

RECEPTION OF CO. M.

A Hilarious Time from the Time the Incoming Train was Sighted on Thursday Evening, until the Boys Reached the Arms of their Friends at the Depot.

Friday the Great Day for Citizens and Soldiers.

Thousands of People Participate in the Grand Reception.

Patriotic Speeches and Songs Enliven the Occasion.

The blowing of whistles and ringing of bells Thursday evening at 5 o'clock, as the B. & M. passenger train came in sight, was a signal to the citizens of the city that the long prayed for event of anxious fathers and mothers was at hand, and that company M, of Nebraska's fighting First, were approaching. The occasion had already been anticipated, and the platform at the depot was crowded, as well as the ground for several rods, with hundreds of relatives and friends of the boys, bent on being the first to extend a welcome grasp or loving embrace. As the train approached the band played "Home Sweet Home," but amid the cheering that burst forth from every throat, the music was inaudible. As fast as the boys could get from the cars, a fond mother or loving sister was in his embrace, while friends upon all sides were urging their attention. It was a scene of joy that was calculated to make the most hardened weep. It was fully an hour before all had left the depot, as all were bent on extending a greeting hand to each of the boys before they dispersed. The members of the G. A. R. were on hand in full force, with a view of escorting the young soldiers up town, but as the relatives took charge of each individual and conveyed him away, all formalities were dispensed with. It was easy to be seen by the happy smiles on the faces of the returning heroes, that they enjoyed being at home and meeting their friends again, as did their relatives and friends enjoy their return. The members of the company from Ansley stopped at home, and did not put in an appearance until the next day, when a large majority of the citizens of Ansley came along with them, to participate in the grand reception. Among the attractions that elicited no little attention was a Spaniard, Francisco Madera, whom the company took in, sick, and almost starved, in the Philippines, and whom Captain Talbot brought home with him. The Spaniard cannot speak much English, but seemed able to understand and comprehend the situation, and showed manifestations of enjoyment. Carey Layton had a Filipino dog, labeled "Company M, Broken Bow," which he brought with him, that did not attract so much attention because it differed greatly from the canine family at home, but because it was a product of the opposite side of the globe.

THE GREAT DAY.

Friday morning, the date of the big reception, was ushered in by the firing of 104 guns and the ringing of the church and council room bells at sunrise. The business houses and streets were elaborately decorated in holiday attire, and everybody was prepared to give our returned heroes a hearty welcome. At an early hour people began to arrive from the country, and by ten o'clock the streets were alive with people. A special train arrived from Ravenna, that brought with it the Ravenna and Ansley cornet bands, and several hundred people from the towns along the route. A large delegation came down from Merna, accompanied by the Merna band and the members of the G. A. R., post of that place. From Custer Center they were accompanied by a large delegation of Custer Centerites, and a large float loaded with little girls dressed in white. On their arrival a procession was formed, starting at the First National bank corner, with Mayor Royse in the lead, followed in order by the Ravenna band, Spanish-American soldiers, members of the G. A. R., the Ansley, Merna and Broken Bow bands each leading a section of the large concourse, which extended more than a mile in length. The line of march was on Fourth avenue, to the street north of the north side school house, and from there to Fifth avenue and south to Main street, thence east to the square, and thence on the north, west and south sides of the square.

The G. A. R. tent had been erected in the street, at the southeast corner of the square, which opened into the park. In the large pavilion the platform was erected, and seats placed covering the entire space, as well as upon an equally large space in the park adjacent to the tent. The seating capacity was sufficient to seat two thousand, but not sufficient to accommodate half

the crowd that clamored and crowded in vain to get within hearing distance of the exercises. The Ravenna band occupied the platform, and interspersed music throughout the day, to the gratification of all within hearing distance. The exercises were opened with music by the band, which was followed with an invocation by Rev. Burns. This was followed by the address of welcome by Mayor Ed. Royse. He spoke as follows:

"Members of Company M and Soldiers of the Spanish American war: War is an abnormal condition. It is discord, disturbance, unrest. It disturbs the business interests of the country; it breaks up family and social relations, parts friends from friends, separates brothers from brothers, from fathers, mothers, sisters and sweethearts. It is gloom, a shadow, a cloud, sorrow, sadness and tears. But when the dark clouds of war are lifted, and the sunshine of peace sheds its rays upon the people recently engaged in war, the whole scene is changed. The olive branch of peace takes the place of the thorns of war—harmony comes out of discord, joy out of sorrow, tranquility out of disturbance, and a peaceful happiness out of anxious sadness.

