

LIST OF OFFICERS WHO FELL AT MONTEREY.

[THE author has prepared biographical notices of such officers as he could obtain materials for—all are imperfect; but he regrets that he could not have completed the sketches according to his wishes. Capt. Ridgely, although he did not fall in the battle, is included in the list, his name having become one of the greatest interest to his countrymen for his gallantry and his untimely death.]

OBITUARY.*

LIEUT. COL. W. H. WATSON.

THE city of Baltimore has been singularly called upon to lament over the death of her noble sons, who have fallen defending their country upon the plains of Mexico. When the news of actual hostilities first reached the "monumental city," the exultation over the victories was clouded by the death of the lamented Ringgold. When the news of the capitulation of Monterey filled the whole country with joy, Baltimore, amidst her smiles, was called upon to shed tears of sorrow over her favorite son, the gallant Watson. No one rushed to their country's call with more avidity than did he; none left their homes with more blessings, or with more of the confidence of the people that he would do his duty.

Lieut. Col. Watson redeemed every pledge of hope, every sanguine wish of his numerous friends. He fell lamented by all; exhibiting a fearlessness of death, and an exalted patriotism, seldom equalled, and never surpassed upon the battle-field. His corpse wore a placid smile, the very clay was animate, in its last expression, of the noble soul that dwelt therein—of the full and abiding consciousness arising from duties well and satisfactorily performed.

Col. Watson was just in the prime of life, and when he left his home he was, as a lawyer, giving great promise in his profession. He was remarkable for the interest he took in all public duties, and distinguished himself by his zeal and perseverance. He has left a widow to weep over his loss, and orphan children to inherit his fame and look to his country for protection. His youngest, a daughter, born on the very day that her gallant father fell, bears the name of Monterey; sad, yet noble name!—one, from the peculiar circumstances attendant upon it, that will make its owner a star among the fair daughters of her native city.

Upon the arrival of the news of his death in Baltimore, the flags of the shipping in port were lowered half-mast, and the different military and civic societies immediately met to pay tribute to his memory—prominent

* The author of "Our Army at Monterey," in preparing such imperfect notices of the distinguished officers who fell in the assault at Monterey as appear in the following pages, regrets that several highly distinguished, among the number, have to be inserted as their names stand in the army list, alone.

among which were the volunteer corps to which he belonged, and the Odd Fellows' society of which he was a prominent member. A general meeting of the Bench and Bar was immediately called, Judge Legrand, who had on a previous occasion announced the death of Ringgold, in the chair. John V. L. McMahon, Esq., arose and said—"That in the midst of victory, which had shed a glory over our country's history, when the notes of triumph were sounding over our land, this hour we are called upon to mourn the death of a fellow-citizen, a member of this bar. He had left us with high hopes and aspirations of the future, and had yielded up his life for his country's honor. We who once knew him here, shall know him no more on earth. Death generally comes to us in a different manner, with weeping friends around; but death had come to him in the hour of victory. In looking around among those who were on that battle-field, we recognised the names of many members of the bar in sister States, who had volunteered their services to uphold their country's honor. It was not to be expected that when blows were to be found in the battle-field, the lawyers would be out of the way, but would be found in their country's ranks. They are found so always, and always so may they be found. With feelings of mingled sorrow and exultation, I now move," said Mr. McM., "the adoption of the following resolutions:

"Resolved, That while we participate in the joy that gladdens every heart at the brilliant and triumphant successes of our country's soldiers in the desperate battles which won the surrender of Monterey to their courage and gallantry, we have heard with deep, unaffected sorrow, that Baltimore has again to mourn another gallant son, in the death of Lieut. Col. William H. Watson, who, with his brave companions in arms, volunteered at the first call of his country, and nobly fell while leading his battalion to victory.

"Resolved, That while we deplore the loss of a youthful warrior, whose patriotism, courage, and untiring energy, gave the brightest promise to his country, we most deeply mourn the death of one who, as a member of this bar, was respected by all for his professional bearing, and loved by those who best knew him, for the warmth and steadfastness of his friendship.

"Resolved, That we sympathize with his afflicted family, in the sorrow of their bereavement, and request the chairman of this meeting to offer them our sincerest condolence.

"Resolved, That, as a tribute to the memory of our departed brother and friend, we will wear suitable badges of mourning for the remainder of the present term.

"Resolved, That the proceedings of this meeting be entered upon the minutes of the Baltimore County Court, with the assent of the judges, and be published in the several newspapers of the city."

The resolutions were read, and Reverdy Johnson arose and seconded the motion to adopt them, prefacing his second with some feelingly forcible remarks.

