

July 14/09

THE TROY TIMES, TROY, N.

GEN. FREDERICK PHISTERER.

Officer Well Known in the National Guard Dies After an Active Life—Civil War Veteran and Former Regular Army Officer—Had Done Much For the Guard.

Gen. Frederick Phisterer of Albany, for many years one of the most prominent figures in the National Guard of the state, died yesterday afternoon at his home on State Street in Albany, just across the street from the Capitol building, where for many years he had an office. He had been ill several months, and his malady was aggravated by the fact of his advanced age. He was a veteran of the Civil War and a former officer in the Regular Army. His career in the National Guard brought about such important results that he was generally looked upon as the "father of the new National Guard."

General Phisterer was born at Stuttgart, Wurtemberg, Germany, October 11, 1836. He came to America when a youth and grew up with the country. His military service extended back to

and he is entitled to be called the father of the National Guard of this state."

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GENERAL PHISTERER DEAD.

His Son a Prominent Merchant of Rutherford.

Lieutenant Colonel Frederick Phisterer, brevet major general, died in

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THE ARGUS: WEDNESDAY MORNING, JULY 14, 1909.

DEATH OF GENERAL FREDERICK PHISTERER

ENTITLED TO BE CALLED FATHER OF THE STATE NATIONAL GUARD.

Few Officers Had Done as Much as He to Promote the Efficiency of the Militia Forces—Affectionately Remembered for His Many Years of Service.

After a lingering illness of heart disease covering a period of the past seven or eight months, during the greater part of which time he was compelled to keep to his room, Lieut.-Col. Frederick Phisterer died at his home on State street yesterday afternoon opposite his office in National Guard headquarters in the Capitol where so many of his active years had been passed.

Death had been expected for some time and the dying soldier was surrounded by his wife and two sons when

Graysville, Georgia, November 26, 1863; was present at the action of Ringgold Gap, Georgia, November 27, 1863; participated in the engagement at Tunnel Hill and Buzzard Roost Gap, Georgia, February 25 to 27, 1864; in the Atlanta campaign from May 3 to August 20, 1864, including the action at Buzzard Roost Gap, Georgia, May 9 to 11, 1864; the battle of Resaca, Georgia, May 15 and 16, 1864; the battle of Pickett's Mills, May 27, 1864; the operations about New Hope Church and Dallas, Georgia, from May 28 to June 5, 1864, covering also a night attack on the enemy's lines May 29th and repulse of his attack to regain his line May 31, 1864; the battle of Kenesaw Mountain, Georgia, from June 12 to July 3, 1864; the action at Smyrna Church, July 4, 1864; the battle of Peach Tree Creek, Georgia, July 20, 1864; the siege of Atlanta, Georgia, from July 23 to August 20, 1864; an affair with Rebel cavalry and outposts August 5, 1864 and the engagement at Utoy Creek, Georgia, August 7, 1864; for special voluntary service at the battle of Stones River he received the congressional medal of honor, and for the battle of Mission Ridge and Resaca the brevet of captain in the United States army.

From the time of leaving the army he was in civil pursuits living in New Jersey, New York, Brooklyn, and Columbus and Straightsville, Ohio; during the railroad strikes in 1877 he commanded a company of citizens' police at Columbus, and August 27, 1877, he was commissioned captain of the Governor's

brigade was ordered into the Cedars to the support of the right wing which was obviously being forced back by the enemy.

The two battalions of the 18th formed the left wing, the other three battalions the right wing. The position of the battery was between the battalion of the Second battalion of the 18th the right and left wings.

The infantry marched into the woods (cedars) and after a march of about 15 minutes on a wood road the battalions of the 18th regiment received orders to halt—which order was executed.

After some 10 minutes or more had elapsed Major Frederick Townsend, commanding the detachment of the 18th infantry, consisting of his own, the Second and First battalion, received orders to return and support the battery of the brigade. This order indicated that the battery was to the rear—yet, there was a possibility that it might have gone to the front, on another road and joined the right wing. In order to make sure that this was not the case Major Townsend sent an orderly to the rear to find the battery, and Lieutenant Frederick Phisterer, his adjutant, volunteered to go to the front, find the remainder of the brigade and ascertain whether or not the battery was with it. After a gallop of 10 minutes along the wood road, which first led directly toward the approaching enemy and the turning to the right along his front Lieutenant Phisterer came up with the battalion of the 16th infantry, under Major Slemmer, which was engaged with the enemy and under a heavy fire. From the moment that he had come to the turn in the road he had been exposed to musketry fire which increased in force as he came nearer the battalion of the 16th.

He reported to Major Slemmer, inquired if the major had seen anything of the battery, and received the information that Major Slemmer had not seen anything of it, and did not know its whereabouts.

