercy of events that he could not control, but duty required that he persevere. This was also true for Charlotte, and the siblings seemed to understand

A word about the discovery of the letters. In November 1870, Charlotte took a second husband, Richard Bell, and they had two daughters. The younger Bell daughter, Charlotte Ellen, was the grandmother of Ira Mical Bullis who in 1982 with his wife, Janet, purchased the family farm from

Ira's father, Mahlon Cray Bullis. The circa 1825 farm with its slab and binder sandstone house lies at the foot of Waterman Hill about halfway between Pierrepont and Canton. Shortly after moving into the house, Janet noticed their five-year-old daughter, Nellie Blue, carrying an old shoe box under her arm. Inside was a collection of letters and envelopes addressed to Ira's great grandmother, Charlotte Knapp Edmonds of "Pierpont," N.Y. The letters had been stored by Ira's mother, Lucia Blackmer Bullis, in a built-in cupboard in the kitchen, and little Nellie had used a few for writing practice.

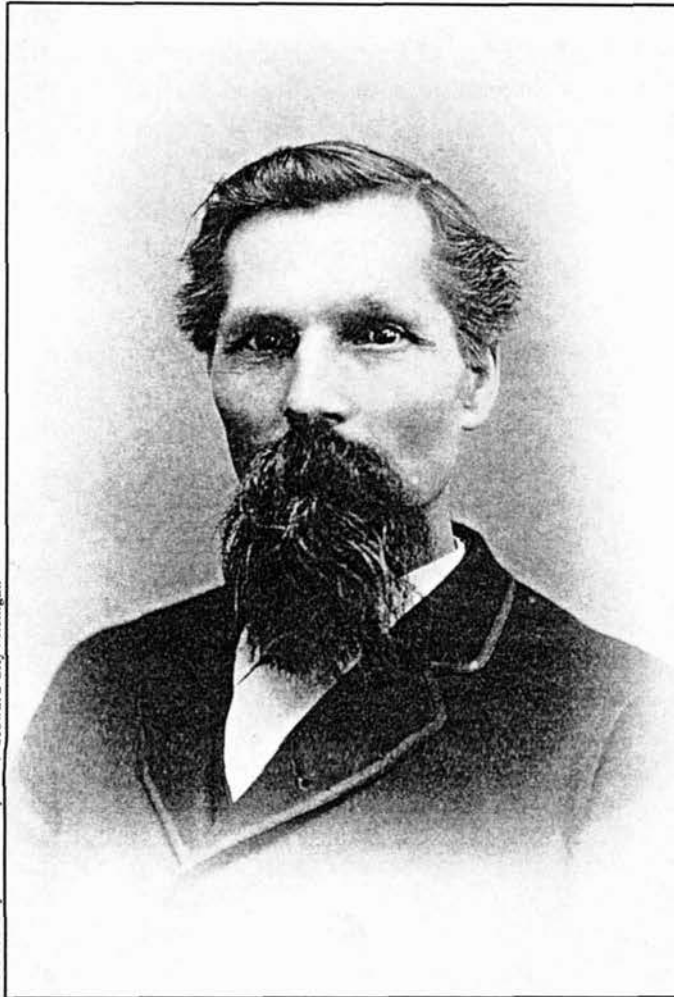


Photo courtesy of Darlene Zylstra, Howard City Michigan

Orlando James Knapp in Howard City, Michigan; probably mid 1870's.

that each had something to offer the other during hard times. For Orlando and for soldiers in either army, perseverance in writing and a few dollars sent in the mail were the gifts of choice for a loved one who remained at home.

We have transcribed the largely unpunctuated letters by placing spaces between sentences and coherent thoughts, and by inserting commas [,] and commentary where needed. Most of the letters are readable and in good shape, thanks to storage in

write what George Abbot it is that
married Maria Eastman it must be some one that
i dont know write all of the news write how
Mellie is and all of our folks are give them
my best respects i would like to write more but
my ~~head~~ head is out of siller to day i have
bee taking quinine

I remain your
your affectionate Brother
O. J. Knapp

O. J. Knapp

O. J. Knapp
Vicksburg
Richmond
Edmonds
Charlotte
Knapp Knapp
Orlando
Thomas

A portion of the June 14, 1863 letter of Orlando James Knapp to his sister, Charlotte Knapp Edmonds. From Haines Bluff, the soldier could hear the sounds of the Union seige at Vicksburg, Mississippi.

the original envelopes.

EXCERPTS FROM THE CIVIL WAR LETTERS

By May, 1862, Orlando was widowed with two small children. He may have written from Indiana and convinced his older brother-in-law, Thomas, to join him in enlisting in the Indiana 12th Volunteers for a three-year term of service. This regiment had first organized for one year of service in May, 1861. It reorganized for three years at Indianapolis from late May to August, 1862, and by August 21 had left the state for Richmond, Kentucky, to confront the invasion by Confederate General Kirby Smith.

Before enlisting, Orlando returned to Pierrepont with his daughter, Alvira ("Nettie") and placed her in the care of a Mr. Gaby in Colton. The letters indicate, however, that Charlotte and the grandparents also cared for Nettie. Orlando's second child, James, remained in Indiana with the Jacob Zeigler family on a farm south of Rome City in Noble County. The departure of Orlando and Thomas for military service was the occasion for writing the single war-year letter preserved from Charlotte.

Thomas's decision to enlist was not a happy one for Charlotte, and one wonders if she had any voice in it. She seemed shocked by the news, depressed that Thomas failed to recognize

the difficulties in caring for a family of four children. A letter to another brother, William Knapp ("Tip"), suggests that she had resisted Thomas's decision.

August 25, 1862

[probably written from home in the Pierrepont area]

Dear Brother *[William Knapp or "Tip," age 22, who lived in Pierrepont village]*

I seat myself this lonesome evening to write to you to tell you that I am left alone. Thomas & Orlando have enlisted & gone to war. I know this is sad news for you but what is it for me Orlando got your letter the night before he started they went away the 19th of this month they are now in Kentucky *[Richmond, to join the regiment then attached to the Army of Kentucky]* I have heard from them once but have had no letters yet Orlando has Chosen Mr. Gaby *[in Colton]* as Guardian for his Children his baby *[James, 9 months]* has been so very sick but it is better. Nettie *[Elvira Henrietta, his daughter, probably 2 years old]* is well. George *[her son, age 2]* is Sick he has had the ague *[fever marked by chills and shaking, generally malarial]* four days running & the baby has been sick all day & Palmer *[her son, age 5]* is sick to night so you may know that I feel pretty much down. I would sell off my things & go back *[to the Indiana in-laws?]* if I thought it was possible to get through with my Children & things alone it is hard to think of staying alone with my little ones this long cold winter I wish you could come & stay with me I feel very lonely but I have kind friends here Mr

Gaby & the girls are friends to me Tip you must break the news as kindly as possible to Mother *[Margaret Chase Knapp, age 62]* for I know it will nearly kill her to hear that Orlando has gone but we must all submit to our lot as patient as we can we will leave them in the care & protection of the Almighty powr above[,] hoping that he will watch over & preserve them & that they will return safe to their friends & home Orlando advised me by all means to go home *[to the parents or in-laws?]* & stay & Thomas was willing I should but the Old folks think that I am foolish to think of such a thing they would rather I would stay here and be scrooged around by them but I tell you that I shant bear much from them before I turn a cold shoulder to them for you know something about how my patience has been tried but enough of this foolery I was very sorry to hear that Harriet *[28 year-old sister]* has been sick give my love to her and tell her that I want to see her & if I dont this fall I hope I shall in the spring write as soon as you get this dont wait an hour & let me know how you are all a getting along I cant write any more for Palmer is a getting so restless that I have to see him so good bye Tip ever your loving sister Charlotte.

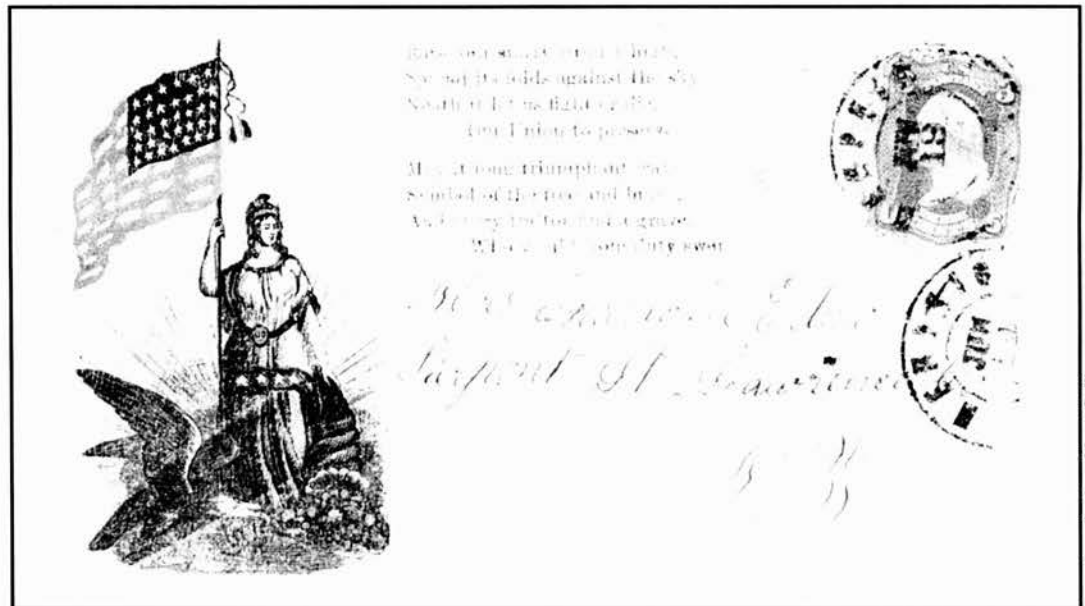
The letter contains no patriotic platitudes about duty to flag and country. The war had settled in, and Charlotte surely was aware that hardship at home would not be a prime consideration for the men. Their duty would consist of writing letters and sending pay. Nothing in Orlando's correspon-

dence, however, suggested that Charlotte ever held him responsible for her husband's enlistment. Thomas would sicken and die. Orlando would finish the war in uniform, proud of his regiment and country. His letters would increase in length, in quality of writing, and in admiration and concern for Charlotte, but getting army pay to Pierrepont never proved easy.



From the collection of Janet Bullis

The first letters from the new soldiers arrived in one envelope from Camp Morton on the state fair grounds at Indianapolis. The regiment had returned to Indiana for "reorganization;" the soldiers were quartered in stables used for livestock, and the race track was used as a drill field. The camp later became a prison for Confederate soldiers. As a member of the 12th Regiment, Company B of the 12th Indiana Volunteers, Orlando wrote for Thomas and himself.



From the collection of Janet Bullis

Samples of Orlando's envelopes received by Charlotte during the Civil War.

