

ABLE RANK AND FILE

HEROIC CAPTAIN, MAJOR AND PRIVATE, SEVENTY-FIRST NEW YORK.

Tributes From Veterans Who Saw the Empire Militia at San Juan. These were Heroes All Along the Line—Good Showing in the Charge.

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IN SPITE of wholesale exaggerations and tortuous complications in its record at San Juan Hill, the Seventy-first New York, as a regiment, is emerging from the cloud under which it was placed by the quarrels of its officers soon after the return from Cuba. Time will right the wrong for the men who were wronged, and the plaudits showered upon the marching ranks on Memorial day were not extravagant and not undeserved. While General Shafter was in command of the department of the east after his return from Cuba, a mustered out Seventy-first man approached his old commander one day in a public place and quite timidly asked the privilege of shaking his hand. The matter was put to Shafter in this form, "General, here is a Seventy-first man who wishes to know if you'll shake hands with a member of that regiment?"

"With pleasure," said Shafter, taking the blushing boy's hand and laying hold of his arm in a fatherly way. "I am always ready to greet a soldier of the Seventy-first. Yours is a good regiment, and don't you ever be ashamed of it. The only trouble in it all was that the officers fell to quarrelling when they got home. The regiment was all right in the field, and did no worse than hundreds of regiments have done in the first campaign. Had the war lasted a few months longer the Seventy-first would have been as good as the best."

Snap judgments on the Seventy-first at San Juan are unfair and unjust to say the least. Notwithstanding all the heroes the Spanish war produced, not one can be spared. The Seventy-first has heroes on its rolls. At one time it seemed as though they had to be brought out with a searchlight. Now its cowards and failures who are to be picked out singly. Said a veteran regular officer at Camp Wikoff, "Give the Seventy-first Krag-Jorgensen and smokeless powder in place of their Springfield and they are regulars."

There have been many good things said of this volunteer militia regiment by their regular comrades. In comparison with the showing of the New York Seventh in the Spanish war crisis the Seventy-first should be entitled to an ovation if it hadn't smelled powder at all. But it did smell powder. It lost 15 men killed outright or died of wounds and 76 deaths by disease contracted in the trenches in Cuba. This was over 10 per cent of its strength.

Aside from these honorable scars, the regiment made a good record in the field and in the trenches. There is one thing that every soldier knows which counts in the favor of these militia boys. Cowards cannot be drawn into battle by chains, and if by any means they are tricked into getting within bullet range they may always find an excuse to crawl out of the dilemma. The mass of the rank and file of the Seventy-first acted all right at the San Juan ford and on the hill. They didn't show cowardice, and to a man would have displayed heroism had they been older hands or had proper leadership.

It is to be noted that not an officer of the Seventy-first was killed or stricken mortally by fever. The two officers who came out unmistakable heroes were prostrated with fever as soon as they reached the north. These were Major Keck and Captain Rafferty. For a time there were conflicting stories about Major Keck, but I discovered at Camp Wikoff that the men in the ranks classed Keck and Rafferty together as the heroes of the day, shutting out all other officers.

When the regiment came home, Keck didn't pose as a hero, but he talked like one. When asked for his story, he said: "My story is simply the story of the Seventy-first regiment. I never saw skirmishers deploy as well as the Seventy-first men deployed on the field of battle. The intervals were perfect. The men were as calm as though they had been drilling at state camp."

"But, major," said the interviewer, "the boys said that you led them, waving a red bandanna handkerchief." "Nonsense! The Seventy-first regiment in that fight led itself."

"But you were out ahead, were you not?" "Well, I followed in front," answered the major, with a smile. "But we were all right there. Rafferty was right with us, and so was his command, Company F. I tell you Rafferty and his men were all right."

command. "Is there an officer here who will obey an order from General Kent?" To this Rafferty promptly responded that he would obey any and every order from General Kent. He was told what to do. Major Keck also responded, and his battalion was placed in line to follow or go beside the regulars then hurrying to support the column attacking San Juan hill. Major Keck gives praise to Keck for readiness to act and coolness. He didn't stand on ceremony and demand that orders come through the regular channels, but fought when and where he was told.

Since the investigation and governor's report on the conduct of the regiment that day former Lieutenant John M. Thomson of the Third battalion has told the story so long held secret of what the battalion did at San Juan Hill. He shows, like Major Keck, that the Third battalion, last in line, was not seriously affected by the wavering of the troops ahead, and continues:

Major Keck, of Kent's staff, asked Major Keck, commanding the Third battalion, if he would obey any orders from Kent. Upon receiving an affirmative reply Major Keck directed him to carry his battalion to the front, which was immediately done. Advancing through the trail, the Third battalion passed the Second and First battalions. Major Keck directed the battalion to ford San Juan river.

Arriving on the other side of the river in the high grass, the battalion was again formed and specially executed the command of Major Keck, which was, "Left front into line of squads as skirmishers! March!"