This showed conclusively that the battery was not in advance as it was



MAJOR GEN. FREDERICK PHISTERER.

his schoolboy days. His record really was made in the Civil War, and he participated in many battles in Kentucky, Tennessee and Georgia under Grant, Sherman and other commanders.

December 6, 1855, when residing in Pennsylvania, he enlisted in the United States Army, and in December, 1860, he was honorably discharged. He had been stationed in the West and had taken part in Colonel Wright's campaign against the Indians, fighting many battles. After the battle of Bull Run he re-enlisted in the United States Infantry and served through the entire war. He was promoted to a Lieutenantcy, and received a

After a lingering illness of heart disease covering a period of the past seven or eight months, during the greater part of which time he was compelled to keep to his room, Lieut.-Col. Frederick Phisterer died at his home on State street yesterday afternoon opposite his office in National Guard headquarters in the Capitol where so many of his active years had been passed.

Death had been expected for some time and the dying soldier was surrounded by his wife and two sons when the end came. In many respects General Phisterer was Albany's most noted soldier as well as one of the best posted guardsmen residing in this country. Frederick Phisterer had a remarkable career. He was born in Germany, displayed in his school days a fondness for the military service, and was in school companies a private, musician and first lieutenant; he emigrated to this country when still a boy.

December 6, 1855, residing in Pennsylvania, he enlisted in the United States army, and in March, 1856, he joined Company A of the Third artillery at Fort Yuma, Cal. October 12, 1858, he was promoted to corporal; April 1,

1861, he was honorably discharged with character "excellent" December 5, 1860, at Fort Vancouver, then Washington territory, having during this service participated in Colonel Wright's expedition against the Spokane and other Indians, and in the In-

lanta, Georgia, from July 23 to August 20, 1864; an affair with Rebel cavalry and outposts August 5, 1864 and the engagement at Utoy Creek, Georgia, August 7, 1864; for special voluntary service at the battle of Stones River he received the congressional medal of honor, and for the battle of Mission Ridge and Resaca the brevet of captain in the United States army.

From the time of leaving the army he was in civil pursuits living in New Jersey, New York, Brooklyn, and Columbus and Straightsville, Ohio; during the railroad strikes in 1877 he commanded a company of citizens' police at Columbus, and August 27, 1877, he was commissioned captain of the Governor's Guard, State of Ohio, which position he resigned January 29, 1879.

He entered the military service of the State of New York, January 1, 1880, as acting assistant adjutant-general of the State with the rank of colonel and November 22, 1892, he was appointed assistant adjutant-general with the same rank.

During this period he also served in the fall of 1881 as secretary of a commission appointed to prepare a military code for the State; commanded the Tenth battalion, Albany, from September 17, 1881, to January 23, 1883, when he was detailed to serve as assistant adjutant-general of the Fifth brigade, which duty he performed until September 6, 1886; served as secretary of a board of judges examining

1884, as post adjutant at the Camp of Instruction of the State from 1882 to 1891; also as inspector of the camp in 1886 and 1887; as paymaster at the camp from 1888 to 1892; as instructor of drills in 1890 and 1891, and as chief of staff in 1892 to 1894. At other times

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He reported to Major Slemmer, inquired if the major had seen anything of the battery, and received the information that Major Slemmer had not seen anything of it, and did not know its whereabouts.

This showed conclusively that the battery was not in advance as it was thought possible to be. Lieutenant Phisterer informed Major Slemmer of the orders received by Major Townsend. This was the first intimation Major Slemmer had received of any movement since he had struck the enemy, and as there was no support on his left and any delay might cause the capture of his battalion Major Slemmer decided to fall back.

Lieutenant Phisterer then returned over the road he had come under a very uncomfortable fire and rejoined his battalion which he found moving out of the woods into the open field, there to support the brigade battery of whose whereabouts the orderly sent by Major Townsend had brought word.

Lieutenant Phisterer in voluntarily searched for the battery in the face of a heavy fire from the enemy until he found the left battalion of the right wing of the brigade, imparting to its commanding officer the situation, and the orders received by the left wing of

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In Colonel Wright's campaign against the Indians, fighting many battles. After the battle of Bull Run he re-enlisted in the United States Infantry and served through the entire war. He was promoted to a Lieutenantcy, and received a Congressional Medal for special voluntary service at Stone's River, and was brevetted as Captain in the Regular Army for gallantry in the battles of Mission Ridge and Resaca. As Captain in the Seventh United States Infantry, after the war, he took part in the Wind River Mountains expedition against the Shoshone Indians. He served many years in the West and held various positions connected with the Adjutant General's Department.

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For thirteen years, 1880 to 1893, he was Military Instructor at the Albany Boys' Academy, and was a member, Past Commander of a post and Past Adjutant General of the Grand Army of the Republic, member of the Society of the Military Order of the Loyal Legion, of the Society of the Army of the Cumberland and of the Society of the Legion of Honor of the United States and of the Masonic orders.