September 25, 1862
Camp Morton,
Indianapolis, Indiana
*[ruled paper with a
flag in upper left;
across the flag is
printed "The Union
Forever"]*

Dear sister i
take this opportunity
to write you a few
lines to let you know
that i am well and in
good spirits and i
hope these few lines
will find you the same
we arrived here safe
and sound we are a
going to stay here till
we are exchanged
*[evidently much of the
regiment had been
captured in Kentucky
on Aug. 30, during the
battle of Richmond,
paroled and sent to
Indianapolis with the
understanding that
Confederate prisoners
would be released.
Had Orlando elabor-
ated upon these events
in earlier letters?
Some start in a new
career!]* one
company refused to
drill and they put
them in the guard
house they soon come
to their milk we are having
good times i should like to see
you and your family but i don't
think I saall *[shall]* very soon
you must keep up good courage
and write soon tell tip *[his
brother William]* to come here
if he comes there your brother
O Knapp

[Also in Orlando's handwriting]
Dear wife i will write a
few lines to you to let you know
that I am well at present and
hope these few lines will find



Photo by James Carl

The grave of Charlotte's children, also inscribed with the name of her 1st husband, Pvt. Thomas Edmonds. He died on May 2, 1864.

you and your family well i
have not drawn any money
yet and don't know when I
shall i want you to write how
you are and how things are
and write before you go away
when you are a going write as
soon as you get this from your
affectionate husband Thomas
Edmonds direct your letter to
indianapolis camp morton
12th regt co B Ind volenterers
write how my boy is
[James] O.K. [Orlando Knapp]
and how gabys folks are

The regiment left
Indianapolis for
Memphis, Tenn., on
Nov. 23, 1862, and
was attached to the
2nd Brigade, Dis-
trict of Memphis,
13th Army Corps.
By December,
1862, Orlando and
Thomas had trav-
eled from Memphis,
Tennessee, into
Mississippi, and
there was fighting
to report.

December 2, 1862
Chulahoma,
Mississippi

Dear sister it is
with pleasure that
i write you a few
more lines to let
you know that i am
still alive and well.
i am in mississippi
only 7 miles from
the enemies
fortifications we
expect a heavy
battle soon our
advance troops
had a small battle yestarday
we heard the cannon we have
marched 50 miles from
memphis Thomas is well and
very anxious to hear from you
we have wrote 3 letters since
we have heard from you i
hope you will write as soon as
you can for i would be glad to
hear from you and the rest of
the folks. i should like to see
nettie *[his daughter]* and the
rest of the children but it is
time to close for i have but a
few minutes to spare so good

bye for this time this from
your affectionate brother and
your affectionate husband
Thomas Edmonds

Orlando Knapp

Direct to the 12 regt Co B Ind vol 6th
Brigade 3 Div Shermans Corps Army
Mails

Casualties occurred on the home front in Pierrepont as diphtheria struck the Edmonds's children. One by one, they sickened and died, beginning with six year-old Palmer on February 2, 1863, and ending with three year-old George on April 5. For Charlotte, there were doctor's bills, burial costs, and prolonged grief and anxiety. The men were probably informed as each of Charlotte's children succumbed, but the correspondence is missing. Thomas was not furloughed.

April 20, 1863

Fort Loumis, Tennessee [*in Orlando's handwriting*]

Dear wife i seat myself to answer your letter which i received a few minutes ago i was glad to hear from you but you judg my feelings [*he means "you know me well enough to understand my feelings"*] when i heard the sad and unexpected news of the death of our lovely children it seems as though fate was against us sure but we must put up with the trials and troubles of this world the best we can if I could only be there to help you in your great afflictions it would be a great comfort but that cant be at present some think the war will end soon but i don't know about it i am well as usual and i hope this will find you well i have not drawn any

pay yet but we expect to be paid off soon [*Soldiers in the field were supposed to be paid every 2 months*] i hope we will so that I can send you some to help your self with for i know that you are in great need of it i dont [*want*] you to work out be as conte[n]ted as you can and write once a week certain write often this from your affectionate husband Thomas Edmonds.

[*Back side of same letter*]

Dear sister it is with pleasure that i have one more opportunity to write to you i am well at present and i hope this will find you well we have left grandville we are camped between colliersville and germantown 18 miles from [*east of*] memphis our company is out on picket— 2 miles from camp we shall stay out here 2 or 3 weeks if nothing happens we heard havy canonadeing yesterday and this morning but we have [*not*] learnt the cause of it yet we have not had any battels yet the fort where we are is one that we built ourselves i was very sorry to hear that you had so much trouble in loosing those lovely children i wish i could be there with you believe me I feel inter-resed in your wellfare. i would help you if i could but i cant now you must bear up with fortitude and do the best you can i would advise you not to work out for you are not able wait until we get our pay and i will help you rely on your affectionate brother O. Knapp direct to Memphis write as often as you can

Mary Jane Fuller, probably a sister to Charlotte's husband, Thomas, received word of the

death of Charlotte's children. She was an accomplished phonetic speller.

July 4, 1863

[*Angola, Indiana?*]

Dear Sistiar [*in-law?*] I recived your letter three weeks ago it brot woeful news sharlot I shod [*should*] have written to you befoar but Father & Mother was hear on a visit when your letter arived hear Tha wanted me to wait till tha wrote to me tha wanted me to write somthing for them ...I had one letter from Orlando he informe me of the death of three your loved ones he said he & Thomas was well ...Sharlot I can simpthies with you in a nuseon [*instant?*] all tho I hav not lost so many loved ons as you hav your los is thair gain Our saviour said suffer little childran to come unto him for such is the kingdom of heven Sharlot it is hard to giv up all of our loved ones but you must live for the good of others Sharlot you no whair thair tha aint one the battle field [*Charlotte, you know where they are; they aint's on the battlefield*] Sharlot did you hav a good docter and good cair it seams as tho some one of them mite of bin spared Sharlot that deseas [*disease, i. e. diphtheria*] has bin vary hard hear we have all had it but egar [*and*] celia [*her children*] got it to chool [*at school*] Willean was sick 9 weeks with it & the ansiplus his eyes was sweled shut his ears was as big as your hand thair was a grate many grown folks that dide with the soar throat and black anciplus the sick gestiv chiels [*nursing babies?*] hav bin vary sickley hear this spring

Sharlot I am all alone today the rest hav all gone to the forth [*Independence Day celebration*] I rather stay to home and think of tha poor boys on the battle field tha hav a grate speacking [*speeches*] today I can hear the drume beet and hear them hoorays it sounds bad in my ears ...write as quick as you git this Mary Jane Fuler to sharlot Edmonds. excuse all bad spelling

The children were buried, and

Scottsboro, Alabama, due to the cost of embalming and shipping that the army would have charged to the family. No more was written about dead children. The news was about war as the men were shipped down the Mississippi and up the Yazoo River to Haines Bluff above Vicksburg, then under seige by the Union Army.

June 14, 1863
Haines Bluff, Mississippi

memphis and took the boat for vicksburgh we had a very nice voyage except a very hard storm and a hurrycane the wind blew so hard that it took knapsacks blankets oilcloths over board and the men on the upper deck had to cling to the ropes to keep from going to[o] we sailed down to the mouth of the yazoo and then sailed up the yazoo some miles we are now within 12 miles of vicksburgh they are fighting most all of the time there we can hear their guns play all



Photo by Janet Bullis

Circa 1825, slab-and-binder style, Potsdam sandstone home of Ira and Janet Bullis at the foot of Waterman Hill, County Route 27, between Canton and Pierrepont villages. The Civil War letters had been stored in a shoe box in a kitchen cupboard by Ira's mother, Lucia Blackmer Bullis.

a tombstone eventually was inscribed with their father's name in the Beech Plains cemetery west of Pierrepont. Thomas's body probably remained in

Dear sister Charlotte i take this opportunity to write a few lines to you to let you know that we have taken a move we left collierville last monday we marched to

times of day and night we are throwing up fortifications here Thomas is wel he is out to work today i should been out to[o] but i had the ague yesterday and i got an excuse we expect to have a fight here

before a great while we are ready to meet them and anxious for an engagement i have wrote all of the news except the rebels sent a flag of truce to our lines offering to surrender vicksburgh if we would let two men pass out grant would not agree to it then they said they would fight us till hell froze over grant said all right he would fight them on the ice after it did freeze over no more at present write soon O.J. Knapp direct to memphis ...i would like to write more but my head is out of kilter today i have been taking quinine. I Remain your affectionate Brother

July 4, 1863, was the “most memorable Independence Day in American history,” at least since the first one, wrote the author James McPherson, in *Battle Cry of Freedom*. It was the day of the Confederate surrender of Vicksburg and the day after the Confederate army failed, despite Pickett’s charge, to win the battle of Gettysburg. President Lincoln had reason to rejoice, but the two field soldiers had more pressing concerns. Thomas was not well.

July 4, 1863
Oak Ridge near Big Black River [south of Vicksburg, Mississippi]

Dear sister it is with pleasure that I seat myself to write you a few hurried lines to let you know that i am well Thomas has not been very well for a few days but he is getting better we have left collierville and went down the river within 10 miles of vicksburgh

then we went up the yazoo to haines bluff then we marched in east of vicksburgh 6 miles from black river the orders have come for us to march [again] we have to take 7 days rations in our haversacks [white canvas bags, carried by shoulder straps, which darkened and acquired the odor of spoiled food] we are to start in 2 or 3 hours we are going to Jackson [Miss.] to kick up a fight out of old Johnson [Confederate General Joseph Johnson] so you see that i have not got much time to spare thomas says that you must not look for him home on a furlough till you see him come for he cant get one now he says he would send you his money but you never would get it if he should i would send you some to[o] but it would be of no use tell father and mother that them to take good care of my girl [Nettie] and when i get home I will repay them it is not safe to send money in a letter no where thomas says that he would be as glad to come home as you would to have him but hesay never mind for he will be there sometime you must keep up good courage and not fail to write write as soon as you get this direct to the 12th by way of memphis This From your affectionate Husband and Brother Thomas Edmonds Orlando Knapp

Orlando wrote on behalf of Thomas about an illness that was becoming increasingly persistent and painful.

September 2, 1863
Messengers Ferry, Mississippi, on the Black River [Orlando’s

handwriting]

Dear wife i seat myself to write you another letter to let you know that i have not forgotton you and to let you know that i have not got well yet you want to know what was the matter with me i will tell you. i was taken with the fever in the first place i got a little better of that and then i was attacketed with the flux. i got cured of that i had a diareah all of the time and it has turned to the chronic diarea i have been sick for 2 months i am now in the hospital i think that i am a little better now i hop that i will get well soon i dont know whether i can get a furlough or not if i can i shall come home to see you ...i will send you 5 dollars in this letter to help yourself with and if this goes through safe i will send more next time i want to see you very bad if i could come home i beleive that i could get well a good deal quicker than i can here but you must write oftener i don’t got a letter from you only once in a great while i want you to write as often as 2 or 3 times a week i got so anxious about you sometimes that i don’t know what to do write as soon as you get this i cant think of much more to write this time so good bye i will try to write oftener to you I Remain Your Affectionate Husband Thomas Edmonds

Many northern soldiers serving in the south experienced health problems. Called the “ague” or “shakes,” malaria was attributed to poisonous vapors arising from swamps. Typhoid (“camp fever”) was traced to



Photo by James Carl

View eastward toward Pierrepoint Village from county route 29. Fields in the foreground lie on a sand terrace that protrudes northwardly from the crystalline bedrock hills that surround Pierrepoint Village. These flat-topped terraces lie along the boundary between the Adirondack Highlands and Lowlands.

tainted water. Orlando placed Thomas's illness in perspective. He also wrote about the deliberate burning of the property of Jefferson Davis in Jackson, Mississippi.