I have never seen the maneuver more perfectly executed on parade. In this order the battalion crossed the field, which was about 200 yards in width and 800 yards in length and proceeded up to the brow of San Juan hill to the left of the blockhouse. When we reached the top, we found Captain Rafferty and I already there. By direction of General Kent the battalion was marched to the left for the distance of about one-quarter of a mile to find the left of the Sixteenth infantry. Not being able to find the Sixteenth, Major Keck marched us back to our previous position on the top of San Juan hill. There has been no claim that the Third battalion led the regiment into action, but the Third battalion does claim that they were first on the hill after Captain Rafferty, who had preceded the Third battalion by about 20 minutes.

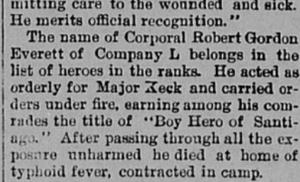
I deny as much as anybody the undue credit given to the Seventy-first and the rough riders for the capture of San Juan hill, but I do claim for Company F and the Third battalion that they were present at the taking of San Juan hill and most materially assisted in doing so. The Third battalion closely followed the footstep of the Twenty-fourth infantry, the fact of which can be substantiated by nearly all, if not all, the officers of the Twenty-fourth infantry.

While at Camp Wikoff the writer personally verified the statements made by officers of the regiment to the effect that 68 men of the Seventy-first reported on the rolls as missing the night of July 1 were not shirking, but were in among the regulars, having charged the hill with them. Major Webb, inspector general of the Second division, says that when the regulars marched through the prostrate Seventy-first in the trail they were greeted with such cries from the New Yorkers as, "Go in, boys, and give it to them!" "We wish we were going along with you!" "Say, take us along with you!" Ask any old soldier if that is the language of cowards and shirks on the edge of the battlefield. The gallant Captain Parker of the Gatlings laments that the Seventy-first men cheered his guns as they went in and drew Spanish fire. But all this cheering and calling for leaders shows that the grit of the misguided boys was all right. It was a place to rattle the oldest veterans, but the moment a leader showed himself who could lead, the Seventy-first men were as valorous as the best. All who left their own ranks to join the regulars fought like heroes, and then went back to their own colors.

Captain Rafferty finally told his story, and said: "My company pushed right along and forded the creek, which was up to their necks. From the creek up to the blockhouse was an open space, which the Spaniards just swept with volleys. We clambered along toward the eminence on which the fort stood. Adjutant Tayman of the Twenty-fourth infantry, one of the colored regiments, a splendid officer and man, came up and said, 'Where are you going?' "I replied, 'Up the hill.' " "Good!" said he. "You're the kind we want." So along with the regulars Company F went up."

Tayman said that it was as Rafferty claimed; that he, Tayman, directed Rafferty how to get his company to do execution, and Rafferty, after the battle, hunted him out to thank him for it. Said Tayman, "Rafferty did well."

A field officer and a line officer saved the honor of the Seventy-first on San Juan hill, and to Private Charles Edwards of Company I belongs the glory of winning the only honorable mention for a man in the ranks. Major Keck said in his report that this soldier "rendered voluntary, efficacious and unremitting care to the wounded and sick. He merits official recognition."



PRIVATE EDWARDS, MAJOR KECK, CAPTAIN RAFFERTY. (Heroes of the Seventy-first.)

FOREIGN NAMES.

How We Should Use Names of Countries and Cities.

It is useless perhaps to rehearse remarks that we have already made once or twice; that the names of certain foreign cities and countries have with us an English form that has by long use and acceptance become English, and the only English. To use its foreign form for the name of some foreign city that has what we may call a second, or simplified name in English, is to be guilty of affectation. The Richmond Dispatch to be consistent must never say Vienna, but will have to write "Wien." Munich must give place to Muenchen. The Rhine will become the Rhein, and Germany itself Deutschland. Henceforth the Virginians should not read Nippon for Japan and Choong Kweh for China. That will be very nice. It will look so much more knowing. The Hague should be written S'Gravenhaag and Antwerp be lengthened to Antwerpen. The thing runs right along on that same principle. The Richmond Dispatch and the few other papers in the country that have similar bees in their bonnets will really be supplying a university extension course in modern languages to their readers. The papers will be cheap at any price.

There is one little thing that we should like to say, however, and that is that when a paper starts out on a tack like that it is sailing pretty close to the wind and ought to keep its sails trimmed flat and know what it is about. It has to be right, and if it is not right it merely makes itself ridiculous. Now about the Richmond Dispatch and "Habana." Habana is not the full, correct Spanish name of the city that we American call Havana. Its name is "La Habana," just as the name of the French city that we know as Havre is Le Havre. In fact, the whole unabbreviated Spanish name of the capital of Cuba is "San Cristobal de la Habana." The full name is not often used, but if the Richmond Dispatch is thirsting for accuracy it must not only pronounce the "b" as a "v," but it must also leave the "H" unsounded. That may cause hard at first, but in such a cause no trouble should cause the ambitious to faint by the wayside. But why do people ever start out on any such performance? We have a very good language of our own, and we might as well stick to it. Why is not "Havana" a good enough spelling for anybody? It is English, just as "Porto Rico" is English, and all the decisions of all the government boards in the country cannot make it anything else, nor can "Habana" ever be made English. It is nothing but an affectation to adopt foreign spellings. If it is to be done in one case it ought to be done in all, but we hope and believe that good American English will continue to serve the uses of the greater number of our people.—Hartford Courant.