Among his literary works were: "The National Guardsman on Guard and Kindred Duties," first published in 1879; "The National Guardsman at Ceremonies;" "The National Guardsman as a

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After the battle of Bull Run, when it became apparent that there would be a serious conflict, living then in Ohio, he re-enlisted in the 18th U. S. Infantry and was appointed sergeant major July 31, 1861. He was promoted to be second lieutenant October 30, 1861, and assigned to duty with the second battalion as adjutant November 4, 1861; he was promoted to be first lieutenant February 27, 1862; served also as adjutant of the detachment in the field from December 26, 1862; he resigned his staff positions April 28, 1863; was on recruiting service at Columbus, Ohio, from May 27, 1863, and while on this service served also as recruiting officer and adjutant at Camp Thomas, Ohio, and as acting regimental adjutant; in June, 1863, as adjutant of an expedition against insurgents in Holmes county, Ohio; from June 29, 1863, as mustering officer at Camps Chase, Todd and Delaware, and at Columbus, Ohio, and from October, 1863, as acting assistant adjutant general of the Ohio volunteer recruiting service; he was relieved from all these duties November 15, 1863, and November 25, 1863, joined the second battalion on the battlefield and was assigned to the command of Company A; he was reappointed adjutant of the second battalion December 1, 1863, and also adjutant of the detachment in the field December 25, 1863; temporarily in command of Company C, second battalion from April 1, to April 24, 1864; resigned his staff appointments and commission August 20, 1864; received leave of absence for four months, his resignation not being accepted, September 5, 1864; he was appointed regimental adjutant November 12, 1864; also quartermaster and commissary of subsistence at Camp Thomas, Ohio, February 1, 1865, serving as such until May 31, 1865; also commanded the permanent company and recruits at Camp Thomas from February 1st to 27th and September 11 to 30, 1865; served also as post adjutant at Fort Kearney, Nebraska, from December 18, 1865, to January 6, 1866, and as acting assistant adjutant general of the Mountain district, Department of the Platte, from April 13, 1866, and as post adjutant at Fort Phil. Kearney from July, 1866; he was promoted to be captain with rank from February 15, 1866, and relieved from his duties as regimental and post adjutant and acting assistant adjutant general July 28, 1866; transferred as captain to the 36th United States Infantry September 21, 1866, and on recruiting service at Columbus and Dayton, Ohio, and Richmond, Indiana,

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For 13 years, 1850 to 1893, he was military instructor at the Albany Boys' academy, and was a member, past commander of a post and past adjutant-general of the Grand Army of the Republic, member of the Society of the Military Order of the Loyal Legion, of the Society of the Army of the Cumberland, and of the Society of the Legion of Honor of the United States and of the Masonic orders.

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At the time of his death General Phisterer was adjutant-general on the staff of Major-General Charles F. Roe, commanding the division, National Guard. He was also chief of the bureau of records of the war of the Rebellion, which latter position he had occupied since the establishment of the bureau in the early eighties. He is survived by his wife, who was Miss Isabel Riley, of Columbus, Ohio, and two sons, both of whom are married and live in other cities. The eldest son is Capt. Frederick W. Phisterer, of the United States coast artillery, stationed at Fort Wadsworth, and the second son, Karl Phisterer, is engaged in business at Rutherford, N. J.

On the announcement of General Phisterer's death, Adjutant-General Nelson H. Henry, by command of the Governor, issued general orders to the National Guard detailing his notable career as passed in the regular army and in the National Guard. The order notes that General Phisterer had twice been brevetted, first as brigadier-general on December 22, 1898, and later as major-general on January 2, 1905. The order prepared by Adjutant-General Nelson H. Henry also says:

"With feelings of deep sorrow the Governor announces to the military and naval forces of the State, the death of Lieutenant-Colonel Frederick Phisterer, brevet major-general, at his home in Albany, N. Y., July 13, 1909. General Phisterer was born in Stuttgart, Wurtemberg, Germany, October 11, 1836.

"The life of General Phisterer during a long career of public service has been characterized by loyalty to country and unswerving devotion to duty. Few officers have done as much as he to promote the efficiency of the State military forces and he is entitled to be called the Father of the National Guard of this State. An officer of undaunted courage and of eminent ability, his

search for the battery in the face of a heavy fire from the enemy until he found the left battalion of the right wing of the brigade, imparting to its commanding officer the situation, and the orders received by the left wing of the brigade unquestionably saved that battalion at least and probably another battalion to its right from annihilation, or capture, for the brigade had but barely formed in support of its battery. In the new position of the latter, when the enemy came out of the woods, and made most determined and repeated efforts to take the battery which efforts were, however, sturdily defeated by the latter its regular supports, and additional troops, formed to the left and right of the brigade; the determined assault showing that the strength of the enemy greatly exceeded the 300 men of the right wing of the regular brigade engaging him but a half an hour before.

