

ZOUAVE!



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James E. Taylor in the zouave uniform of the 10th New York Regiment. (Michael J. McAfee Collection)

Source: <http://www.archives.gov/research/civil-war/photos/>

JOHN COOLEY
Co. G 62d NYSV



This month ZOUAVE! was contacted by a descendant of 62d NY veteran, John Cooley. Bob Meaney has kindly provided new biographical information about his great-great grandfather.

Bob Meaney writes;
I am descended from John H. Cooley, who was my great great grandfather. I just

recently gave my information to David Jones who put it on (the) Descendants Roll Call.

From John Cooley's Civil War Service records, I learned that he enlisted in New York City on June 14, 1861, at the age of 21. This age is consistent with the 1860 Federal Census which lists him as 20 years old.

John Cooley was mustered in to the 62nd NY Infantry, Co. G, as a Private, on June 30, 1861 at Saltersville, NJ. From his Muster Roll cards, I learned that he was wounded on July 2, 1862 (Battle of Malvern Hill?) and sent to "General Hospital, David's Island, New York".

I was able to locate a New York Times article about the arrival of wounded soldiers, dated Friday, August 15, 1862. It says that the steamer Cakawba...arrived in the port of New York from Harrison's Landing on Wednesday, which would have been August 13, 1861. This is the same date that John Cooley's Hospital Muster Roll says he arrived at the U.S. General Hospital on David's Island, in the New York Harbor. The only problem is that the list of wounded soldiers includes a "J. Corley, Co. G, 62d NY". This has got to be a misspelling ... I'm sure it's him.

Apparently, John Cooley convalesced there for 5½ weeks at which point, the Hospital records say he "deserted". I wish I knew more of the details of his separation from service. I don't think he deserted in the conventional sense.

John Cooley went on to marry Johanna Neenan and together they had eight children, four of whom survived to adulthood, including my great grandmother, Mary Cooley, who married John J. Meany.

John Cooley died in New York City on June 4, 1897, at the age of 57, of "chronic bronchitis." He is buried in Holy Cross Cemetery in Brooklyn, NY. His grave makes no mention of his Civil War service. I wish I could clear up his "deserted" status and have a marker placed on his grave by the U.S. Veteran's Administration.

We thank Bob for his contribution to our growing knowledge on the veterans of the Anderson Zouaves. If any readers, particularly in the US, can advise Bob about how he might go about clearing up John Cooley's "deserted" status and have a grave marker placed, please contact this editor at ZOUAVE! Please see contact details below.

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THE FIGHT AT BETHEL A ZOUAVE BOY'S STORY



The following is from a private letter furnished to the New York Tribune: - Camp Hamilton, Near Fortress Monroe, June 11, 1861.

My dear Sister and all my dear Friends, I have received all your kind letters, and also the box, for which accept my hearty thanks. You must not be so indignant at the "outrages" we suffer. We are no worse off than any body of soldiers in the camp, in fact better off than we will be if we should be obliged to shift quarters often. We have enough to eat, and sleep sound and well. Soldiers can't carry their houses with them. I have no fault to find with the officers, they make us as comfortable as they can, and we suffer no avoidable privations or hardships. I did not write to complain, but to show what a soldier's life is, and how different it is from my former one. So don't be indignant any more.

By the time you have received this, the papers will probably have informed you that we have had a battle, or skirmish, or whatever you may call it. We have received the baptism of blood and are to be called soldiers in fact. You will know that I am very tired when you read what I have to write. From 11 o'clock on Sunday night to 5 on Monday afternoon I was on my feet all the time, and marched 40 miles at least; it was an extraordinary march. Just about the time you were going to bed, our camp was put in quite a bu(s)tle of preparation for departure; no one had any idea of marching until the orders were given. We were supplied with ammunition and one day's rations. Before midnight the regimental line was formed, and we filed silently into the road, and took up our march under the light of the stars. On we went in silence, nothing was heard but the tramp, tramp of our feet. It was a beautiful night, as clear as crystal-just the night for a march. The intention was to surprise the rebels at a point fifteen miles off, before day break; so, of course, the strictest silence was observed. But we were disappointed in our surprise. Unfortunately, as it happened, within a couple of miles of the enemy's camp, we came upon their advance or picket guard, who of course fired to raise the alarm, and then endeavored to make their escape. We took prisoner their officer, and captured his horse.

