

JOHN BURRILL

One of the well-remembered and highly esteemed citizens of Hawley, Clay county, during a past generation was the late John Burrill. He was born at Abbott, Maine, on August 2, 1842, a son of Jacob and Rachael (Bennett) Burrill, who are mentioned on other pages of this volume.

John Burrill spent a part of his boyhood in his native town, where he attended the public schools, but before he had reached man's estate, he removed with his parents to Framingham, Massachusetts, and later to Fitzwilliam, New Hampshire, where he was employed in a woodenware factory. In the spring of 1861, he enlisted in Company A, Second New Hampshire Volunteer Infantry, being the first man from his county to enlist in the three-year service. At the expiration of his first term of enlistment, he re-enlisted for the duration of the war, a period of one year. He took part in many of the leading battles of the Civil War, including Bull Run (first and second), Fredericksburg, Antietam, Gettysburg, siege of Richmond, and many others, being present at Lee's surrender at Appomattox, Virginia. Soon, thereafter, he was detailed as a guard. He had previously been an orderly for Gen. Joe Hooker, and he had the honor of escorting President Lincoln from the boat-landing at Fredericksburg to General Hooker's headquarters on one occasion, when the chief executive paid the commander of the Army of the Potomac a visit. In all, Mr. Burrill took part in about thirty battles and skirmishes. He was a brave and efficient soldier for the Union. Other battles in which he took part were those of Cold Harbor, siege of Yorktown, Williamsburg, siege of Petersburg and those of the Peninsular campaign. The dates of his enlistment were as follows: April 25, 1861; one month later, May 31, 1861, when he enlisted for three years in Company A, Second New Hampshire Volunteer Infantry, and on February 1, 1865, when he enlisted a third time, in Company C, of his old regiment.

After the war John Burrill went to St. Johnsbury, Vermont, and worked a year in a scale factory, then returned to Fitzwilliam, New Hampshire, and bought a saw mill. In 1870 he moved to Iowa, where he remained until 1872, then went to Minneapolis, Minnesota, and later moved to Brainard, this state. He came to Hawley in 1873, and helped build the present Northern Pacific depot. He located on a homestead in section 26, Cromwell township, Clay county, at this time, and about 1878 he moved from his farm in 1887. In 1889, he moved to Superior, this state, where he remained one year, and then returned to Hawley, living there until his death, which occurred on June 12, 1906.

Mr. Burrill was married in 1866 to Lewellyn Foristall, who died in 1873, leaving three children, Gertrude, who married Arthur Sholley and lives in Minneapolis; Mabel, the wife of L. D. Libbey, a farmer of Honey Creek, Wisconsin, and Allen F., who served in the Spanish-American War as a member of Company C, Thirteenth Minnesota Volunteer Infantry, and also in the Philippine War, and who married Daisy Pryor, after which he moved to Eugene, Oregon, where he died.

John Burrill married for his second wife Jane Colborn, and two children were born to them, namely: Paul C., who married Hilda Andrea and is a lieutenant in the Minnesota National Guard, and Margaret, who makes her home in Minneapolis.

John Burrill was a member of the Grand Army of the Republic Post at Hawley, of which he was commander at the time of his death. He belonged to the Masonic Lodge. In his early days here he served on the school board and for many years was justice of the peace at Hawley. He gave eminent satisfaction as a public servant, being conscientious, loyal and painstaking; prompt and obliging. He was a great student of history and was a well-informed man along general lines.