

**ADDRESS DELIVERED AT SECOND  
RE-UNION K ASSOCIATION, 25TH  
MASSACHUSETTS VOLUNTEERS,  
AT WORCESTER, MASS., SEPT. 26,  
1870**

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Address Delivered at Second Re-union K Association, 25th Massachusetts Volunteers, at Worcester, Mass., Sept. 26, 1870 by J. Waldo Denny

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**J. WALDO DENNY**

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## ADDRESS.

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### COMRADES :

Upon the second re-union of Co. K, 25th Mass. Vols., with my whole heart and soul, I bid you all a cordial greeting and a Soldier's welcome!

No welcome can be more cordial than that which one old comrade gives to another. There is no grip of fraternity, no grip of brotherhood, though sanctioned by the custom of centuries, that expresses more warmly the real feeling of the heart, than that grip of comradeship which each of us has given to the other, as we have met to-day around our old camp-records, calling up recollections of the past, — the history of duty performed, of noble results achieved, and keeping green in the heart the memory of those comrades who went out with us, but alas! never returned, or returning, have since gone to that bourne from whence no traveller returns.

### OUR COMPANY COMRADESHIP.

There is no assembly of comrades so full of interest as that which groups those who enlisted together upon one imperishable roll, who have stood together under the same line of fire, who have marched together in victory, retreated together in defeat, slept together under the same tents and in the same barracks, and eaten rations together from the same camp-kettle.

### THE COMPANY ORGANIZATION,

because it is the most local in its nature, and entwines around itself the strongest personal reminiscences, commands our first and our warmest love.

In September, 1861, as particles of steel are drawn in by the power of the magnet, the young and middle-aged men of

Worcester county were drawn by the magnet of patriotism into the ranks of Company K. In addition to the sons of our own county, three young men from Hatfield, in Hampshire county, and one from Chester, Conn., enlisted with us and rendered valuable service to our company and the country.

In the movements of a great army, the company organization is almost overshadowed by the more widely proclaimed deeds of brigades, divisions, and army corps; still we cherish a deep attachment for the company organization, because its little history is full of the deeds of brave men, with whom for the time we are intimately associated; and I fear not to say, that as an organization and individually, our beloved Company K can show a record of which no man who was ever connected with it need feel ashamed. Match, if you can, the coolness of the company when it moved forward from the line of battle at Roanoke Island, under the special and imperative order of Gen. Reno, or went into the woods as skirmishers near "Deep Gully," or stood the onslaught of the enemy at Drewry's Bluff, refusing to run, and so shot down like dogs, or captured. Match, if you can, by deeds of generals or the leaders of regiments and companies, the undaunted heroism of little Johnny Lewis, who, grasping the colors of the 25th, bore them forward under a most scathing fire, at Cold Harbor, until shot down, pierced by bullets, he refused to surrender the sacred colors until death released his grasp. To-day the blood of that hero of Company K consecrates the colors of the 25th regiment.

Ah! there was a time — the days following a battle — when scores of hearts ached to learn news from the company. When the newspapers contained columns of names of the dead and wounded, many a wife, mother, sister, father, and brother ran their eyes anxiously adown the lines, until they rested upon the little square telling the story of death and wounds for Company K.

#### RECRUITING.

On the eleventh day of September, 1861, I commenced recruiting for this company, to be joined to what was then

designated the Worcester County Regiment, which was formed under the urgent call of the Governor, with the expectation that it would be employed in the expedition then being fitted out by Gen. A. E. Burnside.

#### AN IMPEDIMENT.

At the first meeting of designated officers of the proposed regiment, but one impediment to the successful formation of the same seemed to be presented. The Governor of the State had offered the command of the regiment, when formed, to a citizen of New York city, who, for twenty years, had been engaged in the pursuits of civil life, but was a graduate of West Point, and therefore sought for as a leader of armies. While nothing could be said against the high personal character of the gentleman named, we felt that his appointment as commander of our regiment, was a fearful blow aimed at our local pride. At the above-named meeting, a committee, consisting of (then) Capt. Pickett and the afterwards captain of this company, was appointed to oppose the proposed action of the governor, and, if possible, to dissuade him from his purpose. Visiting New York, the committee had a very pleasant interview with the gentleman who was proposed for colonel of the regiment, and also called upon Gov. Andrew, who chanced to be in New York, and fully represented to him the views and feelings of those interested in the formation of the regiment.

#### IMPEDIMENT REMOVED.

The result was, that gentlemen in whose good judgment we could confide, citizens with us of Worcester county, were promised the appointments as colonel and lieutenant-colonel; and under this satisfactory conclusion of the matter, on the eleventh day of September, the designated officers commenced recruiting.

#### OUR FIRST CAMP.

On the twenty-sixth of September, of which this day is the ninth anniversary, this company, afterwards designated Company

K, having more than its full quota of enlisted men, marched to Camp Lincoln upon the Agricultural Fair Grounds, where in earnest we commenced the drill of the soldier.

#### START FOR THE FIELD.

On the thirty-first day of October, bidding adieu to friends, surrounded by thousands of the men and women of Worcester county, we departed upon our duties, carrying with us the prayers and benedictions of a loyal people.

Time not permitting as full and extensive an historical sketch of the company as I at first intended to prepare, I shall omit details, and give you simply the names of all camps occupied by the company, together with dates of occupying the same; and finally, the list of all battles, skirmishes and engagements, of whatever nature, participated in by the company.