September 7, 1863

Messengers Ferry, Mississippi

Dear sister it is with pleasure that i seat myself to write you a few lines to let you know that i am well and Thomas is getting better he come back from the hospital to day if he is very careful he will get along he has had a bad time of it but he keeps up very good courage i like to see that it is very sickly down here in the last 3 days we have buried 4 out of our regiment but the general health of the troops are improveing i wrote two

letters dated Sept 2ond[,] 1 to father with 10 dollars in it the one to you thomas sent five dollars i write this to let you know that i sent it in case the money dont go through write as soon as you get this i guess i never told you that we burnt Joe and Jeff davieses property when we went to Jackson [Jefferson Davis and his older brother Joseph, perhaps their residential home when they served in the legislature?] well we did do it and a very nice bonfire it was to i suppose that they will be mad when they hear of it but we dont care they might say enough then we would luff em be our captain has been promoted to major frank eveline is our captain now we have been transferred to the 15 army corps 4th division 1rst brigade

...you must keep up good courage it is no use to complain take things as they come and it will be the best way write soon and often no more at present. O. J. Knapp
In the same letter in Orlando's hand writing

Dear wife i will write you a few lines to let you know that i am getting better i come back from the hospital today i am very careful and i hope that i will get along now very well i am not able to do any thing yet but i am in hopes that i shall be soon ...this from your affectionate husband until death Thomas Edmonds

Another (undated) letter from Orlando and Thomas was also written about this time.

Sister charlotte ... thomas wants me to write that he is on the gain his [he] is here with us but he is not able for duty yet and that he has had the promise of a furlough this month but he dont know whether he can get it or not it is very uncertain he sent you five dollars in a letter sept 2ond and have wrote since but have not heard from it yet dont know whether you got it or not ...he says you must excuse him this time for he is tired he has marched out to camp about a mile from town no more at present yours Truly O.J. Knapp Thomas Edmonds [both signatures in Orlando's handwriting]

Thomas was hospitalized at Luca, Mississippi, and the two men were separated. In the following letter Thomas notices how a photograph of Charlotte reveals the toll taken on her health during a very difficult year in Pierrepont. The letter also reveals that tactful comments were not a soldier's stock-in-trade.

October 28, 1863
Eastport, Mississippi [NE corner of the state, on the Alabama border and Tennessee River]

Dear sister i improve this opportunity of writing a few lines to you to let you know that i am well a doing well i have got a cold it has been very bad but it is getting better i am marching with the company we received your letter the other day and was very glad to hear from you your likeness [tintype or less expensive paper photograph] came through safe i was very glad to see it but you have

grown old very fast since i last saw you Thomas thought it did not look natural Thomas is not with us he was left at iuca yesterday i dont know when he will come to us again he was not able to march he was not quite so well yesterday but if he stays there a little while he will be able for duty we are in miss now but to night we will sleep in alabama we are by the side of the tennessee river we will cross over at noon we belong to the 15 army corps 1rst Brigade 4th Division Gen sherman commands the brigade colonel [Reuben] williams commands the regiment now if you hear of a battle being fought by these men you will know whether we was in it or not ...this from your brother O Knapp to sister charlotte

Orlando was ill, probably with malaria, for which a common treatment was whiskey and quinine, but he managed to follow the regiment to Alabama.

November 16, 1863
Bridgeport, Alabama

Dear sister i take my pen in hand to answer your letter that i received last night and very glad i was to hear from you and to hear that you was well and to hear that our folks was well it had been a good while since i heard from you i should wrote sooner but we could not send letters on the march and then i have been sick most all of the way i am not well now but i feel a little better today i am able to walk around we have had a very long and tedious march and it is not ended yet we are within 30 miles of chatanooga and we expect to start on tomorrow

we can hear canonading this morning very plain but we dont know how far off it is thomas is not with us he was left at Iuka [Miss.] and he was sent to memphis i heard from him yesterday he was no better but he is where he can be taken care of so i guess he will get along if i was only well i would give a good deal i have had to be hauled along in the wagons and some of the way i have had to walk when i could hardly crawl but i am in hopes that i will be better soon ...direct your letters by the way O. K. of Nashville Tenn

Orlando's illness had placed him in a convalescent camp. Such camps were established in the rear of an army for recovery of moderately ill soldiers so that field hospitals would not be overtaxed. He missed the fight for Missionary Ridge at Chattanooga, a courageous dislodging of an entrenched enemy on November 25, 1863. He did not hail the victory but concentrated on the cost to his unit.

December 5, 1863
Bridgeport, Alabama

Dear sister Charlotte i seat myself to write you a few lines to let you know that i am getting along very well considering all things i am getting stouter every day i think that i will be able for duty in a week or two i heard from the regiment the other day they was in the fight at mission ridge they fought bravely but lost heavily our company lost 3 killed[,] Capt Aveline [spelled Eveline elsewhere] and 2 privates and eleven wounded we lament

the loss of our brave captain and our comrades our captain was killed while leading a charge on the rebels he was in high spirits encouraging his men when the fatal ball struck him near the eye and come out at the back of the head killing him instantly i have not heard how many the regiment lost the field officers come out all right i am still in the convalescent camp but i dont know how long i shall stay but i shall stay till i get well and hearty i have enough to eat drink and to wear and a good tent to sleep in i dont hear anything from Thomas but i suppose you do if you do[,] write to me how he is getting along ...this is secesh [secessionist] paper [yellow, ruled] that i am writing on i bought it off[] some of the prisoners that come through here it is getting dark i will have to close good bye for this time O. J. Knapp Bridgeport Al Convalescent camp in care of Capt Barnard is the way to direct

The two soldiers were miles apart. Orlando received and read Charlotte's letters that were mailed to Thomas. He believed that Thomas had been withholding pay from his needy sister.

December 22, 1863
Convalescent Camp,
Bridgeport, Alabama.

Dear Sister Charlotte it is with pleasure that i seat myself to write to you a few lines if no more to let you know that I am alive but not as well as i should like to be although I am not very sick when this reaches you I hope it will find you enjoying good health and in good spirits i got two letters

from you yesterday Nov 8th & 25th they was directed to Thomas they went through to the regiment i took them and read them and i am going to send them to him as soon as i can find out where to direct them I heard from him Sunday. he is in the hospital at Memphis & about the same as he was when i last saw him i was very glad to hear from you but i was sorry to hear that you was in such circumstances & I dont blame you for getting discouraged but i would rather hear that you was contented and comfortable i should thought that Thomas would have sent you some money before this time he had a plenty when i left him but that makes no difference I will not see you suffer in this way as long as i have got a red [red cent?] i will send you \$5.00 in this letter and when you want any more just write to me and you will get it I would sent you some long ago but Thomas had a plenty of money and i thought he might send you some. i dont know the reason why he did not you must not Dear sister be offended at what i write nor feel bad i dont intend to hurt your feelings but after this when you want money please write to me and it will be forthcoming for you have been to[o] good to me and done to[o] much for me to see you suffer keep up good courage not let anything trouble you it is getting late i will close by bidding you good night write often this from your affectionate Brother O. J. K. direct to the 12th by way of Nashville

Recuperating in the hospital, Thomas also wrote about regi-

mental casualties at Missionary Ridge and claimed that money had been stolen from his pocket at the hospital.

December 27, 1863
Adams Hospital, Memphis,
Tenn [probably his own
handwriting]

Dear wife ...I hope when these few lines reaches you tha [they] will find you a live and well. I hante been with my Regament for to [two] monts and hante heard from them for Sometime. The last I heard from them tha was at Chatneary [Chattanooga] and had ben in a fight and my Captain was kiled thare and sixty more but the names of the rest I hante lurnt yet it seems like a good while sence I heard from you it was in October and I sent you twenty dolars in money and I want you to let me know wether you got it. I had rather bad luck sence I came to the hospital. I had twenty dolars taken out of my pocket when I was a sleep. Give my love to father and mother and the rest of the folks and youre self all son [also] no more at present Wright as soon as you get this from youre husband Thomas edmonds to sharlet edmonds Direct youre leters to the Adams hospital, Memphis tenn, Ward R Room 1

Orlando's company was assigned to guard duty for General Thomas C. Ewing, Jr. Thomas remained in the hospital, and a doctor evidently thought that his illness entitled him to an Army discharge. A necessary part of the discharge was a descriptive roll, or list, and the clearing of claims made on the soldier. The

descriptive roll included a record of equipment that must be returned prior to discharge, or paid for if lost. It might also include a record of purchased items and loans from a camp sutler. Thomas was enmeshed in the gray area of hospital-recommended discharges. Army officers who received such recommendations were reluctant to grant them, given their suspicion that the sickness was exaggerated.

January 16, 1864

Scottsboro, Alabama [south of Bridgeport on the Tennessee River]

Dear sister Charlotte It is with pleasure that I seat myself to write a few lines to you to let you know that I am well & I sincerely hope when this reaches you It will find you In the enjoyment of good health I am with the company & doing duty as well as the rest of the boys we are guards for General [Thomas C.] Ewing now [brother in law of William T. Sherman] & our company Is detailed to do his dirty work ...I heard from Thomas the other day he Is in the hospital at memphis the surgeon sent to our lieutenant for his descriptive roll and he refuses to send It to him If you want to write him[,] direct your letters to Mr Thomas Edmonds Adams Genl Hospital memphis Tenn I have wrote a letter to him to day and i only got the directions this morning I dont want you to neglect writing to me now you have found out where Thomas is I wrote a letter to you some time ago with 5 dollars enclosed & have not received an answer yet ...when you are

in want of money send to your
O K good bye

Brother and sister had come to some agreement about Thomas's actions and character. He stood accused of lying and withholding his pay from Charlotte.

January 28, 1864

Scottsboro, Alabama

Dear sister Charlotte ...I received a letter from you last evening & I hasten to answer It I was very glad to hear from you and to see the womanly spirit you manifested In your letter It does me good to read such a letter I wish you would write more of them & write them oftener I was glad to hear that you was well I hope your health will be better In the future I was very glad to see you come out openly & write just what you think It shows that you have confidence In me & you need have no fears of your confidence being betrayed you wrote to me where Thomas was I had found out before and wrote to him I wrote one to him before and It come back without finding him the head surgeon sent to our lieutenant for his descriptive rool [roll] and he refuses to send it to him[,] and as far as the twenty dollars Is concerned that he said he sent you[,] I would advise you not to put yourself to any unnecessary trouble about It for I dont believe he ever sent It & his having \$20 stolen from him I dont believe that neither you can believe as much of It as you have a mind to you know that he is [not?] a man of truth and viracity If I was In your place I would trouble myself but little more about

him you may think that I am meddelling with things that dont concern me but I feel Interrested In your welfare the way you have been neglected It Is enough to turn the warmest heart to stone but act according to your own judgement I may be too hasty If you think I am you will please excuse me you write that you are very thankful to me for the kindness that I have shown I never can pay you for the goodness that you have shown me you have been a friend to me In every sense of the word you have done a great deal for me let the circumstances be what they would I allways know where to find [a] friend I would be very hard hearted to forget It all so soon ...This From your affectionate Brother until Death Orlando J. Knapp

Two days later and unaware of Orlando's suspicion, Thomas wrote to Charlotte that he hoped to re-join the regiment.

January 30, 1864

Adams Hospital, Memphis, Tenn.

Dear wife it is with much plesure I seat my self Down to wright you a few lines to let you know that I am still liven I Received youre kind and welcom leter and was glad to hear from you and hear you was as well as you was I got a leter from Orlando the other day and he was well I am on the gane now. I dont [k]now how longe I shall stay here I may join to my Regament Before longe I am very sory that you did not get that money But as Soon as I get som you shall have it for I supose you need it I am glad that edwards

[Charlotte and Orlando's brother] has in listed [enlisted] But I am a fraid he wont stand it [an opinion shared by Orlando] I want you to tell me what Regament he is in and what Company If the lord spares my life I shall Come home some time a gane [again] ...Sow good By from youre husband Tomas Edmons to his Wife Sharlot Edmons

As Thomas prepared to return to his "Regament," he noted that he could not be paid until May.

March 4, 1864
Adams General Hospital,
Memphis, Tenn.