Boys of company M, your friends and neighbors who met in this city over a year ago to bid you farewell and God-speed as you bravely marched to face the stern realities of war, with all its gloom and hazardous conditions, have now assembled with feelings of unutterable joy, to welcome you back to the bosom of industry, and to crown you with laurels of peace. Though you went to the antipodes, the eyes of the civilized world have been upon you. The eyes of your admiring friends have followed (full of unfeigned pride, though anxious solicitude) every movement you have made. Our prayers, mingled with tears, were with you at the capture of Manila, at Malolos, in the jungles of the San Mateo, at the pumping station, when you swam the Bag Bag river. Our eyes have often dimmed with tears at the thought of your danger, privations and loss, but they have ever been tears of sympathy, always mingled with pride and never with shame; and now we have to congratulate you upon the honorable record you have made as soldiers. We are proud of your patriotism, proud of your valor, proud of you.

Words fail to express our gratitude to you for the credit and honor which you, by all your conduct, have reflected upon your state and your county. And here and now I pledge to you that we shall erect in our hearts a monument more enduring than the piled granite or marble shaft, and write thereon, "Sacred to the memory of the patriotism and valor of company M."

Now in behalf of the citizens of Broken Bow and Custer county, I extend to you our warmest welcome. Nothing that we have is too good for you. The city is yours, take it and use it for your own comfort and pleasure. Forget the stern realities of war, think no longer of the impetuous charge against the Filipinos, but make an onslaught upon the viands prepared for you by loving hands. I pause for a moment,—some of you are not here; disease and wounds have detained some of your number. To them I extend the sympathy of a solicitous people, and express the wish for a speedy recovery and a felicitous return to their home and friends.

I wish I might be spared the rest, but in the bloody carnage some must fall, and the glad songs of our welcome have a sad refrain. Two of your number will never return, Guy Livingston and Nat Sims. They are with your brave Colonel Stotsenburg, to march to the order of the great Commander. Our duty is to their living friends, and let us perform that duty well, as becomes a patriotic and grateful people. In behalf of our people I extend to them our sincerest sympathy in the hour of their distress. They will never return, but they have left a record which will be a matter of pride to you and your issue.

In behalf of the citizens of Broken Bow, I extend to our visiting guests the most cordial hospitality of our city. Be at home, enjoy yourselves and your joy and pleasure will be our only and highest reward for our efforts to entertain you. Boys of company M, you do not need the keys to the town; it is wide open to you, and you have full and absolute freedom of the city."

This was followed with a solo of welcome by Mrs. J. S. Haeden, in which about thirty of the city's best singers joined in the chorus.

Response to the address of welcome was made by Lieut. H. F. Kennedy, in a few well chosen words, in which he expressed the company's appreciation of the grand reception, and the kindness shown them during their sojourn in Manila. Quoting Guy Livingston, one of the two of the company who was

killed in battle, said, "That there were few, if any, towns that did as well by their men as Broken Bow did for company M."

After more music by the band, Prof. J. B. Taggart made the speech of welcome in behalf of Ansley, in place of J. C. Porter, not present. This was followed with a song by the choir.

R. E. Brega being absent, Jas. Stockham delivered the address of welcome in behalf of Callaway. This was followed with social greetings to company M by everybody, under the directions of Mrs. J. H. Kerr, assisted by relatives of members of the company.

Dinner was provided in the north side opera house for the members of company M and their companions, whether mother, wife, sister or sweetheart. This was in charge of the ladies, and was reported to have been an elaborate spread. Basket lunch was partaken of in the park by all who had not made other provisions, where shade and ice water, which was provided in abundance, was relished.

AFTERNOON.

The exercises in the afternoon did not commence until 3 o'clock, but for an hour previous the seats and tent were filled with those anxious to hear all. But the boys were loath to leave their companions and friends, and thus the exercises were delayed. While some grew a little impatient waiting, they were fully repaid for their time by the excellent program that followed. It was opened by all joining in the song, "America." This was followed with music by Ravenna band. Miss Kate Dunning then favored the audience with the recitation of the following poem, of which she is the author:

Welcome Home.