Upon the arrival of the remains of the lamented Watson at Baltimore, the most solemn demonstrations were made to pay the last tribute to the departed hero; it is said, that the ceremonies of the day exceeded any previous demonstration that had ever taken place in Baltimore. The procession was over a mile and a half in length, and conducted with singular order in all its arrangements.

In all future time the name of Watson will be revered by the patriot; and the young men of the country will look to his conduct for an example, and the old will cite it as worthy of emulation.

MAJOR W. W. LEAR.

THIRD INFANTRY.

MAJOR LEAR, a native of Maryland, was appointed from the army a second lieutenant of the fourth infantry, the 13th of February, 1818; he having previously distinguished himself. In the storming of Monterey on the 21st, he was struck by a ball that entered his nostrils, and came out back of his ear, tearing away his palate. As may be imagined from the character of his wound, his sufferings were intense, which he bore with singular fortitude.

Major Lear was a man of iron nerve, a strict and gallant soldier, and a warm friend. He was devotedly attached to his family; in the death of two interesting daughters, whose remains he at different times followed to the grave, he received shocks of sorrow, which, though he struggled with all his energy, it was evident he could not overcome. To those who knew him intimately well, it was perceptible that his wounded spirit was ever bleeding for those whom he had loved and lost; yet to the world he carried a cheerful smile, and delighted in a generous hospitality.

He expired in Monterey on the morning of the 30th of October, 1846; his remains were brought out to the camp of his regiment, and interred with funeral honors on the afternoon of the 1st of November. Four companies of the fourth infantry, under Major Buchanan, were the escort; the third infantry followed as mourners. After serving his country faithfully for more than a quarter of a century, Major Lear fell at the head of his regiment, and died a soldier's death.

General Taylor, on the morning of the day of the burial of the gallant dead, issued the following order:

HEAD-QUARTERS, ARMY OF OCCUPATION,

Camp near Monterey, Nov. 1st, 1846.

The melancholy duty devolves upon the commanding general, of announcing to the army the decease of Major W. W. LEAR, third infantry, who expired yesterday of the wound received while gallantly leading his regiment in the action of the 21st of September.

A long and creditable service, commencing in the war of 1812, has thus been sadly but nobly closed. Kind and generous in his private relations, and, though feeble from the ravages of protracted disease, faithful, zealous and efficient in the discharge of duty, the relatives and friends of the deceased major, and the service at large, have sustained in his death no ordinary loss.

The deceased will be interred at 4 o'clock, P. M., this day, with the honors due to his rank. All officers off duty are respectfully invited to attend his funeral at the head-quarters of his late regiment, the third infantry. By order of Major General Taylor.

W. W. S. BLISS,

Assistant Adjutant General.

MAJOR P. N. BARBOUR.

THIRD INFANTRY.

THE late Major P. N. Barbour was born in Henderson, in the state of Kentucky, on the 14th of April, 1813. His family possessed a military reputation; his grandfather, General Samuel Hopkins, was an officer in the Revolutionary war; and his father, Colonel Philip Barbour, commanded a regiment of volunteers under Governor Shelby, at the battle of the Thames. He graduated from West Point in June, 1834, and on the first day of July following, received a commission in the regular army, from which time until the day of his death he was engaged honorably to himself and his country, in active service.

For gallant services in Florida he was brevetted a captain in 1842. At Resaca de la Palma, with a small detachment of the third regiment, he repulsed a strong body of cavalry, that attempted to recover a piece of artillery taken by some officers and men of the fourth infantry. He was brevetted a major from the 9th of May, for his gallant conduct in that battle.

The generous bravery of Major Barbour, at Monterey, won the admiration of his command and regiment; he was in the thickest of the fight, and by his example cheered on his men when advancing to the charge under the most trying circumstances. While thus engaged it was his lot to fall,

before he had fairly reached the full vigor of manhood, and just as it seemed that a glorious future was about to open before him.

The citizens of his native state showed that they were not unmindful of the claims of the hero. Upon the news reaching the capital, eloquent resolutions were passed in compliment to his memory. The people of his native town resolved to bring home his remains, and over them erect a monument, that a record of his private and military virtues might ever be present for admiration and emulation.

CAPTAIN L. N. MORRIS.

THIRD INFANTRY.

APPOINTED from New York, to the Military Academy of West Point. Appointed second lieutenant the 1st of July, 1820, captain third regiment of infantry 31st October, 1833. Distinguished in the battles of Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma; in both of which he commanded his regiment.

CAPTAIN W. G. WILLIAMS.*

TOPOGRAPHICAL ENGINEERS.