Did you ever come across a monthly publication devoted solely to the condemnation of the tall hat? No? Well, such a journal is really edited and published by an elderly Englishman, who a few years ago was bequeathed the sum of 400 pounds sterling per annum on condition that he ran a monthly in which the conventional "topper" should be held up to derision as "an ugly abomination." The Anti-Tall Hat has a circulation of three copies—one each for the editor and the testator's two executors.

Highly significant were the conditions imposed upon a legatee in the will of an immensely wealthy stock-broker. He left everything to his young wife on condition that she should never set foot in the city of London; should never invest a shilling in anything but consols; and should do everything in her power to deter others from speculating in stocks and shares.

In Jerusalem. There is great distress in Jerusalem at the moment, owing to the enhanced price of flour, and on behalf of the Jewish population there, a curious circular has been issued in Hebrew and English and sent broadcast into England and America. It is signed by the chief rabbi of the German and Polish Jews, who can hardly be less than 90 years of age, and is of very venerable presence. He has long white hair and beard, and looks every inch a patriarch; he is nearly blind with age, and has quite an army of children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Wages are very low in Jerusalem, employment is very hard to get, and though you can buy a chicken for 10 cents, such a sum is not easily obtained. Thousands of dollars flow into the holy city during the year, collected by the charitable for the poor of all faiths, but the distribution is said to be unwise, and the proportion of money properly expended is small.

Rapid Photographic Work. A marvel in the line of rapid photography was performed in New York when biograph pictures of the parade of Astor's battery, taken in the afternoon, were shown the same night at Keith's theater. The pictures, one thousand in number, were taken in twenty-five seconds, ten minutes after four o'clock. They were sent to Hoboken for development, and were back at the theater at 9:10 o'clock. This is said to be the fastest work of the kind on record, the best previous record of seven hours having been made in London on the occasion of the return of General Kitchener from Egypt.—L. A. W. Bulletin.

Henry James Comes Home. The home of the famous novelist near Rye, England, was recently destroyed by fire. While it is being rebuilt Mr. James intends to come back home to the United States, from which he has been absent so many years.

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PRESBYTERIAN. Sabbath services after first day of May at 10:30 a. m. and 8 p. m. Sabbath School at 11:45 a. m. and Young People's Christian Endeavor at 7:30 p. m. Weekly prayer meetings Thursday at 7:30 p. m. Bible class and Teachers' meeting immediately after prayer meeting. Choir practices Friday at 7:30 p. m. Ladies Aid every third Wednesday at 8 o'clock, and Ladies' Missionary Society every second Friday of the month. REV. A. G. MARTIN, Pastor.

CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST—L. D. S. Services every Sunday at 11:00 a. m. and 7:00 p. m. Sunday School at 10:30 a. m. J. T. TURNER, Pastor, Detroit, Iowa.

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SYLVAN LODGE NO. 507, A. F. & A. M. Regular meeting Tuesday evening or before full moon. Special meetings 2d Tuesday following Laub's Hall. Visiting members in the city are urged to attend. A. OSWALD, W. M. C. M. STALEY, Sec'y.

SYLVAN CHAPTER NO. 207, O. E. S. Regular meeting first Tuesday evening after full moon in Laub's Hall. Visitors welcome. Mrs. J. B. ROMANS, W. M. MAX RIFE, Sec'y.

DELOIT CAMP NO. 531, M. W. A., Deloit, Iowa. Regular meetings every Saturday night, Visiting Woodmen always welcome. T. AMLEY BROWN, Clerk. C. R. WILEY, V. C.

DENISON LODGE NO. 315, M. W. A., Denison, Iowa. Regular meetings Thursday night, Visiting Woodmen tendered a cordial welcome. E. GULICK, Clerk. J. H. HORTON, V. C.

SIDONIA LODGE NO. 388, I. O. O. F. (German). Meets every Friday night, in Laub's Hall at 8 o'clock. Visitors especially welcomed. FRED CLAUSSEN, N. G. PETER BRAUER, Sec'y.

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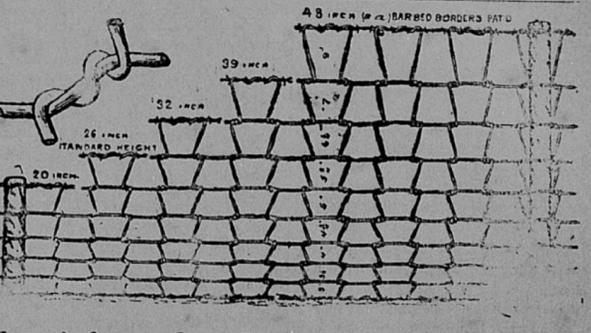
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