

## GALLANT NINETY-SIXTH

Left Plattsburgh for the South 61 Years Ago—Saw Hard Service

61 years ago last Sunday March 11th, 1862, the 96<sup>th</sup> NY Volunteers 1,000-strong marched through the streets of Plattsburgh to the depot and there boarded a train on the Mooers Branch on what was then the New York and Canada Railroad, proceeded to Mooers Junction thence over Central Vermont railroad to Potsdam Junction, and from the latter point over the New York Central Railroad to New York City, the first lap of their trip to the south to take their place in the union lines in that terrific struggle of the Civil War.

This regiment which during the following 4 years made a name for its heroic bravery was recruited in Plattsburgh, Chazy, Chateaugay, Warrensburg and Fort Edward, company B and F being recruited in Plattsburgh and Chazy. When the regiment left Plattsburgh, the late General Stephen Moffitt was a lieutenant in Company B.

Of that gallant regiment of 1,000 young men, the flower of the North Country, only 5 are now living in this county. They are Lieutenant Alexander McMartin, father of William A. McMartin, and who is now residing with his son in this city, Sergeant John M. Tollman, of Cannons Corners, John Lashway and Henry Grassatt, both of Chazy, and Dr. B. E. Hyde, of Plattsburgh who left here as a hospital steward of the regiment. In addition to these, Major M. C. Harris who is now a resident of Leavenworth, KS. He was in command of an assaulting column at Fort Harrison, VA, where the regiment made a most gallant and successful assault upon the enemy's fortification. Major McCarthy, another officer of the regiment, is now a resident of Hudson Falls.

James M. Fairman, of New York, was the first commanding officer of the regiment and he was succeeded by Charles O. Grey, of Warrensburg, who was killed at Kingston, VA. The next commanding officer of the regiment was Edgar L. Culliman, who afterwards became chief judge of the Court of Appeals of this state. Culliman resigned his commission after the close of the war and while the regiment was stationed at Culpeper Court House, VA. General Stephen Moffitt was then promoted to Colonel of the regiment and was in command when the regiment was mustered out and paid off at Hart's Island in New York Harbor.

The 96<sup>th</sup> saw service in the south for 4 years and 6 months. Its first engagement was at Young's Mills, VA, and later it participated in the Battle of Yorktown, Fair Oaks, Chickamauga, Malvern Hill and Cold Harbor. In the latter engagement the regiment lost 8 of its officers during the first 15 minutes of fighting. After Cold Harbor, the regiment was transferred to Pittsburgh and took part in the breast work siege throughout the summer, and took part in the attack on Jamestown breast works.

The regiment, was sent by General Grant into the Second Battle of Fair Oaks for a feint movement but through the daring of one of its officers it charged the breast works, and in this charge lost many men, among the wounded being the late Stephen Moffitt who at that time lost his leg.

The 96<sup>th</sup> was one of the regiments who entered Richmond when that city fell. At the close of the war, the regiment was detailed for regiment duty at various county seats in Virginia and was mustered out of the service on February 6, 1866, thus closing the military-record of one of the most gallant regiments that the Empire State sent to southern battle fields in the struggle of the North against the South.

— From the Plattsburgh Republican

There are a few survivors of the 96<sup>th</sup> still living in this vicinity, among them being Andrew H. Rushford, who enlisted in Plattsburgh in December 1863, joining the company at New Berne, NC, and returning with the survivors on February 6, 1866. Calvin Prairie went out with the company and saw active service all through, the war. John Leclair, of this village, **Edgar Shutts, of Merrill**, and William Hill, of Marathan, NY, a former resident of Chateaugay, were also members of the 96<sup>th</sup>. So far as can be learned the following persons from nearby towns were included in the company's roster: Melvin Hill, Pat Sampica, Benjamin Beebo, Thomas Burke, Hall Boyington, William Holden, Lester Moore, Thomas Moore, John Patnode, Leander Patnode, Wallace McKinney, Jerry O'Neill, Albert Ferrier, Julius Ferrier, Nelson Carow, Dominic Rasberry, Michael Ring, H. M. Hilliker, Jesse

Green, Julius Welsh, James Dawson, James Toohey, William Farquhar, George Hill, William Blanchette, Jerry O'Neil, Supleme Sampica, Nathan Foster, Edward Sheen, Sylvester Edwards.