

THE OLD COMMANDER DEAD

Gen. Samuel R. Per Lee, the Colonel of the old 114th Regiment N. Y. Volunteers, Passes Away—Sketch of His Active Life—Funeral Services.

Wednesday morning, at his home, in South Broad Street, Gen. Samuel R. Per Lee, the veteran commander of the old 114th Regiment. New York Volunteers surrendered to the adversary that never knows defeat. For a number of years, his health has been impaired and his step feeble. Last week Thursday he was at his place of business as usual. That evening he took a ride and became chilled. Symptoms of congestion of the bowels complicated with heart trouble manifested themselves. His impaired vitality was unable to resist the inroads of the disease. He grew worse rapidly. Wednesday morning the end came.

Gen. Per Lee has been a conspicuous citizen of Norwich for nearly a half century. He was born in Amenia, Dutchess County, N. Y., on the 10th day of May, 1819, and consequently had passed his seventy-first birthday. His parents were Walter and Harriet Per Lee. In 1834 he came to Chenango County and entered as a clerk the store of Sandford & Ransford, Mr. Sandford being his brother-in-law. Here he remained two years and then obtained employment in the store of Sandford & Purdy. He remained with this firm till 1838, when he formed a partnership with the late Porter Wood, whose store was the one now occupied by S. A. Jones. He continued with Mr. Wood until 1842, when he associated himself with his brother-in-law, the late Thomas Milner. The partnership was continued till 1847, when he took the business into his own hands and conducted it in a highly successful manner. Upon receiving from the Canal Board of the State of New York the appointment of Superintendent of the Chenango Canal, he retired from merchantile business and devoted himself to the duties of his office, which his good judgment and fidelity enabled him to discharge in a most satisfactory manner. He held the position of Superintendant for two years and then purchased of the late Jonathan Wells the large store house then situated on the canal near the East Street bridge, and now owned and occupied by R. D. Eaton, and engaged in the forwarding business. As a kind and obliging man, he won himself hosts of friends, but was subjected through these traits to many pecuniary losses as an underwriter.

He remained in the storage and forwarding business until President Lincoln's call for men in 1862. When it was known that Chenango County would attempt to raise a regiment, he promptly offered his services to the Governor. Col. E. B. Smith, who had been selected by the War Committee for Colonel of the new regiment, recommended Mr. Per Lee for the position of Adjutant of the 114th Regiment, and he was commissioned July 23d, 1862. He was likewise assigned the duties of Mustering Officer and Acting Quartermaster. He at once began the arduous labor of organizing the regiment. He succeeded so well that, as a mark of their high appreciation, the officers of the line recommended that he be commissioned Lieutenant Colonel, which was done. Just before the departure of the regiment for the field, the citizens of Norwich presented him with a beautiful sword, sash, belt and horse equipments.

He went to the front with the regiment and as Lieutenant Colonel, served in the first and second Teche campaigns. For the greater portion of the time he was in command of the regiment. Upon the death of Col. Smith he was promoted Colonel, his commission dating from June 19th, his muster from August 26th, 1863. After the retirement of the regiment from Port Hudson and its return to Brashear City, he was appointed commandant of the post. Several times he was temporarily in command of the brigade of which his regiment formed a part.

Col. PerLee was with his regiment through all its vicissitudes and triumphs. He was noted for cool bravery and earnest daring. Near Franklin, La., he quieted a panic aroused by an unexpected attack of guerillas on the rear guard and was complimented by the commanding general for his bravery.

The courage shown at that time won him a high place in the hearts of his men." says Pellet in his history. At Opequan, he placed himself at the head of his command and led his men to battle. In this engagement, the 114th saved the day, and Col. Per Lee was twice wounded in the side by a fragment of shell and in the throat by a minie ball, it passing entirely through his neck, inflicting a severe and dangerous wound. Some idea of the severity of the fighting is gained from the fact that three-fifths of the men he took into the fight were either killed or wounded. He returned with his command in June, 1865. Few regimental commanders ever left the service with the good will of so large a portion of his enlisted men as Col. Per Lee, and few regimental commanders labored more faithfully for the comfort of his command. He was recommended by Generals Dwight, Emory and Sheridan for promotion and was brevetted as Brigadier General of United States Volunteers for his "gallant and meritorious services during the war."

Upon the establishment of peace he again entered into the forwarding business and continued it till the abandonment of the Chenango Canal necessarily put an end to it. Since then he has bought produce for commission houses in New York. He always took an active interest in politics. In 1856 he was elected Supervisor of Norwich and in 1866 was chosen County Treasurer of Chenango County.

He was twice married. His first wife, Miss Maria Mitchell, was a daughter of Dr. Henry Mitchell and sister of John Mitchell, Esq. Three children were the fruit of this marriage, George E., now of New York and the sole survivor; Mitchell, and Hattie, who was the wife of W. S. Hewitt, Esq. His second wife was Miss Mary Hutchinson, of Utica. She died some two years ago.

The funeral will be held from his late residence this (Friday) afternoon at 1 o'clock. The burial services will be in charge of Smith Post, G. A. R. The Memorial Day procession will be formed as usual, but will halt in front of Col. Per Lee's residence and receive the dead commander. Upon arriving at Mt. Hope Cemetery, the committal will take place, which will be followed by the usual Memorial Day services. Surviving officers of the 114th have been selected for pall bearers.

Major O. H. Curtiss sent the following telegram upon being notified of Col. Per Lee's death:

WASHINGTON, May 29th, 1890.

W. B. Stoddard:—

Impossible to attend. Bury him with honors. Cover his grave with flowers. The time is fitting.

O. H. CURTISS.