

<andrew@ournorthernroots.com>

From: Donald Cady <DLCady@webtv.net>
To: andrew@ournorthernroots.com
Date: 05 Jun '07 10:22
Subject: George Burdit and Civil War

Andrew,

The story passed down about George finding a "spent ball" in his knapsack is indeed true.

Perhaps 20 years ago our school nurse loaned me his letters that were found in a Hornell home that her husband was remodeling when he found the letters in the attic. Almost a diary as he wrote often of events and conditions.

I spent many hours reading the faded writing that was oft written with berry juice (I think) and oddly the penciled ones were still very clear.

There were the usual remarks and complaints typical of a very bright young soldier, some rather shocking but understandable. A Captain came to visit and "hoped the war would go on a long time as it was good for him"; George wrote he would like to "put a bullet through his [redacted] gut!"

He told of Col. McNett of Belmont losing his arm at the shoulder. (McNett stayed in the Army after the war and was in campaigns of the Indian Wars in the west, remarkable?)

There were a few letters written to him after the war by a friend who became a long time editor of the Baltimore Sun, and another local boy named Kreider or similar who had an important position with the Department of the Interior and wrote from Miles City Montana. He returned to Dansville for a GAR celebration as the featured speaker.

So I got to know George very well and liked him. Clifford (Bud) Whitney and Carol of Belmont had the letters and wanted them back in case their grandson would like to research later. I kept one as the information of that was in earlier correspondence. Carol was our school nurse at Friendship, grew up in Hornell and thought George Burditt was a relative.

Enjoyed your site as it gave a conclusion to his life, I wondered what became of such a stout heart after the war. I could wite from memory of some of the rigors of his march and one especially trying time under Joe Hooker's command.

Don Cady (retired teacher of Friendship and living on farm of my birth near Richburg)
(Copy of Atlanta Letter to follow)

<andrew@ournorthernroots.com>

From: Donald Cady <DLCady@webtv.net>
To: andrew@ournorthernroots.com
Date: 05 Jun '07 10:57
Subject: George Burditt (Atlanta)

beautiful writing.....

Near Atlanta Ga. July 23rd / 64

Dear Mother

I will wright you a few lines this morning to let you know how we are all gitting along. I am as well as usial and Geo M is well allso Joseph is well (or was when I saw him last) but has got a flesh wound in the left arm between the elbow and wrist but it is nothing dangerous. It did not hurt the bone tell Mary E not to worry about him I did not see him after he was wounded he helped one of the other boys off the field after he was hit. We crossed the river the 17th in the after noon and we marched fro 3 to 4 miles every day till the 20th and then marched 2 mles and layed in the woods till almst 4.oc when the show commenced, the Rebs attacked the 2nd division on our left and almost at the same time they atacked our Div. Our Brigade went in on double quick the 46th Pa was on the right the 4 Conn was next 141st next 128 NY next. We went in down a road about 20 rods and then by the left flank they put us in beind the 5 Conn as we went down the road the Rebs hade a cross fire on us They wounded our Lol. L Col, Major and Adutant there. Col Loyrie (Sp.? Lowery?) died that night. Lt Col NcNatt lst his right arm.

There was wood on our left as we went down the road wewent into them about 3 rods. The Rebswas down in a hollow we could not see them but new they was thare by the balls come by us. We layed thare about an hour when the Rebs mad a charge. We fell back acrost the road and gave them more than they could stand and they fell back. We advanced up again and held our position we was engaged from 4. oc. till 7 1/2 oc. We hade 12 killed on the field and thare has 3 died since. and thare is about 55 wounded. Co G hade 3 wounded and one was hit in the temple but did not break the skin it knocked him down Thier names are J. S. Flint, . Pateridge W. Ross. So Patridge is wounded the most.

I received a letter from you the 21st. and got it partly answered and was detailed for picket and put it in my day book went on picket and lost my book it had your likeness and some paper and the onely Postage Stamp I had in it. The arney advanced 3 miles yesterday I was on the skirmish line but came off with a whole skin thank Kind Providence we are about 2 miles from Atlanta we have got good Breastworks throwed up and are reddy fro the Johneys if the come bu I dont think they will. I found one bullet in my knapsact it struck a hatchet I hade and stopped I can't think of enny more to wright this tie. I will wright again in 2 or 3 days.