After marching a little further toward the enemy's camp, we heard firing to the right of our rear, which continued some time. Thinking one of our regiments must have

been attacked, we turned about and marched in the direction of the sound. After marching three or four miles we met the Troy regiment, who gave us the cause of the firing. That regiment, and one of the New York regiments coming from different directions mistook each other for the enemy fired. Several were wounded before the mistake was discovered. We were joined on the road by two regiments and three small field-pieces, or cannon, with a body of United States Artillerists to work them. We led the line. As we neared the enemy's line we were saluted by a cannon ball which came flying over the road and landed at our feet. Thus the battle opened. Our field pieces were placed on the road on a line with the enemy's battery, entirely unprotected, with the brave men who worked them gallantly, but paid most dearly for their heroism. We first formed near a wood, and then dashed over an open field of several acres, to within 200 or 300 yards of the enemy's battery. It was discovered that it was too strong to be taken by infantry that the only way to reduce it was by heavy cannon, and a number of them, which he had not. The rebels had mounted behind a masked sand battery some twenty cannon, and were several thousand strong.

The battle lasted between two hours and three hours. Part of the time we were in the woods. Some fifteen of us, with the colonel and one of the captains, were in a group together, and fired through the trees. Other groups were scattered through the woods in the same way. It was a novel thing to hear the cannon balls crashing through the trees and whizzing past us, and the hissing of the rifle balls as they flew by. I don't know whether it was bravery or not, but I was never more cool in my life; I hardly thought where I was, in fact, I don't think I had a realising sense of the danger. The fire was very hot and rapid. Every instant the balls were crashing and whistling around us; yet all the boys in our group stood steady, ready to fire at every opportunity, and conversing with each other and the colonel in the same voice, and as deliberately as if we had been safe in camp. I know I had quite an argument with one of the fellows, and we both thought nothing of our situation. At one time it seemed as if balls could never come so thick and fast as they did about our group. At every

boom of the cannon we would drop flat on our faces, and rise instantly, but they came so fast after that that many of us did not take the trouble. I felt, that if I was going to be hit I would be anyhow, and if I had fallen at every shot I would have nothing to do but get down and get up. It was a grand and awful scene, but I did not realise it fully until it was over. There were many instances of individual heroism observed, some not. I think every man did his best, and all, with few exceptions, were equally brave. One fine young fellow lay near a tree on his face, loading and firing in that position as fast as he could, making almost every shot tell on some of his foe. At last he raised his body a little; at that moment a bullet struck his heart and he fell stiff in death. An excellent fellow of my mess, with whom I have become well acquainted, fell right by my side. Captain Kilpatrick, as brave a man as ever lived, who stood not over three feet from me, was shot in the leg and arm.

At length our party wanted a change, so we turned into the road, where we joined our 1st lieutenant, a bravo young man, of about my age, and a few others. We begged him for God's sake to lead us on; he asked, "Will you follow?" "Yes," we shouted. He waved his sword above his head and cried, "Come on!" and on we went with a (shout) at full speed over the ploughed field, right in the face of the enemy's battery. We were about the only red breeches in the field, and the balls...round us like a hailstorm. The 7th New York Volunteers were at the left of the field, and we stood at the right (all) continuing the firing for some time, the 17th were ordered back. Our little band remained longer, and were the last to leave the field. The rebels seemed to have...particular antipathy to our red breeches, for they paid special regard to them with their shots. After this came the order to fall in, and the weary march homeward; the officers knowing that further fight would cause a useless sacrifice of life. The fatigue, (that seemed to fall) off in the excitement of battle returned, and the march of fifteen miles in the hot sun was the hardest march I ever experienced.