#### CAMPS.

Our list of camps is large, and indicates not a little work. It is about as much labor for the soldier to pack his knapsack, strike his tent, and put himself in order for a move, as for the housewife to "break up" housekeeping. Soldiers become attached to their old camps and everything within the camp lines; the trees are friendly objects to them, and in many instances the order to "strike tents" causes a feeling of sadness, a home-sickness, to fall upon the hearts of the troops. Even now, as I call the names of our camps — our *old homes* in time of war — familiar objects connected with each will come up in your thoughts, and the many good times had around the camp-fires, many a joke there uttered, many a song there sung, will be presented to your recollection, while visions of the dear comrades who were with you then, sharing with you the joys and hardships of camp life, now among the sainted throng of heaven, will come up before you, and thus for a brief moment, we will live our camp life o'er again.

I name our camps in their order, as follows: —

Camp "Lincoln," Worcester, September 26, 1861.



Camp "Hicks," near Annapolis, Maryland, November 4, 1861.

January 6th, 1862, we "struck" our tents at Camp "Hicks," and embarked on board the steamer "New York," which was our home until Feb. 7th, 1862, one day more than a month. Aside from the kindness of Capt. Clark, master of the steamer, and Mr. Mulligan, the mate, we have no very fond recollections of this "home on the roaring deep." We have no special fascination for that kind of ship-life, and I think, when you recall remembrances of the fearful storm at the "Inlet," the short rations, the warm condensed water we were forced to drink, the dangers of shipwreck, the collisions with other vessels daily occurring, which we happily termed "cat-head drills"—I say, when you call up recollections of all these things, you will heartily sustain the assertion that if soldiers ever put up an earnest prayer, it was when they cried, "From Cape Hatteras, Good Lord deliver us!"

At Roanoke Island, on the evening of February 8th, we commenced life at Camp "Foster," in barracks erected and previously occupied by the rebel army under Henry A. Wise. We took the barracks, with all their filth and vermin just as we found them; and as we took forcible possession, holding as tenants at will, we had no occasion to exercise a critical spirit. The fact that the enemy's commissary department was abundantly supplied with flour, bacon and lard, — articles found very convenient in helping out the army ration, — was a slight compensation for the inconvenience of filthy barracks, and the necessity of associating for some time quite too intimately with the prisoners captured in the engagement.

We remained at Camp Foster until March 6th, when, with Company I, we found a temporary home on board the schooner "Skirmisher," of which Captain Richmond was master.

March 14th, we occupied New Berne, resting ourselves in a milliner's establishment on Craven street, among ribbons and head-dresses, moving next to the Peirce House, on Pollock street, among roses and garden vegetables in abundance.

May 8th, we occupied Camp "Bullock," at the Red House.

May 29th, at the same place, the regiment having returned to New Berne, our Company, with Company G, remained, and the camp was named Camp "Upton."

June 2d, we removed to the Jackson House, and established Camp "Sprague."

July 8th, we moved from Jackson's to a point a couple of miles below, and established camp at "Harrison's."

August 21st, one of the hottest days of the summer of 1862, we rejoined the regiment at Camp "Oliver," near New Berne. Here we remained until October 20th, when we returned to outpost duty on the Trent road, establishing Camp "Harkness," near the Harrison House, Companies F and G being with us.

February 19, 1863, we occupied camp opposite the Joe Rhein place, our camp being named Camp "Pickett." Here we remained until March 14th, when, somewhat against our will, we evacuated under peremptory orders, and fell back to the protection of the regiment and the guns of Fort Totten, at Camp "Oliver."

March 30th, we were established at Plymouth, in Camp "Flusser." This camp was named in honor of that brave naval commander, CHARLES FLUSSER, whose untimely death soon after, while gallantly fighting the rebel ram Albemarle, removed from our service one of the truest patriots, one of the bravest spirits that ever walked a quarter-deck. A son of Kentucky, born and raised under the influences of that system of human slavery which inaugurated and perpetuated the rebellion, he, among the faithless, was faithful found, and sealed with his noble blood a cause which he loved even better than he loved his life.

May 5th, 1863, having returned to New Berne, we were re-established at camp "Oliver," and here remained until July 4th, when we established camp at Rodman's point on the Pamlico river a few miles below "little" Washington.

On the twenty-third day of July, the company moved to Washington, N. C., where it remained in the commodious brick building of the old Cape Fear Bank, until October 24th, when it left for Virginia.

October 26th, arriving at Newport News, Va., the regiment established camp "Upton." The company remained in camp here until February 14, 1864, when those who had re-enlisted for another term of service, left Virginia for a furlough "at home."

March 24th, the company returned from furlough, established camp near Getty's Station, on the outer defences of Portsmouth, Va. This camp was designated "Wellington," thereby honoring a citizen of Worcester who had proved a true friend of the 25th regiment, and established a character for loyalty to the government which none could question or deny. Here to-day, we are glad to welcome his son, our comrade president of "H" Association, "chip" of a most excellent "block."

April 26th, the 25th regiment was assigned to Heckman's brigade, and on the next day broke camp "Wellington" and went to Yorktown.

The quiet camp-life of Company K and the 25th regiment here ended. From this time, while the company retained its organization, there was a constant series of marchings and counter-marchings, skirmishes and battles, and many a brave comrade of Company K enjoyed his last camp upon earth near the placid waters of the Nansemond; many a brave comrade knew no other soldier's home upon earth after the tents were struck at camp "Wellington."

At 3 o'clock, on the morning of April 27th, camp life ended, and from that time until the muster-out of the organization, head-quarters were in the field.

#### ENGAGEMENTS.

In naming the engagements in which the company participated, from the time of entering service until its muster-out as an organization, covering a period of three years, the fact will be comprehended by my veteran comrades without any explanation, that these engagements are of varied significance, only a portion of them reaching the character of a general battle, in which all the forces were engaged in deadly conflict.