

The Mohawk Courier.

Little Falls, June 18, 1863.

Return of the 34th Regiment.

THEIR RECEPTION.

Last Saturday was a gala day in our village. The gallant soldiers of the 34th regiment were coming home after two years hard and honorable service, to receive the thanks and congratulations of relatives, friends and old acquaintances, previous to their being mustered out of the service. During their absence, they have participated in battles that will be recorded in history, and won a name for bravery that will be honored so long as the record of our country shall be kept. They had rallied from the hills and along the valley, when the first alarm of danger was sounded, and 800 in number had entered the service of the Government two years before. Three hundred and twenty only of that number were in the ranks,—the ballance were mouldering upon fourteen battle fields, or scattered, sick and disabled among the scenes of their childhood. (An article copied from the Evening Journal on our first page, will give the reader a concise history of their movements.)—Little time remained after the day of their return was fixed in which to complete arrangements for their reception, but with general enthusiasm and cooperation, our citizens accomplished a great amount of work. Saturday morning all things were in readiness. Before sunrise, rain began to fall, and about 9 o'clock it poured upon us heavily. Notwithstanding, loads of people began to move along the roads leading to our village, and our streets were soon thronged by thousands.—The rain ceased about, 10 o'clock, loads of people continued to arrive, and at 11 the assemblage was all that could have been expected. At that time the train bringing the 34th arrived. Cannon thundered a welcome, our band played "Home, Sweet Home," and amid waving of kerchiefs the regiment debarked. For a few moments the scene baffles description. Parents sought among the ranks for sons,—sisters looked for brothers.—and every one seemed to have a friend among the gallant soldiers. After receiving the con-

gratulations of the assemblage, the regiment formed in line. They were then welcomed home in behalf of the Board of Trustees by M. W. Priest, President of the village, in the following brief and appropriate speech:—
 GENTLEMEN, *Officers, and Soldiers of the 34th Regiment, of New York State Volunteers*:—

The duty and the pleasure devolves upon me as President of this village, to welcome those that belong to this County on their return home. Thanking those members of your regiment belonging to other parts of the State for their presence on this occasion, I hope that nothing may occur that will cause any but kind, recollections and good feelings towards us when far away from us. I assure the relations and friends of those that do not return that they have the sincere sympathy of this community. Hon. AMOS H. PRESCOTT will welcome you in behalf of the County. Again I bid the heroes of the 34th Regiment a warm and cordial welcome to the Village of Little Falls.

The procession was then formed in the following order, by the Marshal of the day, Maj. Z. C. Priest, and marched to the corner of second and John streets.

Squad of Police.
 FIRST DIVISION.
 Maj. Z. C. Priest, Marshal of the Day.

Mohawk Valley Band.
 County Committee, Mounted.

Mounted Citizens from the various Towns.
 Marshal. Visiting Military. Marshal.

SECOND DIVISION.
 Marshal. Frankfort Band. Marshal.
 President and Trustees of the Village.
 Orators of the Day.
 President of the Day.
 Clergy.
 Operatives from the Factories.
 Citizens in General.

THIRD DIVISION.
 Iliion Band.

Marshal. FIRE DEPARTMENT. Marshal.
 Chief Fireman.
 Herkimer Fire Company.
 Frankfort Fire Company.

Mohawk Fire Company.
 Iliion Fire Company.

LITTLE FALLS FIRE DEPARTMENT.
 Cascade Engine Co. No. 1.
 Protection Engine Co. No. 2.

Gen. Herkimer Engine Co. No. 8.
 Citizens' Brass Band.

Marshal. Drum Corps. Marshal.

34th REGIMENT N. Y. S. VOLUNTEERS.
 Disabled and Discharged Soldiers.