Wright soon and what you can think of.

Give my best wishes to all. Good by fer this time
George B Burditt

(This was typical of his letters, detailed and showing concern for others with suggestions about what to do with farming back home. Railroads were called "Roads" and fully described as was the weather and impressions of the area and climate. I felt honored to read letters from such a youth and knew he would become a devoted father and worker and citizen when and if he got the opportunity.)

<andrew@ournorthernroots.com>

From: Donald Cady <DLCady@webtv.net>
To: andrew@ournorthernroots.com
Date: 05 Jun '07 11:20
Subject: From memory as told by G. Burditt

In one advance under Gen. Joe Hooker the 141st got too close and pinned down in a ravine. The safe thing was to get up close to the Rebs below the crest of the bank where artillery could not get them: "One older man stayed on the other side as we yelled at him to move but he put his face down and moaned I want to go hum I want to go hum..... and a cannon ball took off his head. He should not have been in the army". They peered over the crest and shot only those artillerymen who tried to fire the guns.

I forget how many miles they hiked over 9 continuous months, under fire almost every day. Described the swamps around Savanna and shoes getting sucked off by the mud. Clothes got tattered by briars and they were reduced to taking clothes off clothes lines of the locals and the trousers were mostly tattered above the knees to shorts.

I think it was about 650 miles but on good days they rode railroad cars, rarely though. George was fascinated by the "roads" as he called railroads and described them in comparison to the ones in the north. No surprise that he later worked for the Erie Railroad!

I think they were hurried to Gettysburg after that battle, just a little late after a forced march. His friend who later was editor for the Baltimore Sun was sent on a mission and sat in remorse after returning to find the Regiment had been sent south. He was alone amidst the odds and ends that were left at the camp, things too cumbersome to carry and picked over by later soldiers. Said he never felt so alone as he did then, returning to find his friends gone and spending the rest of the war among strangers.

An earlier "Band of Brothers".

I really enjoy sending these messages, as for years I felt his story and character should be told, but to whom?

One of my friends Dorothy Snyder Goodridge of Alfred, went to school with Jan Burdett and is still a friend of hers.

I believe Jan Leathersich (sp?) now.

I read Jan was active in Almond History and she might want a forward of the above and previous sendings.

No, I did not teach history but science!
History and genealogy is what I live(d).
Don

<andrew@ournorthernroots.com>

From: Donald Cady <DLCady@webtv.net>
To: Andrew Burdett <andrew@ournorthernroots.com>
Date: 06 Jun '07 10:26
Subject: Re: From memory as told by G. Burditt

Minor addendums and corrections:

The L Partridge who was wounded July 20 died of wounds August 1 and the other two apparently survived.

The Colonel who was killed was Col. Logie who was with them at the start as a young Captain, very popular with the men.

The Battle described was Peachtree Creek after they had scaled Lookout Mountain under fire and drove out the Rebs. (The battle above the clouds).

I think it was General Thomas who was asked by his Commanding General "By whose orders are the men advancing up that mountain?" And Thomas replied "By their own orders by the look of it!"

The Ravine encounter was in Joe Hooker's command but he was not present. Another big deal was he, when he took over the Army of the Potomac he told that he was from the west and would fight! He was called "Fighting Joe" finally in derision. At Chancellorsville he scoffed at the notion that they had been flanked till the porch post he leaned on was hit by the first cannonball and left him dazed and useless for the rest of the battle. Asked later what went wrong he said "I just lost confidence in Joe Hooker that day." The Reb army in the east was a different matter than the western ones who had less determination as a rule.

The above is from reading the on line history of the 141st. Regiment as to corrections and the rest is from my lifelong study of the Civil War.

Another compliment to George: he always was concerned and made mention of others with little said of himself. Did not complain of the deprivations except for describing them at times and in the midst of danger showed concern for how things were going at home on the farm.

Much is said about how the war wrecked the rural economy of the south but the same was true here as so many sons were lost or the farms were lost because the young men were away and labor was scarce and expensive. And many were mentally or physically disabled on return.

Don