In a later action that day the brigade suffered in killed and wounded nearly 50 per cent of its effective force.

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In announcing General Phisterer's death, through Adjutant General Henry, to the military and naval forces of the state last night, Governor Hughes said: "The life of General Phisterer, during a long career of public service, has been characterized by loyalty to country and unswerving devotion to duty. Few officers have done so much as he to promote the efficiency of the state military forces,

Chase, Ohio, and Delaware, at Columbus, Ohio, and from October, 1863, as acting assistant adjutant general of the Ohio volunteer recruiting service; he was relieved from all these duties November 15, 1863, and November 25, 1863, joined the second battalion on the battlefield and was assigned to the command of Company A; he was reappointed adjutant of the second battalion December 1, 1863, and also adjutant of the detachment in the field December 25, 1863; temporarily in command of Company C, second battalion from April 1, to April 24, 1864; resigned his staff appointments and commission August 20, 1864; received leave of absence for four months, his resignation not being accepted, September 5, 1864; he was appointed regimental adjutant November 12, 1864; also quartermaster and commissary of subsistence at Camp Thomas, Ohio, February 1, 1865, serving as such until May 31, 1865; also commanded the permanent company and recruits at Camp Thomas from February 1st to 27th and September 11 to 30, 1865; served also as post adjutant at Fort Kearney, Nebraska, from December 18, 1865, to January 6, 1866, and as acting assistant adjutant general of the Mountain district, Department of the Platte, from April 13, 1866, and as post adjutant at Fort Phil. Kearney from July, 1866; he was promoted to be captain with rank from February 15, 1866, and relieved from his duties as regimental and post adjutant and acting assistant adjutant general July 28, 1866; transferred as captain to the 36th United States Infantry September 21, 1866, and on recruiting service at Columbus and Dayton, Ohio, and Richmond, Indiana, from September, 1868; on duty at headquarters of the recruiting service, New York city, from November 12, 1866, and as acting assistant adjutant general of the recruiting service from February 1, 1867; on four months leave of absence from May, 1868; on duty at regimental headquarters at Fort Sanders, Wyoming, in October, 1868, and in command of his company (H) at Fort Bridger, Wyoming, October 31, 1868. He was transferred as captain to the Seventh United States infantry May 13, 1869; was in command of an expedition to the Wind River mountains to protect the Shoshone Indians in summer, 1869; on an expedition to the Sweet Water Mines in December, 1869; on waiting orders from January 7, 1870, and was honorably discharged at his own request August 4, 1870.

During the War of the Rebellion he took part in Major General Thomas' campaign against Zollikoffer in Eastern Kentucky in January, 1862; the forced march to Pittsburg Landing, Tennessee, to support General Grant; and participated in a skirmish at Lick Creek or Paa Ridge, Mississippi, April 26, 1862; in the siege of Corinth, Mississippi May, 1862; in a skirmish at Springfield, Kentucky, October 6, 1862; in the battle of Perryville, Kentucky, October 8, 1862; in the battle of Stones River, Tennessee, December 31, 1862, to January 3, 1863; in a skirmish at Eagleville, Tennessee, March 2, 1863; in the battle of Mission Ridge, Tennessee, November 25, 1863; in a skirmish near

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"The life of General Phisterer during a long career of public service has been characterized by loyalty to country and unswerving devotion to duty. Few officers have done as much as he to promote the efficiency of the State military forces and he is entitled to be called the Father of the National Guard of this State. An officer of undaunted courage and of eminent ability, his career is a shining example to every citizen. In his death the State mourns the loss of a born soldier, and a man of unquestioned integrity who discharged the duties of every position he was called upon to fill ably, efficiently and conscientiously.

"In respect to his memory the national flag will be displayed at half staff at all headquarters, armories and State arsenals, until retreat of the day of his funeral."

General Phisterer was one of the heroes of the rebellion and his principal exploit in the line of heroic endeavor is set forth in a notable publication, "Deeds of Valor," compiled and published in two volumes in 1901 by Walter F. Beyer and Oscar F. Keydel, to show "how American heroes won the medal of honor." At the time of the incident detailed General Phisterer was first lieutenant and adjutant of the Second battalion, Eighteenth United States infantry, on December 31, 1862. The account of his exploit reads as follows:

The regular brigade of the Army of the Cumberland consisting of battalions from the 15th, 16th, 18th (two) and 19th regiments of infantry and Battery "H," Fifth artillery, marched early on a gray frosty morning, December 31, 1862, from Stewart's creek, where it had bivouacked during the night to the battlefield of Stone's river or Murfreesborough, Tenn., arriving there at about 8 o'clock. After having been drawn up in column for possibly an hour the