My Dear Wife i take my Pen in hand to Wright you a few lines to let you know that I [am] prety well now But A Bad Cold I Received youre kind and welcome leter and was glad to hear from you But was Sory to hear youre helth Was no Beter I am going to My Regament in the morning But I cant get money till may and as Soon as I can get it you shall have it Tha [there] is Six month pay Dew me maybe I can Bory Som and if i can I will send you some you must Wright as soon as you get this and as soon as I get to my Regament I will Wright and let you know how things is you must keep up good Courage and get well as soon as possible it is hard luck to Bee sick So long and Dis couraging to [o] But never give up Well I must close for this time Give My love to all and take a prety good share [of my love] youre self nomore at present from youre Husband Thomas Edmonds to his Affectionet Wife Sharlot Edmonds good By for this time

By early March, Thomas left the hospital and travelled by rail to Scottsboro, Alabama.

March 13, 1864
Scottsboro, Alabama

Dear sister Charlotte ...I am well at present & enjoy myself first rate I have a plenty of duty to do & a plenty to eat & drink & to wear if that is not enoug to content a man I dont know what is ...Thomas has come back to the company again he arrived this morning he is well & fat & hearty he is asleep while I am writing he did not get any sleep last night on the cars you wrote to me to use my influence to have him send you his money i will do so as soon as he gets some but it will be 3 or 4 months before he can draw any we mustered before he came he has got to wait till the last day of April before he can muster & then he has got to wait till the last June before he can draw his money that you see is a great while for you to wait for money If you want money[,] send me word as I have wrote to you before Gaby [in Colton] owes me 7 dollars I wrote to him to send It to you I have got no answer yet i dont know whether he has done it or not if you get it i wish you would let me know it and if you dont get it soon I will write to him again I wrote a letter to Father a good while ago with five dollars in it and I dont hear from them since if you know whether they got it or not i wish you write now charlotte keep up good courage you must excuse me this time for i am on duty to day & i cant get time to write much good bye for this time this from your affectionate Brother

Orlando J. Knapp

Both men were now in Alabama. Thomas experienced a relapse, and Orlando sent him to the hospital.

April 16, 1864
Scottsboro, Alabama

Sister charlotte I seat myself to answer 3 or 4 letters that i received from you some time ago & i have neglected to answer them till now but not without some reason Thomas received a letter from you in one of mine i was waiting to have him ask me to write for him but i waited in vain he never said anything about writing and he did not have much to say about what you wrote he did not seem pleased nor displeased but i am sorry to say that he is sick now & in the hospital he was taken 2 days ago with the chills and a violent attack with the fever & hard pains in the head[,] back & stomach i went to the hospital yesterday morning & had the doctor send over an ambulance and took him over he was a little better but i have not seen him since being on guard yesterday and on the wood list to day i have not had time to go an[d] see him but i am going over this evening to see him if he get worse i will let you know it i got Fathers & Mothers likeness [photographs] i knew them at once but the one that took them did not do a very good job i thought the man was drunk that took them by the way he spread the paint i also got netties likeness ...Your Affectionate Brother O.K.

Thomas's condition had deteriorated, and Charlotte was

warned to prepare for the worst.

April 23, 1864
Scottsboro,
Alabama

Dear Sister
Charlotte
...Thomas is no better he is very sick the Surgeon says that there is but a small chance of his recovery he is in his right mind the most of the time some times he is a little deranged he was sick so long and then getting better he come back to the company and went to doing duty he stood it first rate for a while but the army diet did not agree with him he was taken down so suddently that it is doubtful of his getting well if he could have got his discharge when he was at Memphis i have not the least doubt but what he would got well but it is of no use to talk of getting a discharge in this regiment it is a matter of imp[ro]visability charlotte i write this to let you know the true state of affairs i would not deceive you you must not grieve dear sister about things that can not be helped bear youself up with fortitude in this hour of trouble there may be brighter days in store for you rest assured there is one that sympathyses with you now keep up good courage and when you want



Charlotte Ellen Bell Blackmer, daughter of Charlotte Knapp and her second husband, Richard Bell. This Charlotte was the grandmother of Ira Mical Bullis. He and his wife, Janet, unknowingly acquired the Civil War letters when they purchased the sandstone house at Waterman Hill.

assistance please write to me no more at present i write soon good bye your affectionate brother O. J. K.

Thomas must have contemplated the seriousness of his condition. He asked the company chaplain to write a letter on his behalf.

April 25, 1864
Scottsboro,
Alabama
Mrs. Edmonds:

Your husband continues very ill, and is most of the time in a deep slumber. He wishes me to write to you for him. And as he is in a very critical condition I have thought best to state plainly the facts in his case without consulting with him. He has been delirious for several days, and little hope has been entertained of his recovery. Today he seems to be more rational and rather better. But there is no permanent improvement and I fear he cannot recover. This is the opinion of the physicians also who are doing all in their power for his relief. His constitution is not sufficient to resist the disease which is preying upon his system, and unless a marked change takes place

soon he cannot live many days. Should any more favorable symptoms appear in his case I will let you know. And if he is called away I will communicate all the facts connected with his last hours. Yours in sympathy,
M D Gage, Chaplain 12 Ind Vols

Three days later, Chaplain

Gage changed his prognosis.

April 28, 1864
Scottsboro, Alabama
Mrs Edmonds:

I wrote you a few days ago in reference to your husband, then lying very low, with scarce a hope of recovery. I directed my letter to Canton and now learn that it should have been Colton. So you have probably failed to get my letter and have been saved much anxiety. I am glad to be able to say that your husband has improved since I wrote, and now bids fair to recover. This is more than anyone anticipated a few days since. He has less fever, rests better, and is in most respects improving. I cannot say he is out of danger, but think he is in a far more favorable condition than at any time previous during his illness. If any change for the worse takes place you will be duly notified.

I sincerely trust that you may be spared the affliction of losing your companion. He is receiving all the attention that can be given him and is cheerful and contented. He is now rational, having been delirious much of the time during his illness. Your brother will probably keep you informed of his condition which

will render it unnecessary for me to write you again unless he comes worse. Hoping you may live to see your dear husband once more in health and peace. Your sincere friend
M D Gage Chaplain 12th Ind Vols

Chaplain Gage's first letter proved accurate, and Thomas died on May 2, 1864. Usually the company commander informed the family of a soldier's death, but no letter from an officer or from Chaplain Gage has survived. Orlando's letter reporting the

death began with other matters.

May 20, 1864
Near Kingston, Georgia

Dear sister i improve the first opportunity that has presented itself for me to write since I started on this campaign it has been a good while since i wrote it has been so that we could not send letters if we wanted to ever so bad i am well a[t] present and i hope these few lines will find you well when we left scottsboro we marched to dalton there we had a fight and whiped the rebels of course I came out without a scratch the rebels retreated towards atlanta and we are following them tight up we have a fight with them nearly every day we take a good many prisoners. We are 79[?] miles from chattanooga it is 59 miles frome here to atlanta we expect another fight there our company was detailed this morning to General [John A.] Logans head quarters i expect we shall have to stay with him through this campaign our company stands high in the estimation of all the generals they all want us our company charged a hill and took it and the generals stood off looking at us and swinging their hats and wanted to know where them dare devils was going we went to the top of the hill and the rebs scattered like sheep

Photo by James Carl



Tombstone of Charlotte Ellen Knapp Bell, about 15 feet south of the grave of her four children in the Beech Plains cemetery. Charlotte married Richard Bell in 1870 and had two daughters. She died at age 44 on August 27, 1875.

well I must close for i am in a hurry i will inform you of the death of Thomas he died the 3rd [actually May 2] day of may[,] 2 days after we left one of our boys stayed there when we left he has come to us since it was through him i found it out you must not grieve your self to deathe about it for it cant be helped ...direct to Co. B headquarters 15 army Corpse.

Orlando took another two weeks to express sympathy about Thomas's death.

June 3, 1864
Camp in the field near Dallas,
Georgia [west of Atlanta]

Dear sister it is with pleasure that i seat myself to write a few lines to you to let you know that i am well & doing well when these few lines come to you i hope you will be well you must excuse poor writing for i have burnt 2 of my fingers so that I cant hold my pen any better [*He had burnt himself with phosphorus picked up near a match factory*] we are at Logans head quarters yet we are in the rear of the line of battle just far enough to be out of immediate danger there is once in a while a stray bullet drops in around here but does no harm the rebs have made a stand here we have been fighting 10 days here our loss is not very great Orson Fuller [*perhaps a brother-in-law to Thomas in Angola, Ind.*] was killed at resaca he was shot through the head while looking over the breast works killing him instantly Thomas died at scottsboro he had 8 mo[n]ths pay due him you will get that as soon as it can be attended to

it has been over 3 months since i drew any pay i dont expect to draw any more till this campaign is over no one knows how long that will be Dear sister i pity you from the bottom of my heart you have seen so much trouble i thought he was better when we left but you must not give way to troble dear for such things cannot be helped keep up good courage and write to me as often as you can ...your Affectionate brother O. J. Knapp

Soon after, a Colton lawyer requested permission to seek the back pay and pension due Charlotte.

June 10, 1864
Mrs Charlotte Edmunds

I have learned of the death of your husband, For which I am exceedingly sorry—You will be entitled to his back pay, and \$100 Bounty, perhaps more if he re-enlisted you co[u]ld own a pension of \$96 a year. I am informed in getting pensions & Bounties and would like to get yours I will do it reasonable— I have had good luck in getting them I have got a good many I shall be over next week will see you
Yours Truly Aikins Foster

True to 19th century custom, Charlotte wrote to Orlando asking whether Thomas did or said anything of importance in the hour of his death.

August 23, 1864
Camp near Atlanta

Dear sister Charlotte ...you want to know the particulars of Thomas death the particulars are few as

near as i can learn we left scottsboro may first and he was moved to the general hospital and the next day he died i thought he was getting better when we left charles fisher was there when he died he said that he was unconscious some time before he died he said nothing about home and that is about all of the particulars he was buried in his best clothes and charlie brought me nothing but his letters and your photograph i can have that to look at if i cant see you it is some consolation to see even the picture of so dear a sister we are still fighting away down here every thing progresses finely report says that general kilpatric [*Judson Kilpatrick*] had a fight yesterday with the rebs and whiped them bad & captured 1 brigade & 2 pieces of canon and took possession of the railroad if it is a fact it is a splendid victory kilpatric is on our extreme right & commands the cavaly force he is a fighting man he was wounded at resaca but he is well again i have not been very smart for a few days but i am improving i was only excused from duty 1 day i hop[e] when this reaches you it will find you well and in good spirits & i hope harriet will be well also give them my best respects & fathers folks too our captain has not received an official notice of thomas death yet consequently he cant make out his final statement i dont see why they dont send it my head is so confused to day ...this from your ever loving & affectionate brother Orlando J. Knapp to my much loved and respected sister Charlotte

POSTSCRIPT

On June 9, 1865, two years after Thomas's death, the Colton lawyer, Aikins Foster, was notified by the Pension Office of the Department of the Interior that Charlotte Edmonds would receive a pension of \$8 per month. In 1870, Charlotte married Richard

Bell "of Canada" who was listed in the St. Lawrence County Directory of 1873-4 as a farmer with 105 acres of land. She had two children in her early forties, one of whom, Charlotte Ellen Bell Blackmer, would become the grandmother of Ira Bullis at Waterman Hill, the inheritor of

the box of Civil-War letters. Charlotte, however, did not live to raise her daughters. She died in 1875 and was buried in the Beech Plains Cemetery west of Pierrepont. In April 1876, her death was mentioned in a letter from Orlando's daughter, Nettie, who was living with her father in Howard City, Michigan. The teenager wrote her grandparents in Pierrepont.