[To Company M, of the First Nebraska Regiment.]

Welcome home, company M,
Back to old Nebraska:
Back to the state,
Its rugged soil;
Happy homesteads,
And honest toil.
The fresh, pure air,
That freely gave
Strength to make you
Soldiers so brave.
Make you ready
To do or dare,
For patriotism
And name most fair.

Welcome home, company M,
Back to old Nebraska.

Welcome home, company M,
Back to old Nebraska:
To the mothers
Whose locks are gray:
Whose fond old hearts
Are proud today.
Of sons scarcely
Past their teens,
That fought like men
In the Philippines;
"Neath scorching sun,
Across the sea;
The true-born sons,
Those gentle lips
Now speak to you.

Welcome home, company M,
Back to old Nebraska.

Welcome home, company M,
Back to old Nebraska:
In the graveyard,
Beyond the hill,
Dear, loving forms
Are lying still.
A year ago
They said good-bye,
At home, in war—
We all must die,
Beyond the dome
Of endless blue,
Those gentle lips
Now speak to you.

Welcome home, company M,
Back to old Nebraska.

Welcome home, company M,
Back to old Nebraska:
The people flock
From far and wide,
Nebraska's brave,
A nation's pride;
With shouts of joy—
They come to greet,
Though that meeting
Is bitter-sweet—
We'll not forget,
In years to come,
And give the praise
To every one;
Soldiers of company M,
Gallant First Nebraska.
—KATE W. DUNNING.

Hon. Jas. Whitehead acted as toastmaster, and introduced the several speakers in highly complimentary and appropriate remarks. The toast, "Company M" was responded to by Judge H. M. Sullivan. His speech was able, patriotic, and complimentary in a high degree to the members of company M and the first Nebraska regiment. This was responded to by Captain C. L. Mullins, who expressed his appreciation and that of the company, for the kind words and deeds of the citizens of Broken Bow and Custer county.

An original solo was then rendered by Mrs. A. H. Stuckey, in which the members of the company

were personally mentioned, the choir joining in the chorus.

Ex-Senator W. R. Akers gave a fine address on the subject, "The Fighting First Nebraska." It was one of the best talks of the day. It was responded to by Capt. V. C. Talbot, in a short talk, in which he expressed his gratefulness for the many kind words said in behalf of the First Nebraska.

At this juncture music was furnished by the band. A recitation by Charlie Kroll was delivered in her usual happy style, to the delight of all. A solo by Deane Holcomb, in which a number of voices joined in the chorus, was met with the hearty applause of the audience.

"The Nebraska Soldier" was responded to by Prof. J. M. Scott, instead of Gov. Poynter, who failed to put in an appearance. It is not putting it too strong to say that a half dozen Poynters, put together, could not have equalled it. It was a fine speech. This was responded to in an able manner by Simon Cameron, a former member of the Second Nebraska regiment. This address was followed with music by the choir.

"Soldiers of the Spanish-American War" was responded to by an old soldier, Dr. R. C. Talbot. This was to have been responded to by a new soldier, Robt. Frey, but he, with his returned comrades, was surrounded and held captive by friends and appreciative citizens on the grounds, and was unable to make the platform.

The exercises closed by the band playing "The Battle of Manila," which evoked the most hearty applause and commendation from all present, followed by the announcement that supper would be served to company M, and the band at the north side opera house. The audience was then dismissed with an expression of thanks for their good order, many of them having been kept standing throughout the entire program, and while, on account of the multitude in attendance, a large number were beyond the reach of human voice, yet they exhibited, through all, a degree of good nature and patience that was in itself an evidence of the high intelligence of those assembled. The concluding exercises wound up with a ball in the north side opera house, at night in which all who wished joined in the dance free of charge.

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Hello, there, are You Coming to the Big Show?

If so, you will see Geo. Willing, with the Peninsular, Planished Steel Range High Closet; it is a beauty, at a moderate price. It makes my competitors howl. Also the Cast Stove, from \$11.00 up.

The ESTATE OAK Heater is a world beater—it made the other fellow change his line last year. It holds fire 60 hours. Hundreds are in Custer county.

Just received a carload of the celebrated Studebaker Wagons—best wagon made; also Racine Banner & Bradley Buggies and Spring Wagons. Deering Binders won't work in winter.

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