CAPTAIN W. G. WILLIAMS, who fell mortally wounded, on the first day's assault at the east end of Monterey, entered West Point Military Academy from South Carolina; on the 1st of July, 1824, he received the appointment of second lieutenant in the Seventh Infantry, the Topographical Corps not then having been organized. Although born in this country, the greater portion of his childhood and early youth was passed in England. Returning to the land of his nativity while yet a boy, his mother being deceased, and his father engaged in business which required his absence, he was left, in a measure, to carve out his own destiny in life. He conceived the determination of entering West Point. Without friends or influence to further his aim, he voluntarily, and alone, made personal application, at Washington, to some of the distinguished functionaries there, for an appointment. His prepossessing appearance, and the singular decision of character and confidence evinced by the circumstances under which he appeared as an applicant for a position which was in eager request by numbers with the aid of powerful friends and influence, procured for him

* This sketch is almost literally adopted as it appeared in the Buffalo Advertiser, October 15, 1846.

what many, with all the advantages of the latter, failed to obtain. By the particular efforts of those to whom his application was addressed, and who had become deeply interested in his welfare, his wishes were crowned with success. Greatly to his father's amazement, who had left him pursuing his studies in an obscure village in Kentucky, he found him on his return a Cadet. Apprehensive, somewhat, of his father's displeasure at his assuming the management of his own destination in life, at that early age, the young cadet referred him, in justification of his conduct, to the high position in the class which his industry and good conduct had secured him. With the sanction of the government, a portion of his cadetship was passed at Paris, where he prosecuted his mathematical studies, with close assiduity, under the best teachers of the French metropolis, and there acquired the French language, which he spoke with the greatest ease and fluency. It is hardly necessary to add, that, at the close of his course at West Point, his rank was among the first of the class. Upon the organization of the Topographical Corps, he was appointed to that branch of the service.

Many of the duties performed by him were of a delicate and very important description. The topographical survey of the Cherokee country, preliminary to the removal of the Cherokee Indians, the survey of the route for the proposed ship canal round the Falls of Niagara, a reconnaissance of the Canadas, at the time of the border troubles in 1837-38, when a rupture with Great Britain was threatened, were among the duties intrusted to him, which were performed with great credit to himself, and to the entire satisfaction of the government. A portion of his early military life, by consent of the government, was devoted to civil engineering, during which time he was associate chief engineer of the contemplated railroad to connect Cincinnati, Ohio, with Charleston, South Carolina. The survey upon which this great scheme of internal improvement was based and commenced, was in a great measure performed under his direction. For the last seven or eight years, up to a short time before the Mexican war, he was general superintendent of harbor constructions, and at the same time carried on a triangulation survey of the lakes. The latter, as is well known to those conversant with the subject, requires profound scientific attainments, and abilities of a high order. The occult nature of this branch of engineering precludes its general appreciation. On this account it is probable that a large portion of the community were but imperfectly aware of the delicacy of the operations, which for several seasons were carried on under his management, and the responsible nature of the undertaking. The archives of the department at Washington will show, to those who are qualified to judge, abundant evidences of the zeal and ability with

which this duty was discharged; possessing in an eminent degree that chivalrous disposition which seeks the most active and dangerous business.

Upon the breaking out of the Mexican war, Capt. Williams solicited orders for the field. After the battles of Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma, his request was granted. He joined the army at Matamoros, and accompanied it to Monterey. Here it was decreed that his career of honor and usefulness should cease. The division to which he was attached had stormed and taken the outer batteries defending the point of the attack, and had penetrated within the streets of the city. Here they were exposed to a cruel fire from an enemy on each side, concealed from view, and with leisure and opportunity to give a murderous precision to their shots. Under such circumstances, so conspicuous a mark could not fail to induce a concentrated aim; and he must have been aware of the certainty that he was about to yield his life for his country. Too severely wounded to retire, he was left to die in the hands of the enemy. * * *

His literary acquirements were of a high order, and his talent for painting would have ensured eminent success had he devoted himself exclusively to this line of effort. Such was his fondness for this branch of the fine arts, that he bestowed a large portion of his leisure to laborious application to it. The time which, in too many instances, is lost by inaction, or worse than wasted by ill-directed activity, he devoted to refined pursuits. He was interested in the National Academy of Design, was an honorary member of that institution, and its annual exhibitions always contained creditable productions from his pencil. In cultivating this elegant pursuit, he was not a mere copyist, but aimed at the higher departments of the art. Many of his compositions, if we mistake not, would not do injustice to artists of distinguished merit.

CAPT. HENRY McKAVETT.

EIGHTH INFANTRY.