I thought I would write you a few lines to let you know that we are still numbered with the living we have not heard a word from you since Auntie died [Charlotte in August, 1875] who has got the children [two Bell children] and are they well and kindly treated I do hope so for her sake. I wanted to go back but could not is she Buried in Bells lot or in her own you must tell me all about it for I loved her so much...

Transcriptions of the letters of Orlando Knapp and his relatives are on file at the St. Lawrence County Historical Association in Canton. After 34 months of continuous military service, Orlando was contemplating a reunion with his sister and family. He wrote Charlotte from Washington, D. C. on May 29, 1865, in great anticipation of the reunion.

...we expect to go to Indiana before we can get mustered out & that will take some time and then I will want to visit a short time there but [t] will be only a short [time]

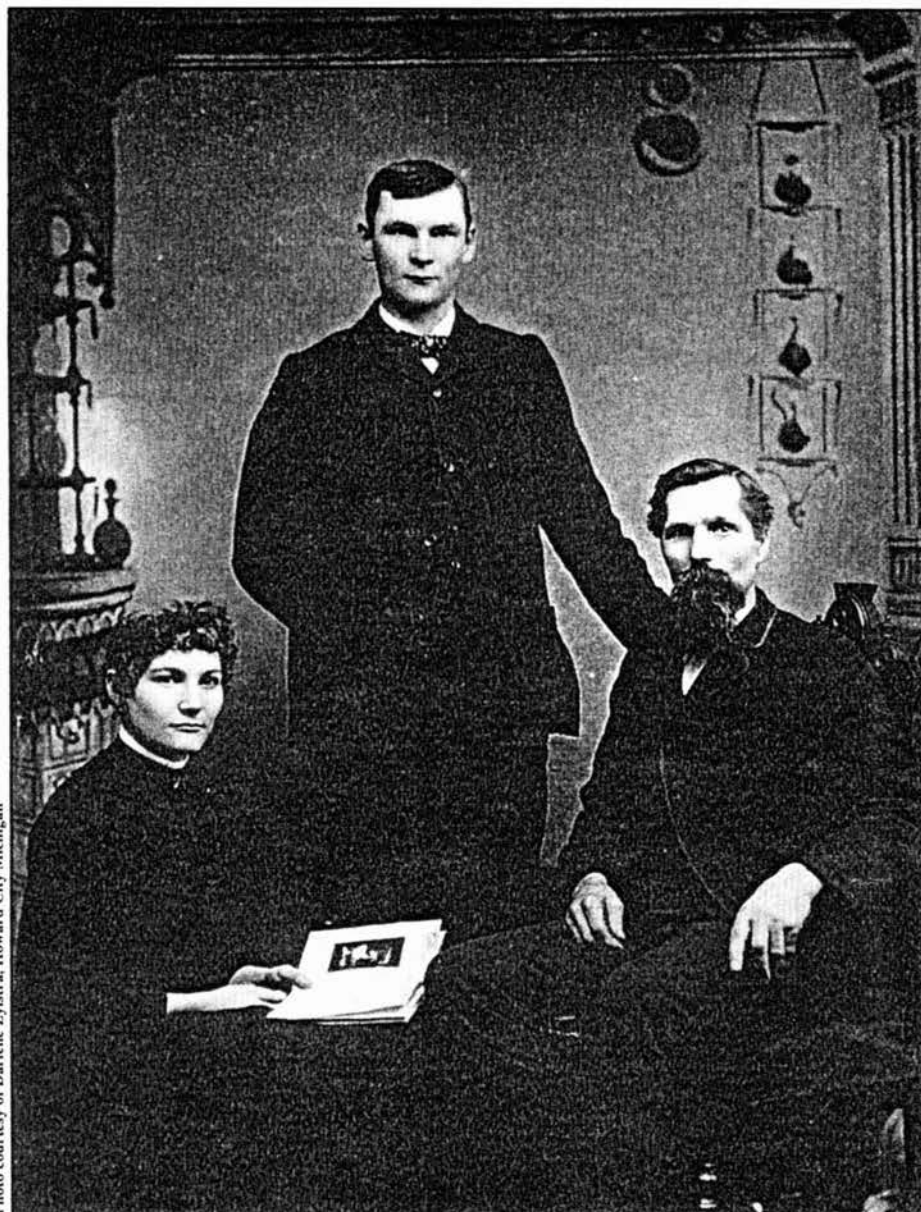


Photo courtesy of Darlene Zylstra, Howard City Michigan

Orlando and his children in Howard City, Michigan; probably mid-1870's.

for I shall make all possible speed to get home to the land of my birth and to my dear friends & relatives It will be a glorious meeting after so long an absence none will enjoy it better than I will...

We hope it was a glorious reunion. Orlando reclaimed his children after the war, became a traveling salesman of dry goods in northern New York and New England, remarried in 1869, and by 1871 had moved into lumber country along the Muskegon River that flows westerly into Lake Michigan. He became a reputable postmaster and businessman in Howard City, Michigan, the proprietor of O. J. Knapp and Company, Manufacturer of Lumber and Eave-Spouts. By the mid 1870s he operated a grocery store with his son, James. He died an honored citizen of Howard City in May, 1917, and Knapp descendants are scattered over western Michigan today.

In 1967, Hazen Knapp, a grandson of Orlando, was living near Howard City on property purchased by his grandfather. Hazen was fourteen when his grandfather died. What stories he must have been told. Perhaps when finished with stories of combat by the 12th Indiana Volunteers, Orlando might have paused and reflected on a different kind of war story - a story about Charlotte, Hazen's great aunt, that had unfolded letter-by-letter from northern New York. Perhaps there was mention of a woman's lonely

and increasingly futile attempts to nurse four small and very ill children through a diphtheria epidemic. Perhaps something was said of the anxiety of the father and brother who waited for word in the south and hoped for better news than they received.

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Janet Bullis was born in Potsdam, New York. She is the daughter of the late Roswell and Nellie Ames Smith. Upon graduation from high school she moved to Chicago, Illinois where she worked for Time-Life Magazine. She moved to Osceola, Arkansas where she lived with her first husband, D. Allen Edrington. Upon his death in a drowning accident in 1973, she and their young daughter, Katherine, moved back to Canton, New York. There she married Ira M. Bullis (great grandson of Charlotte Ellen Knapp Edmonds Bell). Janet and Ira have four daughters, Katherine, Peggy, Anna and Nellie. Janet is the secretary to the faculty in the

departments of geology and physics at Potsdam College.

Dr. James Carl is a midwesterner who moved from Illinois to New York in 1968.

He is a Professor of Geology at the State University of New York, College at Potsdam and has a strong interest in American history. He taught a course in American landscapes and literature along with his regular teaching duties in mineralogy and geochemistry.

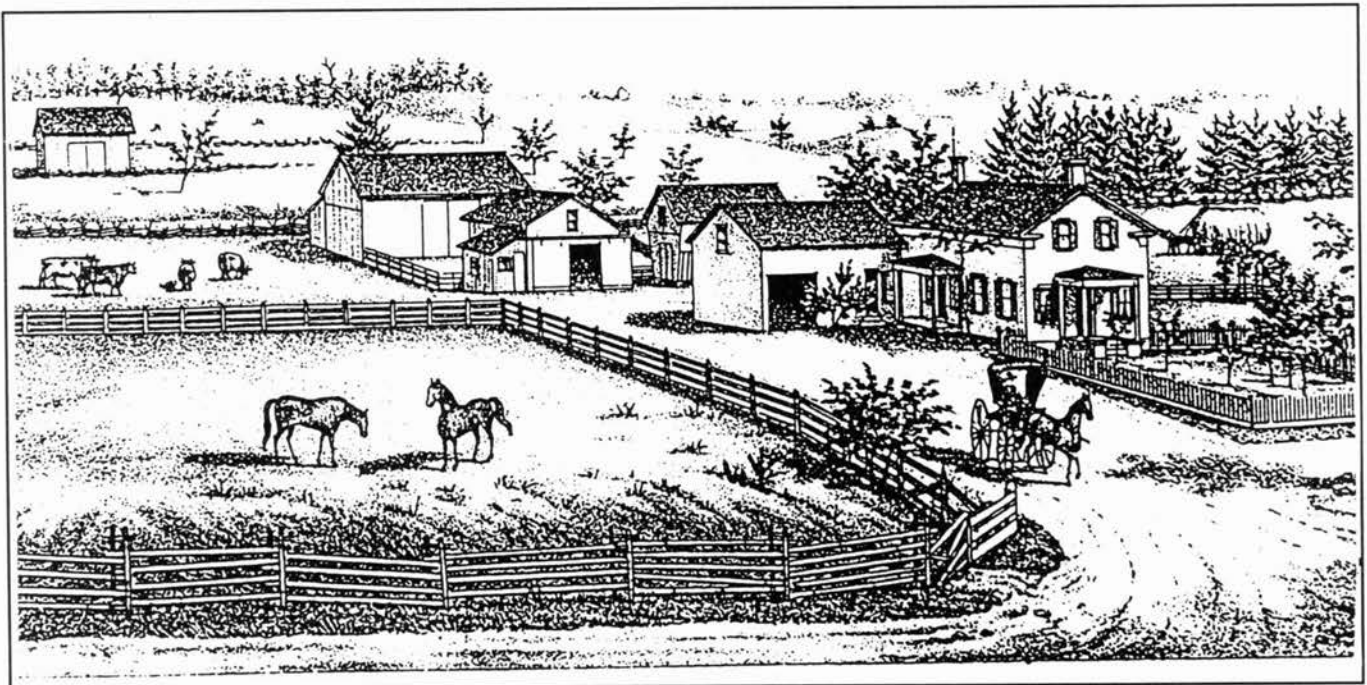
A Badge of Friendship?

by Charles T. Creekman, Jr.
and Douglas B. Moore

The stress of war often creates strong bonds of friendship between men whose paths would not otherwise have crossed. This was undoubtedly true during the Civil War as citizens came together from all over the young nation to fight with and against their countrymen. The legacy of those ties lasted long after the war's end, as evidenced by strong veterans' organizations like the Union Army's Grand Army of the Republic, whose members met to remember and fight again the battles of years past.

While those relationships died out with the passing of the veterans, once in a while we can look back and reflect on what made men comrades. An artifact, recovered in 1986 at Petersburg, Virginia, provides a rare glimpse into the past. The diamond shaped gold corps badge with a Greek cross in its center, bearing the inscription "Adj't J.C. Robinson, 106 N. Y. I, from Capt. E.M.P." on its reverse, has spawned an intriguing mystery — who were these men whose friendship merited such a special gift?

It could be said that J.C. Robinson was fortunate. Joseph Clark was born in 1840 at Gouverneur, New York, the son of Samuel Clark and Mary Boldurn.^{1d} Shortly after his birth, he was adopted by Horatio Nelson and Mary Goodrich Robinson of Massena, New York. Joseph's paternal grandfather, Daniel Robinson, a wealthy landowner, timber dealer, and one of the first settlers of Massena owned about 1400 acres of land on the St. Lawrence River, known locally as *Robinson's Bay*.^{1c} A sizeable portion of the farm passed to



Residence of H.N. Robinson, Massena, St. Lawrence County, N.Y. Most likely the childhood home of J.C. Robinson. Taken from *History of St. Lawrence County, 1878*.

