

Bethinking of Old Orleans

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CO. F, 3rd N.Y. VOLUNTEERS

Welcome Home



When soldiers from the Spanish American War returned home in Sept. 1898 they were greeted with great fanfare at Medina where the community went all out. The headline on a newspaper article of the time notes: "Medina Can Think Of But One Thing" with a subtitle "Whole Town Working To Welcome Its Returning Soldiers." This grand event occurred on Tuesday, Sept. 13, 1898. The following news article gives the complete details of the celebration as planned:

"The committees having in charge the arrangements for the grand reception to be accorded the members of Company F, Third Regiment, on their return today, hustled hard yesterday. The train bearing the returning soldiers will reach Medina station about 3 o'clock, possibly a little later, if the Elmira parade detains them. Surgeon Simonds, of the One Hundred and Twenty-ninth, will go to Rochester to meet the company and will wire Medina the exact hour of leaving Rochester.

As soon as the train leaves the city, the fire alarm in Medina will be sounded as a signal for the parade to gather. When the train passes Holley the alarm will again be sounded as a signal for the procession to move to the depot. Mayor F.L. Downs will be president of the day, with S.A. Cook, A.J. Hill, Michael Slack and Worden Babcock, Vice-presidents. Major Henry M. Starr will act as marshal. In the line will be the common council and visiting common councils from Albion, Brockport, Holley, Middleport and other villages which furnished recruits for the company, the Twenty-ninth Separate Company band, Company F, the Veterans' band, Hood post, G. A. R., Chief Joseph Brady and Assistant Chief H. Milton Seeley with the paid portion of the Medina fire department, the

Alert Hose Company, Gorman Hose Company, Protective Hose Company, Citizens' Hook and Ladder Company, the Brockport Cornet band, the volunteer relief fund committee, the citizens' reception committee, the high school boys brigade and carriages for infirm and disabled soldiers. Everybody else will march. As the train arrives, a salute of twenty-nine guns will be fired and every whistle and bell in town will sound for fifteen minutes. The route of the parade will be through, West, Park, Catherine, Center and Main streets, counter marching on Main to the armory.

"A large arch is being erected in front of Bent's opera house by the citizens, with a thirty-two-foot span bearing the legend of welcome and with panels showing the months of service. Preparations are being made for other elaborate decorations. At Odd Fellows' Hall a banquet will be served to the soldiers by the ladies of Medina. There will be a prayer by the Rev. Mr. MacFarlane, and an address of welcome by Mayor Downs. An informal reception will follow at the armory, and in the evening there will be bonfires, fireworks, balloon ascensions, band concerts and an evening of general rejoicing."

The accompanying photo shows the arch which was erected across Main Street in Medina. It appears to be covered with evergreen boughs (perhaps Cedar) and carries the message "Welcome Home." A shield which hangs down in the middle bears a large F. On the top of the arch is mounted a miniature cannon and American Flag. Other flags and decorations also appear on the buildings lining Main Street in the Medina business district.