After prayer by Rev. S. B. Gregory, the following Address of Welcome was delivered by Hon. A. H. Prescott:

Col. LAFLIN, officers and soldiers of the 34th Regiment, of the Volunteer force of the State of New York:

I have unexpectedly been selected to perform the honorable duty of greeting

you, and in behalf of the people of the County, to extend to you their warm, cordial, and hearty welcome. It is now more than two years since you, each and all, abandoned your peaceful pursuits in civil life to engage in a new vocation. The employment was one of a different character from any that you had before that time engaged in; you did not go to gratify an ambition, to obtain wealth, or for place, or for position, whereby you could formally enjoy the favor, comfort, and emoluments of the world, but it was in response to the call of our country, to perform, not a pleasant though a highly important duty, which belongs to the citizens of all classes that live in the land of Washington on their own free will and accord, abandoned all you held dear, so far as the social relations of life were concerned, because you desired to obey the summons which called you to defend the institutions of our Fathers. The time when your organization was affected is fresh in our memory, as well as the many difficulties and hardships you encountered, and the sacrifices made to reach the Battle Field. Well do we remember the day when you bade adieu to the loved ones, and amid their tears, with firmness and manly bearing, departed upon the train which was, to convey the Regiment to the scenes of deadly conflict and strife, and which, alas, was to many of our brave comrades, their departure upon a journey from which no traveler returns.

As you went away, the sympathies and prayers of the people were with you; all had a deep interest in you as citizens of a County that had since the days of the Revolution been always distinguished for their fond attachment to the principles of a Republican Government. The honor of the fair fame of the County of Gen. Herkimer was committed to your trust; *you* were to prove whether or not you were worthy of your noble ancestry—did the same unflinching courage, devoted patriotism and fidelity exist in A. D. 1861, as pre-

vailed and was exhibited in the days of 1776? The record already made up in the history of this great contest, still existing in behalf of human freedom and the "inalienable rights of man," shall speak and answer the question.

The battles of Fair Oaks, Nelson's Farm or Glendale, White Oak Swamp, Malvern Hills, Antietam and Fredericksburg were each and all of them distinguished as closely contested fields, by the opposing forces, for the unflinching valor there displayed, and places that have become classic grounds. On those bloody fields tens of thousands brave soldiers sacrificed their lives on the Altar of Liberty, and have gone to receive their reward in the land of light

beyond the Sun. The soiled, blood-stained and tattered banners which I see before me this day—proud emblems of a nation's hope, were there unfurled and sustained by you. That brave, accomplished, and deeply lamented officer, Gen. Sumner, in his official report of the battle of Fair Oaks, by merely stating facts in regard to what you did there, has made a page in history which is destined to place undying laurels on the 34th New York. When the fortunes of the day were against us, and the traitorous legions of the enemy were advancing, and nothing except firm, bold, and decided action could prevent defeat, your services were required, and upon you rested the responsibility of that important contest—Your line of battle on that occasion was as perfect and in as good order as though you were only on Dress Parade, or drawn up for review. Shoulder to shoulder you made that gallant, noble, and glorious charge, which will be remembered "not for a day but for all time." The enemy fled, and one of the most brilliant victories of the war was thus accomplished, but at a loss of ninety-eight of your brave comrades.

At Antietam, when outflanked and surrounded, you nobly cut your way through the enemy and saved the Regiment, coming out of the contest with numbers much diminished.

Nobly did you stand up against the iron hail and missiles of death and destruction at Fredericksburg. But I have not time to continue the history of your gallant deeds further here.—Your have gained the unperishable glory of true courage and bravery, at all times and in all places in which you have been called upon to act. "The Fighting 34th," well in the advance at all times when on the march against the enemy, and in the rear at the re-

treach.

More than the full period of your enlistment having expired you are now about to lay down your arms and return to your families and friends. A cordial, earnest, and happy greeting awaits you. The assembled multitude here affords but slight evidence of the place which you each and all hold in the affections of the people of the County, who all hail and honor you, the survivors of so many well fought battles. But the rejoicings and congratulations of this hour must be disturbed by the incidents that are always connected with such conflicts.—In proportion to the character, magnitude, and severity of the contest, must be our losses and reverses. How happy we should feel if all those who wept with you in April 1861, could be restored to society, friends, and families on this occasion. While your safe arrival causes the tears of joy to flow down many cheeks, emotions of a different character prevail in many sad

hearts; but about half of your original number have been permitted to return. Where are those that went with you that cannot be present here to-day?—A large proportion of them have fallen in battle, and their remains repose beneath the clods of the valley, or are now bleaching in the sun in a distant land. All honor is due to the memory of the illustrious dead.

