

Sergeant Richard W. Farrell

Co. F., 123rd New York Volunteers
Ancestor of Robert Farrell



Richard Farrell, like so many others in Washington County, stepped forward to answer President Lincoln's call for an additional 300,000 soldiers. Born in Ireland 22 years earlier, this fair skinned, 5' 5", blue eyed, brown haired, clerk enlisted July 28, 1862 in his hometown of Whitehall, New York for a period of three years as a private. He was mustered in to Captain Augustus Vaughan's Co. C. on August 14, 1862; as a private. It would appear that he performed some administrative duty as the majority of the Regiment mustered in on September 4, 1862. That day he was promoted to third Sergeant. The 123rd New York enlisted all its ten companies within the county and was forever known as "the Washington County Regiment"

The regiment left Washington County on September 5 and proceeded to Washington, DC. by way of New York City. They began learning their trade in the defense of Washington as part of the 12th Corp. A few months later they moved to the support of Burnside at Fredericksburg, Virginia and later Burnside's famous "Mud March." They saw their first combat at the Battle of Chancellorsville where the Regiment suffered severe losses. During that fight on May 3, Richard received a wound to the head which required examination by the regimental surgeon Mr Lysander Wilcox Kennedy, then hospitalization and he returned to his unit in mid May. This action was soon followed by the battle of Gettysburg where the unit spent the majority of their time in the area of Culp's Hill

In the fall of 1863 the 12th Corps, including the 123rd New York, moved to the Western Theater. The 11th Corps plus the 12th Corps were joined to form the 20th Corp as part of the forces under Major General William T. Sherman. Soon they found themselves in the Campaign for North Georgia which quickly moved towards the Atlanta area. After participating in much of the action about Kennesaw Mountain, on June 22, 1863 the 123rd NY was acting as Brigade skirmishers and was fallen upon by Hood's whole army. They were forced to fall back and the losses were 47 men killed, wounded and captured. July saw them involved in the Battle of Peach Tree Creek and the Siege of Atlanta.

After the Surrender and Occupation of Atlanta, Sherman moved east on his March to the Sea with the 20th Corp in addition to the 14th as the left wing and the 15th and 17th Corps as the right wing. After a 305 mile march, Sherman effected the Siege of Savannah which fell December 21, 1864. In January, the Union forces turned north to begin the Campaign of the Carolinas. Although there was no major fighting there was a lot of skirmishing hard labor and retribution on the Birthplace of the Confederacy..

By March, Sherman had reached North Carolina and had fought at both Averasboro and Bentonville. Upon being resupplied at Goldsboro, the troops moved toward the Capitol, Raleigh.



Following the surrender of General Joseph E. Johnson, the 123rd NY headed north to Richmond and Washington DC where they were the leading Regiment of the Grand Review of the Army of the Cumberland. The Washington County Regiment mustered out of Union service on June 8, 1865 at Washington, DC. During service the Regiment lost 6 officers and 66 enlisted men killed and mortally wounded and 95 Enlisted men by disease for a total of 167.

At that time it must be assumed that he returned to his native Town of Whitehall. To date I have been unable

to learn anything of him for the next two years. On March 8, 1867, he married Margaret E. Satterfield Tarble the widow of Joy J. Tarble. Margaret's first husband had been honorably discharged from the 124th Illinois Volunteers. He served as a private, sergeant and musician After their marriage the Farrell's moved to Chicago.

Subsequent to moving to Illinois, Richard applied for a pension based on the wound to his head which he had received at Chancellorsville claiming headaches, vertigo and deafness in both ears. He was ultimately awarded two dollars a month. At that time of his death, February 21, 1897, Richard was employed as a traveling salesman selling Cigars. With Margaret's death ten years later on September 3, 1907, Tarble, Richard and Margaret all are interred in the West Aurora Cemetery.