Horatio. Joseph's mother, Mary Goodrich, was the daughter of Ira Goodrich, a former military officer and respected politician.^{1b} Mary's obituary proudly states that she was a lineal descendent of such pilgrims as John Alden and Miles Standish.^{1c} Joseph was their only son.^{1c}

Military and public service were part of Joseph's family history. During the Revolutionary War, Joseph's paternal great-grandfather, Ichabod Robinson, commanded a company at Schroon Lake at the time of Burgoyne's invasion.^{1c} Joseph's paternal grandfather, Daniel Robinson, held local public office as a Justice of the Peace for the town of Massena and, in 1814, was appointed Associate Justice of the Peace of the court of common pleas.^{1c} His maternal grandfather, Ira Goodrich, distinguished himself as an officer in the War of 1812 and served as a member of the Vermont legislatures of 1822 and 1825. Ira Goodrich also served as supervisor for the town of Massena for five or six years.^{1b} Joseph's father, Horatio, was a highly respected citizen of Massena and served as tax assessor in 1839. Joseph was educated at Fort Edward and Potsdam Academies in northern New York and was college bound at the outbreak of the Civil War.^{1a}

The story of "Capt. E.M.P." is one of hardship and dedication. Edward Michael Paine was born in Broad Stairs, Kent County, England in 1832.^{2a} At the age of five, Edward immigrated to the United States, with his father Edmund and seven sisters.^{2a,2b} They settled in Oswego, New York, located on the southern shore of Lake Ontario at the mouth of the Oswego River, about 130 miles southwest of Massena. Prior



H. N. Robinson, Joseph's father. From History of St. Lawrence County, 1878. The authors have searched for several years for a picture of J.C. Robinson. Recently one was located through a dealer in Civil War Artifacts only to be sold to someone else first and thus is not available for this publication.

to the war, Edward worked as a barber in his father's barber shop. He was described as the kind of person who had many friends and

was popular in the community. He reportedly won several local awards for his marksmanship and athleticism. In 1852, Edward married Hannah G. Stewart of Granby, New York.^{1a}

Edward's first military experience was short and disappointing. In April, 1861, shortly after the birth of his first child, 29-year old Edward Paine answered the call for enlistments, becoming Captain of Co. B of the 24th New York Infantry.³ From April to July, 1861, the 24th New York encamped at Washington, D.C., training and preparing for the war's opening campaign. In July, 1861, while marching out of Washington across the Long Bridge, Edward collapsed from heat stroke^{2b} which forced him to resign his commission in September and return to Oswego to convalesce. There he remained under the care of his family and Dr. Robert Scott through the winter of 1861-62, not fully recovering until late spring.⁴

The stage was set in July, 1862, for Robinson and Paine to meet as President Lincoln, facing reverses in the course of the year-old war — most recently the failed Peninsula Campaign in Virginia — issued a call for 300,000 more volunteers to fight for the Union. In northern New York,

communities answered the call as men began to enroll in a new unit which would soon be called the 106th New York Volunteer Infantry Regiment.⁵ Recruited from St. Lawrence and Franklin Counties, the rolls were rapidly filled as men came together in Ogdensburg for a few weeks of organization and training before heading for their first assignment.⁶ Edward Paine and Joseph Robinson were among the nearly 1000 men in the newly formed regiment. They would be one of the last regiments filled by men who voluntarily left their farms, friends, and families and went to war.

As with other regiments before, few men in the 106th New York had any practical military experience. Officers were often elected based on their social standing and willingness to serve. Edward Paine, having previously been a Captain in the 24th New York, was appointed Captain of Co. A.,⁷ while 22 year old Joseph Robinson became Corporal of Co. K.⁸

The soldiers of the 106th New York spent their first year performing garrison duty guarding the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad (in what is now West Virginia), a collection of untrained civilians learning the art of war. Following the battle of Gettysburg in July 1863, the 106th New York was consolidated into the Army of the Potomac.⁹ A grueling pace of nearly continuous campaigning

gradually transformed the regiment into a battle-toughened unit of that Army's Third Corps, wearing the distinctive badge of a lozenge (or diamond) to distinguish their corps from others.¹⁰ By 1863, Joseph Robinson was promoted to First Lieutenant and acting Adjutant. He was promoted to Adjutant in February 1864.¹¹ During

this period, Edward Paine had transferred to serve as Captain of Company G.¹²

In March, 1864, as Lieutenant General Grant took command of the Union armies, Major General Meade's Army of the Potomac was reorganized, with the 106th New York's Third Division of

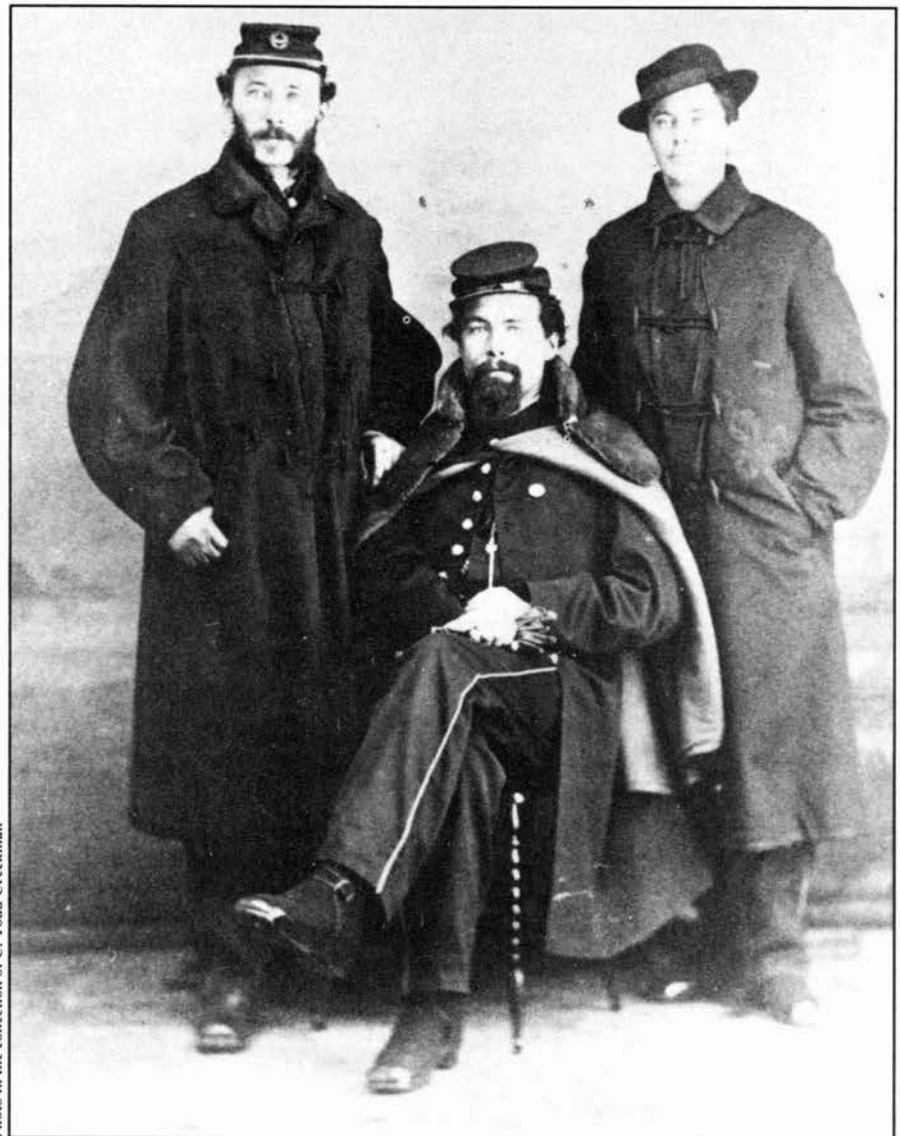


Photo in the collection of C. Todd Creekman

Captain Paine with his 1st lieutenant, Hiram W. Day (left) and 2nd lieutenant, Seldon C. Judson (right)

the Third Corps transferred to become the Third Division of the Sixth Corps—and now wearing the badge of the Greek cross. The veterans who prided themselves in the impressive combat record of the Third Corps resisted the change of identity. As a result, the Army issued General Orders No. 10, allowing members of the Third Corps to keep their corps badges. Meade explained:

*The major-general commanding avails himself of the occasion to say that, in view of the reduced strength of nearly all the regiments serving in this army, the temporary reduction of the number of army corps to three is a measure imperatively demanded by the best interests of the service, and that the reasons for attaching the First and Third Corps, for the time being, to other corps were in no respect founded upon any supposed inferiority of those corps to the other corps of this army. All the corps have equally proved their valor on many fields, and all have equal claims to the confidence of the Government and of the country. The First and Third Corps will retain their badges and distinctive marks, and the major-general commanding indulges the hope that the ranks of the army will be filled at an early day, so that those corps can again be reorganized.*¹³

The design of the corps badge found at Petersburg, combining the Third Corps lozenge with the Sixth Corps Greek cross, is an innovative example of the strong esprit de corps embodied in both of these battle-tested units.

The Army of the Potomac's Overland Campaign against Lee's Army of Northern Virginia started in May, 1864, and the opposing armies were in nearly continuous contact for forty days. During this time, both Paine and Robinson were present and actively participated in the battles of the Wilderness, Spotsylvania Courthouse, North Anna and Cold Harbor. At Cold Harbor in June, the 106th New York endured its most severe bloodletting of the war; by the time the regiment headed for Petersburg, it had lost nearly 200 men -- killed, wounded or missing -- down from its original recruited strength of nearly 1000.¹⁴

The Union army, though it had outraced Lee to Petersburg, failed to dislodge the defenders and take the town before the Confederate army settled into the extensive defensive works protecting this vital supply line junction. Grant attempted to determine the extent of Lee's lines by sending Hancock's Second Corps and Wright's Sixth Corps beyond the Union left flank, thereby stretching Lee's limited resources as much as possible and disrupting the supply flow on the Jerusalem Plank Road and the Weldon Railroad, south of Petersburg. On June 21st, 1864, the Sixth Corps camped at the Jerusalem Plank Road and prepared defensive lines. On June 22nd, the Federals moved cautiously to the west towards the railroad, but a determined counterthrust led by Confederate General William Mahone

forced them to fall back to their lines near the Plank Road. Most of that day's action fell to the Second Corps, as the Confederates exploited a gap which had developed between the Second and Sixth Corps.¹⁵

The Sixth Corps was engaged mainly in heavy skirmishing, and Captain Peter Robertson of the 106th New York detailed the events in a letter home to a local newspaper:

At sundown Gen. Wright was ordered to charge the enemy's works, which was to be with the bayonet. Two lines of battle were formed, the 10th Vermont and 106th New York forming the first line of our brigade. When the order came to storm the rebel works, we thought of the desperate charge at Cold Harbor, in which we lost so many of our noble boys, and we thought of our country; and every man moved forward, shoulder to shoulder, determined to do his whole duty.

The enemy had a heavy skirmish line in our front, and from which we received a severe fire which had but little effect upon our line. The order to charge was given. The boys gave their accustomed yell and forward they went on the double quick. The Johnnies took to their heels and fled behind their main works from which they fired a volley. I guess by the yelling we made they thought the whole of Grant's army was after them, for we could not see their heels for dust. We had to charge three-eights [sic] of a mile through a thick jungle of briars and under brush. The rebels had a cleared field in their rear which facili-

*tated their escape, consequently we took but few prisoners. Our loss was one killed and three wounded....*¹⁶

Perhaps that headlong charge over rough ground ripped loose the Corps badge that Adjutant Robinson almost certainly had received from Captain Paine earlier in the year. The action that day and the next took place in the vicinity of Globe Tavern, the area where the badge was found 150 years later. At any rate, the Federals held their positions and sent out patrols on June 23rd towards the Weldon Railroad. Tearing up portions of the track, they were forced by the Confederates to fall back to their lines of the 21st. The result of this engagement at the Jerusalem Plank Road was to extend the opposing lines further to the west and eliminate the road as an easy Confederate supply route.¹⁷ The railroad, however, was quickly repaired by the Confederates, and by early July the two armies had settled down to a protracted siege. The 106th New York, after a brief respite from the nearly two months of constant campaigning, was about to head north for another brutal battle, this time at Monocacy, Maryland, and a memorable Shenandoah Valley campaign.