Their names and deeds are recorded in our hearts, and in a suitable manner, shall the record be preserved, and transmitted from generation to generation. I trust also, that each and all of us, will remember in a manner to be exhibited by "substantial acts, of kindness, and charity, the Widow and the Orphan. Another painful consideration is suggested here: Notwithstanding your task has been well accomplished, the end has not yet been reached; the Rebellion against the best Government that the light of the Sun has ever shown upon, still rages with undiminished fury. While much has been accomplished, great sacrifices and exertions, are yet necessary, and demanded. I desire to ask a question here, put to all those who compose this assembly, returned Soldiers as well as Citizens; Shall we abandon the conflict, allow our institutions to be overthrown, and the fit and chosen emblem of our Nation's Glory to trail in the dust?—Will we, so far as our action is concerned, continue to make all the further sacrifices that are, and may become necessary to preserve to the world, to bless mankind, the richest boon, which GOD, in his wisdom has ever vouchsafed to Man? I believe it to be the firm and decided opinion of all present, "that our Glorious Union, must and shall be preserved."

Then in conclusion, permit me to say, let this consideration be uppermost in the minds of all and let all else, be subservient to the great end. To establish our Glorious Government, required the sincere and the greatest sacrifices of all those possessed of patriotic hearts.—To preserve and continue it requires greater exertion, more united action, than it did to establish it.

From this time henceforth then, let us each and all, feel that we have an individual duty to perform, and waiving all less important considerations, let us be united as one sacred band of Patriotic men and women, and let the only question be, in what way and manner can we do the most good, towards the accomplishment of this much desired object.

Fellow Citizens, the example of the 34th is before you, it has been noble, manly, and glorious, from the beginning to the end. If we do our part, yet remaining to be performed, as well as they have done theirs, the rebellion will speedily be put down, Officers and

Soldiers, trusting that your presence with us will incite in all, emulation and action, for that purpose, in this hour of peril, I welcome you, and may the richest of Heaven's Blessings, reward and bless you and yours.

The Address was responded to by Col. Byron Laflin, in behalf of the regiment, in a brief, appropriate and eloquent manner. At the conclusion of his remarks, Maj. Priest proposed three cheers for the 34th, which was heartily responded to. Col. Laflin then called upon the soldiers for three cheers for Herkimer County, which were given with a will.

The procession then marched up John street to Eastern Avenue, around Eastern Square to Main street; up Main street to Western Avenue; down Canal street to Ann street; down Bridge street to Jefferson street; up Jefferson street to Ballinger street; up Ballinger street to German street; thence up Ann street to Western Square. During the march bells rang and cannon thundered.

Arriving at the Square, a beautiful scene was presented. A long platform had been erected on the north side, for the speakers and clergy. Upon that stood about fifty young ladies belonging to Miss H. A. Wright's School, dressed in white,—wreaths encircling their heads, each holding bouquets, tied with red, white, and blue ribbons. In front of the platform in long letters was the motto "First to Volunteer." Entering the Square through a beautiful Gothic arch, the procession was marched in front of the platform described. The young ladies then recited in perfect concert a composition addressed to the soldiers, which we have failed to procure. At the close of their recitation, they tossed their bouquets among the soldiers who eagerly appropriated them. Maj. Priest proposed three cheers for Miss Wright's school, which was heartily responded to—the young ladies left the platform,—the clergy and speakers took seats, and Hon. Ezra Graves delivered the following address to the soldiers.

