

TBS 1-68 Classmates:

The 149th New York Infantry Regiment or Fourth Onondaga from the Syracuse area broke winter camp at Brooks Station, Virginia and marched southwest towards the Rappahannock River in late April 1863. It crossed at Germania Ford and approached the Chancellorsville area on May 1. The 149th was heavily engaged from May 1-4 and suffered 189 casualties including 14 killed. After crossing at the U.S. Ford, the regiment marched north to camp at Leesburg, Virginia until marching north again to Culp's Hill at Gettysburg. The Confederate assault on Culp's Hill at 6 p.m. on July 2 was met by General Greene's brigade that included Colonel Henry Barnum's 149th New York. On July 3 before 5 a.m., fighting renewed on the east side of Culp's Hill. By 9 a.m. the attacks made it clear to Union officers that reinforcements were needed. The 400 men of Colonel Silas Titus' 122nd N.Y. infantry regiment from Shaler's brigade were sent into the line alongside the 149th N.Y. for two hours of heavy fighting.¹ By noon the Confederate attacks were over and Greene's New York brigade had captured about 130 Rebels.

In October 1863, the 149th N.Y. was transferred to the Army of the Cumberland near Chattanooga, Tennessee and fought in the Battles of Wauhatchie on October 28 and Lookout Mountain on November 24, 1863. Three soldiers of the 149th were awarded the Medal of Honor for bravery at Lookout Mountain. The regiment participated in the Atlanta Campaign followed by Sherman's March to the Sea.

The following letter was penned by a member of the 149th New York Infantry Regiment from Onondaga County where I now live. Since I cannot make the reunion this year, I provide this appropriately yellow highlighted Tucker submission to you as my contribution. Please note that the 149th N.Y. did not loot, ravage or burn Savannah, thereby making your visit much more pleasurable.

“SWORD AND PEN.

SAVANNAH, GEO., Dec. 25, 1864

DEAR STANDARD: —To-day is Christmas, and being a holiday, I have a few moments leisure, —the first I have known since I entered the city. **You have already been informed that the 149th regiment was among the first to enter Savannah.** The 3d brigade, discovered the retreating movements of the rebels, and our pickets followed close upon the enemy's heels into the city, and even chased the rebels to the pontoon, which was laid across the river into South Carolina. Col. Barnum, of course led his own brigade into the city, and Gen. Geary and his Staff, being apprised by Col. Barnum of the movements of the enemy, also accompanied the troops into the city.

Gen. Slocum and Staff followed soon after daylight, and Gen. Williams, commanding 20th Corps, followed close after Gen. Slocum. Other brigades and divisions of the 20th Corps, moved forward, and **by noon the whole army had occupied the city, and a systematic arrangement of military districts was made, and each division, brigade and regiment, was assigned to a particular locality.**

¹ Harry W. Pfan, Gettysburg-Culp's Hill & Cemetery Hill, (Chapel Hill & London: University of North Carolina Press, 1993), pp. 324-25; and, David B. Swinfen, Ruggles' Regiment, The 122nd New York Volunteers in the American Civil War, (Hanover and London: University Press of New England, 1982), pp. 25-26.

The rebels left all their artillery behind them including some heavy pieces in Fort Jackson, which was also evacuated, and a large quantity of ammunition is scattered in every direction about the city. We also found a good supply of forage for animals, (of which our 3d brigade obtained its full share) but provisions with the exception of rice, were very scarce.

The inhabitants, with very few exceptions, remain, and most of them pretend to be pleased to see us in town, and already I hear of a project started among the citizens for bringing the State back into Union. Savannah is a beautiful city, and there are many of the buildings are splendid structures. There are numbers of fine Parks in various localities, and some of the streets are wide and handsomely ornamented with southern shade trees.

Our White Star Division is in command of the city. Gen. Geary is Military Commandant of the Post. Capt. Parker, Division Quartermaster, is Post Quartermaster. Capt. Seymour, of the 149th is Provost Marshal, and with all due modesty, I have the pleasure of announcing that Capt. M. Summers, A. Q. M., is conducting a newspaper called the "Loyal Georgian." Col. Barnum presides over a district of the city, and the 149th regiment is quartered in one of the principal streets, and the boys occupy the best houses they could find unoccupied.

By order from the Provost Marshal, I have taken possession of the newspaper offices of the city, and commenced the publication of the "Loyal Georgian." The first No. was issued yesterday, and from the rush for copies I should judge it takes well. It is pretty difficult to get up interesting matter for a daily here, as I have no exchanges to scissors from, but we will do the best we can, and make the sheet as interesting as possible.

Already are the citizens moving for the admission of the State into the Union, and a project is on foot for establishing a National Bank, by a couple of Insurance Companies, who are said to have about three millions capital. So you discover things are moving, and we expect to be moving again soon.

Yours for the Union, M. S."