The success of General Jubal Early's diversionary actions in the Shenandoah forced Grant to ship elements of the Sixth Corps, including the 106th New York, from the trenches at Petersburg north to defend Washington, D.C. The

young Captain of Co. G, Edward Paine, must have looked upon the move with apprehension since Washington had been the scene of his previous injury. He was equally unlucky this time around. During July 9th's battle of Monocacy, Captain Paine, in temporary command of the regiment, was wounded in the left thigh by a ball from a spherical case shot. As the outnumbered Union veterans retreated from the field, he was saved from capture by his comrades including Captain Hiram W. Day.¹⁸ Once again, Captain Paine was forced to return home to convalesce.

Meanwhile, the 106th New York participated in all the engagements against Early's army throughout the autumn of 1864, including Opequon Creek (3rd Winchester), Fisher's Hill and Cedar Creek. Newspaper accounts of the Battle of Opequon Creek report that Adjutant Robinson and Corporal Snyder distinguished themselves by capturing eight Confederate prisoners and that Adjutant Robinson had his sword shot from his hand.¹⁹

Paine's wound healed relatively quickly, and by January, 1865, he returned to the regiment

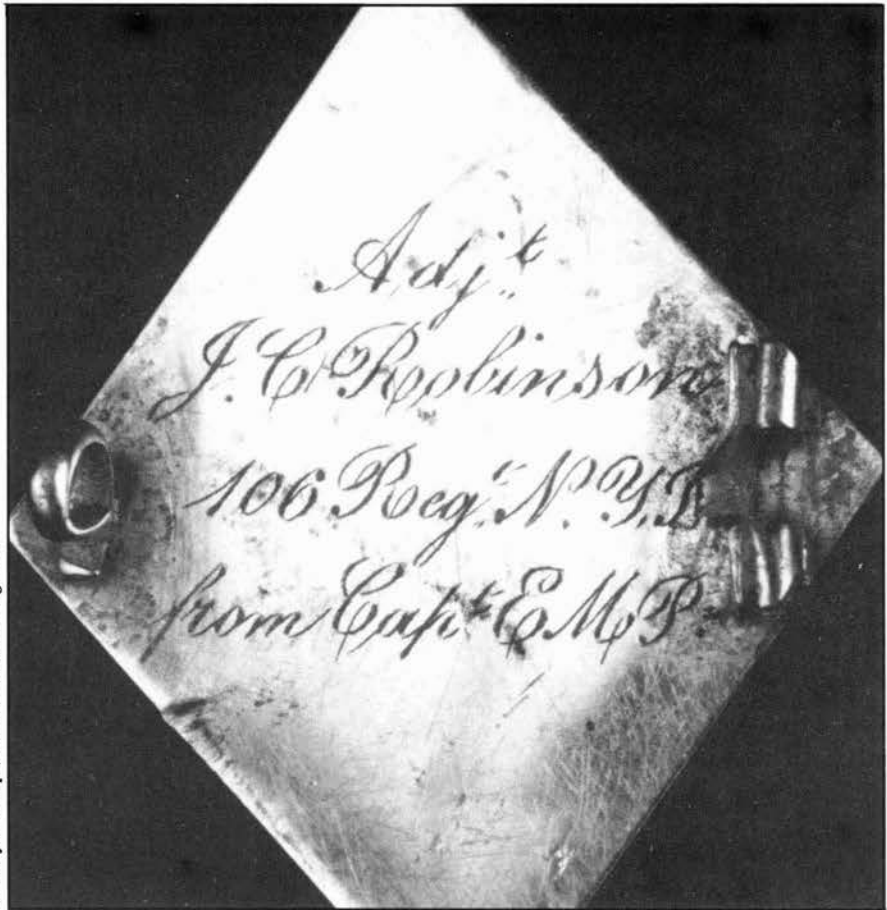


Photo by Fred Stipe, in the collection of Doug Moore

The badge is 1" high, and is made of gold. It is in the collection of Doug Moore.

once more, this time promoted to major. A diary entry of Abiel La Forge of the 106th New York mentions the arrival of Paine and Major McDonald, who had been captured by the Confederates and escaped.

Monday 30th - Major McDonald came to the regt after dark this evening and with him ex-Capt. Paine, who has a Majors [sic] commission to be mustered as such, as soon as McDonald gets mustered as Lt. Col., which he will be tomorrow. As soon as we found the Major had come, we got the regiment into line with a lot of candles and pine knots so as to form a torch

light [sic] procession, and moved up to Hd. Qtrs. and gave him "three times three". He made a short reply and the reg^t was dismissed. The army around us took up our enthusiasm, thinking some great news had come, and we could hear them sending cheering to the right and left of us as far as the sound would carry and they were sending it on. After the affair was over I returned to my quarters; played whist until near midnight, when just as I was going to bed, the Adj^t [Robinson] and Q.M. came down all out of breath, and begging all sorts of pardon for not having me at Hd. Qtrs. before! They were having a gay time there and never noticed the absence of one or two. Well, I went

up! Found the Brigade staff all there, all our officers and all drunk or getting so. We staid [sic] there dancing and singing & c. until three O.C., then broake [sic] up. I did not taste any licquor [sic]. They are getting so now as hardly to think of offering it. I used fairly fight to keep them from making me drink. 20

Edward Paine served as Major and Joseph Robinson as Adjutant of the 106th New York to the end of the Civil War, participating in the final battles of April 1865 at Petersburg and Saylor's Creek and Lee's surrender at Appomattox Court House. Major Edward Paine was in command of the 106th New York when it mustered out of service on June 22, 1865 at Washington, D.C.

Both officers received promotions and brevet (or honorary) promotions during the war. Joseph Robinson was promoted from Corporal to First Lieutenant to Adjutant. By the end of the war, he was an Adjutant on General Rickett's staff. He received a brevet commission to Major for "bravery and meritorious conduct during the Richmond campaign".^{21,23} Edward Paine rose in rank from Captain to Major. He received brevet commissions to Lieutenant Colonel and full Colonel for "bravery and meritorious conduct during the war".^{22,23}

After the war, both men returned home with experiences that undoubtedly shaped their post-war civilian lives. Col. Edward Paine was elected three

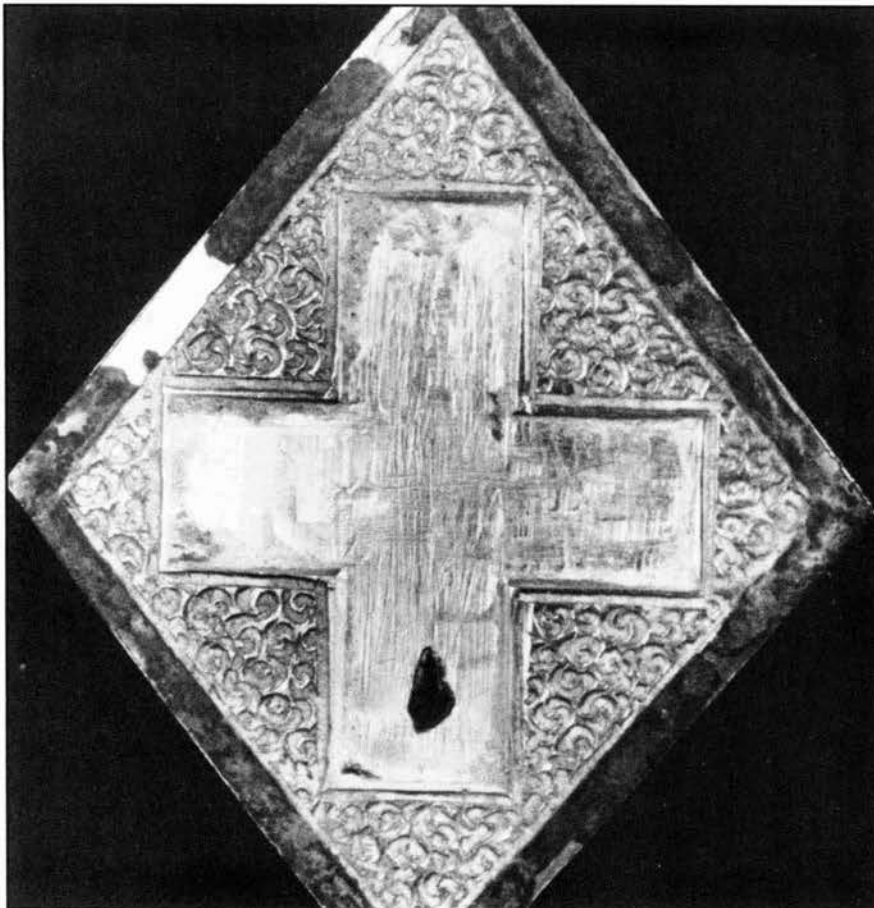


Photo by Fred Stipes, in the collection of Doug Moore

There are still traces of blue enamel on the cross and around the diamond's border.

times to local office, serving as a commissioner for the 3rd Ward, city of Oswego.^{2a} Among his post-war interests, Edward was an active sponsor of the 48th National Guard State of New York.²⁴ He was a successful businessman who returned to barbering as a profession, opening his own bath house. Around 1877, he formed a business partnership in Oswego with Thomas Hunter called the Paine-Hunter Furniture Wareroom.²⁵ In 1890, he sold his share of the business and moved to St. Louis, Missouri, where he lived for the next sixteen years. Edward Paine died in St. Louis on June 9, 1904.^{2b,4}

