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pass to July 1st, 1863. Look, there are the colors of the 154th in the cemetery overlooking Gettysburg. Before them lies the field about to be made memorable as the arena of the most terrible conflict of arms in the history of civilized nations. Col. Allen is in command; about him are gathered 200 dust begrimed veterans. Early in the morning of that fateful day Col. Warner (then Major) was detailed with 50 men of the regiment for a scouting party, and well indeed was it for the regiment that it so happened. But let us turn to the cemetery ridge. To the left and northwest the 1st corps has been fighting ~~the~~ Gen. Lee's main column since early morning over seminary ridge. Gen. Reynolds has been killed, Gen. Howard has assumed command, and the 3rd division of the 11th corps has been thrown forward to support the 1st corps which is being forced back by overwhelming numbers. Gen. Von Steinwehr has formed our 2nd division on Cemetery ridge. Meantime the rebel columns of Early and Rhodes have reached the field from the northeast and are deploying to sweep up through Gettysburg and take the ridge. Again the 154th must be sacrificed to bad generalship. Two regiments only are ordered out a half mile in front of the main line to hold a corps of rebel veterans. 'Tis 2 or 3 p.m., the command is given the 154th and 134th "Fall in." The 134th with Col. ~~Castor~~ in command leads off a quick step down the main street of Gettysburg. The sidewalks are lined with the wounded of the 3rd division which has been forced back on the town. But the regiments move on through the town, across the railroad and over a bridge, while from the left on Seminary ridge a rebel battery opens on their devoted heads. Comrades I saw a sight then which you could not all see as I saw it. I was with company B, at the ~~very~~ rear of the regiment and could look over the whole length of the marching column. As they uncovered from the town, the shell from Kee's battery came shrieking closer to their heads and every shot a little closer, you all know how it was. I looked for some disorder, but I swear to you today, not one man broke step from the head of the column to the rear. I said they were brave. I wanted to take off my hat and cheer them then. A little farther on and the head of the column files to the right through a brickyard, the order is given, "halt, front, right dress," then forward in the line of battle. Had the regiment been on dress parade it could not have done better. But there comes the rebels right in front. "Ready, commence firing." Instantly the whole line is a blaze of fire. But look, on the right the 134th is being doubled up and broken. An order is given to retreat, but in the crash of battle it is not heard, soon a rebel division sweeps into the rear from the left and the 154th is cut off, surrounded. In the midst Col. Allen and 16 others make a dash and escape. Comrades you know the rest, all but the dead are taken prisoner. The brave sergeant who carried the colors so proudly through the battle of Chancellorsville, fell flag in hand, his brother seized the colors, and he too fell, how many more I do

not know. The prisoners were hurried from the field to the rear of the rebel army. The ground over which we passed to reach the rear was thickly strewn with the dead and dying, showing that the first fight at Gettysburg was no idle play. Had I time I could tell you of the 150 brave men who refused the parole on the field offered them by their captors because it would have been disobeying an order of the government. Of those 150 men 75 perished in rebel prison. Let us not forget them.

Letter of John F. Wellman, Sgt. Co. B,
printed in the Ellicottville Post, Sept. 5, 1888 on the
occasion of the Regts' 1st Annual Reunion.