OFFICERS AND SOLDIERS, OUR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS,—who have now come back from the field of blood and carnage with your garments faded by a southern sun, and your faces bronzed by a southern wind. You have come home unharmed from the rebels, from

whose hearts the sting of nations death has emanated, and by whose hands the temple of freedom has been desecrated. You are permitted to meet again the kind embraces of those you left behind, with such additional claims upon them as your fidelity and heroism have created. The two years that you have been absent, have been long years to those who have missed you at home, and who have gazed up on the vacant chair with tearful eyes and prayerful hearts; whose thoughts and imaginations have followed you from your enrollment in 1861, to the barracks at Albany, and onward to your encampment on Kalorama Heights; from thence to Seneca Mills, to the Great Falls, to Edwards Ferry, to Poolsville, Baldwins Heights, Charles town, Berrysville, Winchester, and back to Sandy Hook, and Washington, and Alexandria, and then by ship to Fortress Monroe, disembarking at Hampton. We followed you through Big and Little Bethel, to the entrenchment at Howard's Bridge, pursuing the rebels on their retreat to their formidable defences at Yorktown, and from thence to your encampment at the Tyler House. We followed you to Fair Oaks, to witness the full strength of your heroic daring as you took the place of Gen. Casey's vanquished forces and came to the relief of General Couch, who was then about yielding the field to the enemy. We heard your shouts as they welled up from your patriotic hearts on that memorable day at Fair Oaks, when, with glistening Bayonets, you charged the rebel foe with such intrepidity and determination that stone walls, underbrush and swamps were no obstacles in your way to the attainment of that glory that came with a halo clustering around your heads wilting on the breeze as it passed over the field of deadly conflict. "The brave invincible 34th," we read it on the wings of the wind, as it passed over the homes you left behind, and our bosoms beat with pride and our hearts throbbed with gratitude that you, our associates, had nobly defended our country's flag though the missiles of death, thinned your ranks and laid low by your sides your valiant companions in arms. We followed you through that seven days bloody conflict at Peach Orchard, Savage Station, White Oak Swamps, Glendale, Nelsons Farm, and Malvern Hill, where you met the enemy and added to former successes by forcing them to flee before you, leaving their dead and dying in your hands. We saw you at Harrison's Landing erecting breastworks, cutting down the forrest and making corduroy roads, faithful to duty everywhere. Next at Newport News and then at Alexandria. Thence by peremptory order you were summoned to Bull Run. The order was changed while you were on the march, as you

met the Yankee in disgraceful retreat before the enemy, and you will all remember that dreary and fatiguing all-night march to Chain Bridge, arriving there early in the morning and breaking camp the same afternoon, and taking up march for Centerville to cover Pope's retreat. Six days' mud and exhaustion brought you back to Chain Bridge. We followed you to Tاملtown, Rockville, to South Mountain and on to the long to be remembered bloody field of Anteitam, where you escaped destruction by unequalled coolness and unparalled bravery. From thence to Harper's Ferry and Baldwin's Heights, thence to Loudon Valley, clearing the gaps of the mountain by your firm step and deadly fire, until you reached Warrenton, and then to Falmouth, when by that fatal order which brought you over the Rappahannock on the 13th of December last, you fearlessly mingled in that bloody scene, which moistened the earth of Fredericksburgh with blood too pure for rebel soil.

Although we have detailed ourselves to do sympathetic duty at home, yet we know we have not followed you through all the trying and embarrassing duties which have blocked your pathway. And although we have stood by your side in thought and hope, amid pelting storms in dreary marches, in tents of wasting fever and bleeding wounds, and although we listened to the throbbing heart of electricity with breathless suspension as it out-rote time to bring us the soul-inspiring tidings that victory was not for our enemies, while the 34th remained unconquered; yet you know, with all our solicitude and anxiety, we could not comprehend that self-sacrifice and deprivation to which you have been subjected through the complex realities of a soldiers' life. It would be unworthy a freeman who loved his country and his country's cause to be unmindful of any who periled their lives to save its laws and institutions. But when the news came of the sacriligious and cowardly attack upon Fort Sumpter, you left the plow in the field, the work shop, the counting room, the halls of science, the sacred altar, the learned professions, parents, brothers, sisters, friends and homes, to mingle your bones and blood, if freedom demanded it, on soil cursed by rebel foot steps. No glittering gold invited you to the contest; no government bank bill was placed before you to arouse your patriotism. With that intuitive impulse of passion which every true lover of his country feels you drew the sword and shouldered arms, and with firm step and manly bearing, went to the battle field to honor, the cause you