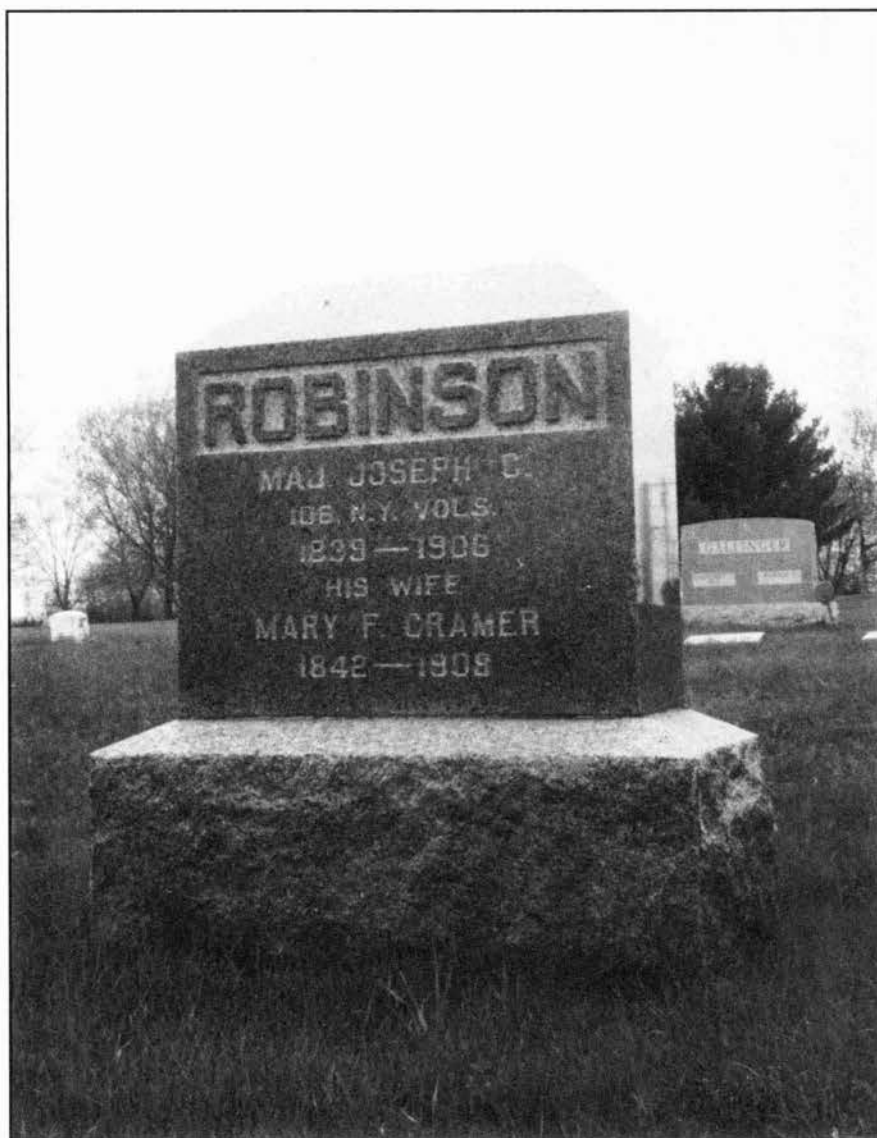
In 1870, Major Joseph Robinson married Mary Frances Cramer.^{8,1f} The couple had three children: two daughters, Mary Edith (Mrs. Alexander Mercer), Alice Nelson (Mrs A.A. Keeney) and one son, Clarence Cramer. Joseph was a member of the Colonel Hiram Anderson Post, Grand Army of the Republic. Joseph left the family farm in Massena New York for the dry good business in New York City; he eventually became a member of the wholesale firm of L.M. Bates and Co. He worked in New York City until his father's death in 1895 and returned to Massena in 1901.^{1c} After his return, Joseph, like his grandfather Daniel, was appointed a Justice of the Peace for the town of Massena.^{1c} While visiting his daughter and son-in-law, Mary Edith and Alexander Mercer, Joseph contracted pneumo-

nia and died on December 5, 1906 at their home at 352 West 117th Street in New York City. He is buried in Massena Center Cemetery.^{1f}

Based on the construction of the recovered corps badge and the relative ranks of Robinson and Paine in the inscription, the badge must have been made between March, 1864, when the regi-

ment was transferred to the Sixth Corps, and May, 1864, when they began the Overland Campaign. During this period, the 106th New York was in winter camp near Brandy Station, Virginia. Who made the badge and why Paine gave it to Robinson is still anyone's guess.

Despite all that we know about the two soldiers, the story of their



Grave marker of Major Joseph Robinson.

Photo by J. Rebecca Thompson

friendship remains an intriguing — and somewhat intractable — mystery. The record is silent about the relationship of Paine and Robinson between 1862-1865. Although no regimental history of the 106th New York was ever produced after the war, much data has been found in recent years of research, and interest in the Civil War and the men who fought remains high. However, no plausible explanation of the gift has been found in the military, pension, or local records. Almost certainly there is some documentary record as yet unlocated which will provide a clue, or perhaps even an answer, to this puzzle, and permit us to unlock the secret of this “badge of friendship”.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Captain Todd Creekman of Annandale, Virginia has conducted extensive research on the 106th New York Volunteer Infantry for the past 15 years, with the goal of writing a regimental history. His interest stems from his boyhood years when he spent several summers at his great-uncle Charles S. Chapman’s summer cabin at Morristown in St. Lawrence County. There he learned of the 106th New York and several ancestors who fought and died in the war. He asks that readers please contact him at 4812 King Solomon Drive, Annandale, VA 22003 if they have additional information on the regiment.

Douglas B. Moore is a relic

hunter and history buff who currently lives in Garner, North Carolina. He requests that any new information on the two officers in this article be passed to him at 1603 Woods Creek Drive, Garner, NC 27529.

NOTES

1. J.C. Robinson’s genealogical information comes from:

a. Gates Curtis, ed., Our Country and Its People: A Memorial Record of St. Lawrence County, New York (Syracuse: D. Mason & Co., 1894), p. 310.

b. History of St. Lawrence Co., New York (Philadelphia: L.H. Everts & Co., 1878), p. 410.

c. “Old Brick Houses”, Massena Observer, August 23, 1979, p. 5.

d. Unpublished Robinson family lineage, Massena Town Historian, 1996.

e. Obituary of Mary Minerva Robinson, Massena Observer, January 3, 1901.

f. Obituary of Major Joseph C. Robinson, Massena Observer, December 13, 1906.

2. E.M. Paine’s genealogical information comes from:

a. History of Oswego County, New York (Philadelphia: L.H. Everts & Co., 1877), pp. 187-188.

b. Obituary of Col. Edward M. Paine, Oswego Palladium, June 11, 1904.

3. Edward M. Paine, Captain,

Co. B, 24th New York Infantry and Captain, Co. A, 106th New York Infantry, 106th New York Infantry; Compiled Military Service Records of Volunteer Union Soldiers Who Served in Organizations from the State of New York; Muster Rolls; Records of Adjutants General’s Office, 1780’s-1917, Record Group 94, National Archives, Washington, D.C. (hereinafter cited as “E.M.Paine CMSR”)

4. Affidavit of Colonel Timothy Sullivan, 22 Dec. 1882; Edward M. Paine, brevet Colonel, Invalid’s Certificate 73,623, 106th New York Infantry; Case File of Approved Pension Applications of Civil War Veterans; Civil War and Later Pension Files; Records of the Veterans Administration, Record Group 15, National Archives, Washington, D.C. (hereafter cited as “E.M. Paine Pension File”).

5. “The New Levy”, St. Lawrence Republican and Ogdensburgh Weekly Journal, July 15, 1862, p. 2.

6. St. Lawrence Republican and Ogdensburgh Weekly Journal, July 22, 1862, p. 2.

7. E.M. Paine CMSR.

8. Joseph C. Robinson, Corporal, Co. K, 106th New York Infantry; Compiled Military Service Records of

Volunteer Union Soldiers Who Served in Organizations from the State of New York; Muster Rolls; Records of Adjutants General's Office, 1780's-1917, Record Group 94, National Archives, Washington, D.C. (hereinafter cited as "J.C. Robinson CMSR").

9. William F. Fox, Regimental Losses in the American Civil War 1861-1865 (Albany, NY: 1888), p. 221.

10. Mark M. Boatner, III, The Civil War Dictionary (New York: David McKay Co., Inc., 1959), p. 37.

11. J.C. Robinson CMSR.

12. E.M. Paine CMSR.

13. U.S. War Department, The War of the Rebellion: A Compendium of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies (70 volumes in 127 parts; Washington: Government Printing Office, 1880-1901), Series I, vol. 33, pp. 722-723. (hereinafter cited as "OR")

14. Fox, Regimental Losses, p. 221.

15. Noah A. Trudeau, The Last Citadel (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1991), pp. 68-79.

16. "From the 106th", Ogdensburgh Daily Journal, July 1, 1864, p. 2.

17. Trudeau, The Last Citadel, pp. 68-79.

18. Affidavit of Hiram W. Day, 27 July 1865; E.M. Paine Pension File.

19. "From the 106th", St. Lawrence Republican and Ogdensburgh Weekly Journal, October 4, 1864, p. 2.

20. "Diaries and Letters of Abiel Teple LaForge" (unpublished manuscript compiled by Phylis G. Jones in 1994), January 30, 1865 entry, U.S. Army Military History Institute Archives, Carlisle Barracks, Pa.

21. J.C. Robinson CMSR.

22. E.M. Paine CMSR.

23. Frederick Phisterer, New York in the War of the Rebellion 1861-1865, (Albany, New York: 1912), vol. 4, pp. 413-418.

24. Oswego County Board of Supervisors Reports, Oswego County Records, 1871, p. 8.

25. County Directories, Oswego County Historical Association. (1867, p. 146; 1878, p. 222; 1884, p. 23

From the Bookshelf

by Arthur Johnson

Railroads of the Adirondacks: A History

by Michael Kurdish. Purple Mountain Press, 1996.

Building on his earlier work *Where Did the Tracks Go?*, Michael Kurdish has produced the definitive book on railroads of the Adirondack region. Kurdish, a professor of botany at Paul Smiths College, has not only researched all these railroads, he has walked many of them.

The first half of the book examines geography and maps, passengers, fires, various industries, unusual railroads, abandonments, and preservation efforts. Part Two treats specific railroads and is divided into four geographical sections. For each railroad there is a history and general description, including a description of each station (In railroad terms *station* refers to a designated location and includes sidings and other facilities as well as the *depot*). For each line there is a map and also maps of each few miles of line, showing sidings and spurs. Black and white photographs adorn the text. One shows Paul Smith's trolley car pulling two passenger cars. The hotelier ran his own six-mile electric railway from the New York Central at Lake Clear Junction to his hotel on the shore of Lower St. Regis Lake (present site of the college of forestry and

hotel management which bears his name).

A map of passenger railroads shows how extensive a network served the region from the late 19th century to the 1930s. The only passenger carrier remaining today is the old Delaware and Hudson line over which a single daily Amtrak train, *The Adirondack*, runs each way between Montreal and New York. It is, by the way, one of the prettiest train rides anywhere.

No trackage has escaped Kurdish's notice. Most Adirondack history buffs know about the D & H, the Adirondack Division, or the New York & Ottawa. But how about the New York & Pennsylvania Company Railroad at Willsboro or the Watson Page Lumber Co. Railroad from St. Regis Falls to Lake Ozonia? The right-of-way is still visible from Azure Mountain if you know what you're looking for. Or the Grasse River Railroad into Cranberry Lake, or the Cranberry Lake Railroad into Wanakena, or the Roakdale Railroad, two miles of track from Onchiota to Roakdale? They are all here and more.

The topic is an important one

historically because it was the railroads that opened the heart of the region, first to lumberers, then to recreationists in search of game or health of body or soul, and finally to vacationists and skiers. The railroad days were the days of the great camps of the rich, the big frame hotels, and the boom towns feeding on lumber or ore. The trains carried out the wood and iron and carried in the summer people. At the little wooden depot of North Creek, Teddy Roosevelt boarded a train at night to be sworn in as president. Robert Louis Stevenson stepped off a train at Union Station, Saranac Lake, to "take the cure" at one of Dr. Trudeau's sanatorium cottages. Blocks of ice from Raquette Lake and the Fulton Chain rode out in New York Central "reefers" to cool the nations food.

Then came the automobile age and the two-lane blacktop road. Cars, trucks, and buses did in most of the railroads. A few survive. The former Carthage & Adirondack survives as the Mohawk, Adirondack & Northern to serve the paper mill at Newton Falls. The D & H still runs, now as the St. Lawrence & Hudson, owned by the Canadian Pacific. A tourist operation, the

Adirondack Scenic Railroad, runs summer excursion trains a short distance out of Thendara on the old Adirondack Division. But most are gone, leaving only rusty rails or a brush-covered grade, bridge abutments, or the occasional depot put to other uses, as clues to their once busy presence. Professor Kudish has told their story and enabled any of us so inclined to put on a pair of boots and walk the old rights of way. One is surprised with how fast it all came and went, just an episode in the rapid change in the region that started with railroads and steamboats and continues with roads and cars.

For the scholarly, though he does not pepper and salt the text with footnotes, Kudish provides an annotated bibliography. For anyone interested in the Adirondacks or its railroads, this book is absorbing reading and a useful guide for study or exploration.

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