The rebels cannot claim a victory, we had no knowledge of their position and means, or we could not have attacked them without proper preparation. They considered

themselves safer within the battery, for they (did) not follow us. We only wished they had, and given us a fair fight in the open field. After the regiments had moved on, a body of their cavalry pursued a few men who had been ordered to see to the wounded, and were thus behind. Our loss is not exactly ascertained as yet, but it is wonderful that no more were cut off, considering the sharpness of the fire. I suppose our regiment suffered as much as any, owing to their advanced position and conspicuous appearance. James Taylor was killed. The brave fellows that worked the cannon suffered severely. The lieutenant, a United States officer, had his head torn from his body, and occasionally some poor fellow would drop upon the ground dead or writhing in agony. These scenes are the most dreadful in battle. One brave boy, with his arm torn off, cried out to his comrade to revenge him; another with his hand hanging only by the skin, besought to have it taken off, as the pain was dreadful. It was when I was seated by my tent, and thought over what we had passed through, that I first began to realise its fearful nature. It impressed me with a feeling of awe and trembling. I know I shall never go into battle again without more sober and serious feelings.

The officers are delighted with the conduct of the men. They acted nobly, to a man. One of our company, who went through the Mexican war, says he never saw a hotter fire, or men act better. The regulars of the United States army spoke their admiration and surprise; but no one could have acted nobler than they, those brave heroes who stood fast to their guns. It was indeed wonderful to see those raw recruits face that fire so unflinchingly. Thank God, I believe there is not a coward in the regiment. I look forward to another battle. That battery can be taken, and I trust will be, but it will make a most bloody fight. No one knows when his turn may come, and every one and his friends should be prepared for the worst. If I should die, remember the holy cause in which I toil, and let your sorrow, if deep, be proud, and hope that the last acts of my life may go far toward blotting out many of the past. But I am of hopeful heart, and look forward with joyful anticipations to the time when I shall meet all my friends once more.

I am quite well now, only tired, as you can suppose. Had I not thought you would be anxious, I should have left my letter for another day.

Most affectionately yours...

Brisbane Courier Wednesday 25 September 1861

Contributed by Neil Chippendale

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A "DEMORALIZED" SOLDIER



The New York Tribune tells a story of a stout, athletic Zouave, who, running away from the battle of Fredericksburg, was checked by a lieutenant with a drawn sword.

Said the latter, "Stop, sir; go back to your regiment, you infernal coward, you are not wounded."

"For Heaven's sake let me pass," implored the fugitive, "I know I'm not wounded, but I'm fearfully demoralized."

Brisbane Courier Monday 1 June 1863

Contributed by Neil Chippendale

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NEW SOUTHERN DOCUMENTS AVAILABLE



Footnote.com is a pay per view family history site. They have just added new Civil War papers to the list of available items.

Confederate Unfiled Papers -

Arranged by soldier's surnames, these are images of card abstracts and personal papers never filed within a confederate soldier's original service record file. Papers were collected by the War Department and then placed in this series when their proper filing was uncertain or there was no other place to file them. The usual reason was that the information was insufficient or contained discrepancies and could not be positively

identified with any soldier for whom there was a compiled service record.

Compiled Service Records of Union Soldiers serving in Southern states -
Compiled service records of volunteer soldiers from Southern states who fought for the Union.

Contributed by Neil Chippendale

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TAMINICK MILITARY WEEKEND

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Just to let you all know that the Military weekend on the 8th and 9th May 2010 is on. This Military Weekend in May is not taking over from October, it is only an extra one.

This military weekend is to see how many turn up, so far there has been a good response to it and we will see if we do it every year from now on

The shooting events will be determined on the day and as we go along. The costs will be \$5 per night camping, \$5 per day range fee for NEML members and \$7 range fees per day non members, a cheap weekend.

Please let anyone else that you know of in your units if you have one and anyone else for that matter who might be interested.

Don't forget you can ring me on 0260232850 or 0438858626

Regards

Noel Smith

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North East Muzzle Loaders (NEML)

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If you wish to register your group for a re-enactor discount, please email your group's name and details to; corpsutler@yahoo.com.au

Visit our website at; <http://corpsutler.tripod.com>

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