THE lamented Captain McKavett, a native of New York, was an eminent example of what well-directed industry will accomplish, unaided by family influence or fortune. To the Orphan Asylum of New York city, he was indebted for his early education. By his intelligence, he attracted the attention of those who had the judgment and influence to obtain for him a commission at West Point, from which institution he graduated with honor, and was appointed a brevet second lieutenant in the Seventh Infantry, on the 1st of July, 1834.

In the battle of the 8th and 9th, Captain McKavett displayed great cool-

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ness and judgment, and at Resaca de la Palma, distinguished himself in leading his company into action, in the brilliant charge made by Colonel Belknap. He fell at Monterey, at the head of his company, under peculiarly affecting circumstances, a cannon ball literally severing him in twain. He appeared to have had a presentiment of his death, as there was found in his trunk a will, of recent date, which displayed not only an anticipation of death, but also one of the noblest traits of the human mind, gratitude; for it gave to the early protectors of his childhood, the officers of the Orphan Asylum, nearly all of his property, which was considerable.

Captain McKavett wielded a felicitous pen; many of his sketches of Mexico had a wide circulation through the press of the country, and were admired for their simplicity of style, charms of diction, and excellent spirit. An extract from his last epistle, is, perhaps, a proper conclusion to this imperfect notice of his excellent life and honorable death. In a letter to Colonel A. Hamilton, dated Seralvo, September 13, 1846, we have the following paragraphs, remarkable for sound judgment, highly cultivated taste, and resignation to the apparently anticipated sad event that was to overtake him at Monterey.

"We begin to see the trouble of moving an army in a foreign country. We are necessitated to look to Mexicans for assistance, not only in giving information of the country, but in furnishing the means of transportation, as well as the means of subsistence. The policy seems to be, to bribe the people by kindness. They declare they would rather have such a war than the peace they have been accustomed to; for our army never disturbs them in their dwellings, and at the same time, by its wants and demands, fills their pockets; whereas, when a Mexican force passes through a town, notice is sent in advance, to have ready for them such things as they may call for. If not furnished, the town is plundered; and they never think of paying for supplies thus furnished. On the other hand, if they find one individual in better circumstances than others, they compel him to pay tribute, or break into his premises. This deters many from seeking wealth, or, if they possess it, compels them to conceal it.

"We are in sight of a beautiful range of mountains, a spur of the Sierra Madre. After travelling over flat table-lands for such a length of time, the sight of a mountain is very pleasant, and is a great relief from monotony.

"We have the advantage of continued health; pure mountain springs furnish clear, cool water, and the atmosphere is pure. We learn that it is sickly on the Rio Grande, at Camargo and Matamoros, both of which places have no troops—we may therefore esteem ourselves fortunate in being marched to the interior, for now commences the season for sickness

in the country, and especially along large water-courses. The mountains are said to be healthy the year round.

"Possibly, I may write you next from Monterey; but no one can foresee the result if our movement should be obstructed.

"Please remember me kindly to —, and believe me,

"Sincerely yours,

"H. MCKAVETT."

CAPT. GEORGE P. FIELD.

THIRD INFANTRY.

CAPT. GEORGE P. FIELD, a native of Black Rock, New York, and one of the gallant officers of "the Third," who fell at Monterey, united within himself rare combinations of the qualities of the gentleman and soldier. With the kindest feelings and most generous sympathies, he was an excellent disciplinarian, and remarkably brave. In his youth, by his manliness of character, he attracted the attention of those who had the judgment to perceive his natural military talents, and power to obtain for him a place at West Point. The excellent qualities so promising in his youth, were all realized in his manhood; he endeared himself to his subordinates, and secured the love and respect of his equals and superiors. He graduated from the military academy, at the early age of nineteen years, and entered the army, in which he remained a distinguished ornament, until the day of his death in the assault on Monterey.

Capt. Field was in Florida with his regiment, during the Seminole war, and although that service afforded no opportunity for brilliant achievement, yet it gave to Capt. Field a position to raise himself in the estimation of the army. His regiment being garrisoned at one of the south-western posts, it formed part of the command of Brig. Gen. Taylor, when he established himself at Corpus Christi. Capt. Field was in the battles of the 8th and 9th, in both of which his regiment distinguished itself; his conduct in his last battle, was worthy of himself and his country. He died a soldier's death, at the early age of thirty-three, his last breath being expended in cheering on his men to the charge. In the fond recollections of Capt. Field, so many of which cluster around his surviving friends, no one is remembered with deeper pleasure, than that he ever acknowledged his reliance upon the God of battles, and that his spirit, so suddenly called into eternity, was prepared for the message.