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November 21, 1932

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Mr. H. B. Lewis
525 Security Bldg.,
Des Moines, Iowa

My dear Harry:

I have worked over twelve hours compiling a short sketch of Mr. Ward's life from the meagre data which I have gathered together, and send you the same herewith, together with photographs and original manuscript of the "Battle of the Wilderness," and a personal letter from Mr. Ward, all of which I sincerely trust will contribute in a small way to the fulfillment of your historical collection and exhibit for the seventy-fifth anniversary of Plymouth church.

Please feel free to call on me at any time for such feeble help as I am able to give along this line, and be assured of my personal kind regard for yourself and every member of the Lewis family, as well as the dear friends who were always so loyal and true throughout the years that have intervened since the time when, as a boy, I joined good old Plymouth.

Courteously yours,

Frank Cramer

Encls.
FLC:M

B I O G R A P H Y A Short
O F B Y R O N C. W A R D

By Frank L. Cramer

Byron C. Ward was born November 28, 1838, in Underhill, Vermont. His first paternal grandfather was William Ward who imigrated from Sudbury, England, in the sixteenth century, settling in Massachusetts. Among other members of his family tree was General Artemas Ward who was appointed as General Commander in Chief of all the forces of the Colony of Massachusetts and was later chosen by George Washington, Commander in Chief, as the first Major General in command of the Continental Army, on June 17, 1775.

He was a student in the Vermont University when the Civil war began, and enlisted as a private in Company G, Second Regiment Vermont Volunteer Infantry. This Regiment was a part of the First Vermont Brigade in the Second Division of the Sixth Corps, Army of the Potomac.

Mr. Ward was promoted through the grades and commissioned as First Lieutenant, and soon after, detailed as Adjutant of his regiment, and served in that capacity until the close of the war. He participated in such battles as Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, Gettysburg, Wilderness; also, battles of Winchester, Fisher's Hill, and Cedar Creek, after which he was transferred with the Sixth Corps to the front line which was held around Richmond and Petersburg.

On the night of April 1, 1865, Adjutant Ward was ordered to move a mile to the left where his men laid on the ground until the break of day when they were ordered to make the last charge on the enemy's works near Petersburg, which was one of the concluding or culminating

offensives, and which brought about the surrender of Lee. Adjutant Ward was one of the most gallant commissioned officers of the First Vermont Brigade and his Second Division of the Sixth Corps was the point of the wedge that was driven into General Lee's fortification, which, as history records, was the beginning of the end of the memorable six-day-battle that concluded the Civil war.

The life of Byron C. Ward had ever been one of utmost activity. He was a student in the University of Vermont when the war broke out, and was engaged to marry Miss Ellen J. Cilley. At the close of the war, he became Superintendent of Underhill (Vermont) Academy, and while so engaged, was married to Ellen J. Cilley. In the year 1869, he and his bride sought a new home in the fast opening west, settling in Prairie City, Iowa. There, Mr. Ward was admitted to the Bar. He also was Editor of the Prairie City News for many years. He served in the Twentieth General Assembly as a Member of the Legislature from Jasper County, Iowa, and, after twenty-three year's residence in Prairie City, where he had always exercised the best citizenship and occupied the highest places of leadership in that community, he removed to Des Moines, Iowa, where he continued the practice of law.

In 1909, he was appointed by Governor B. F. Carroll as the Iowa Representative in charge of the Gettysburg Reunion of the Blue and the Gray upon that historic battlefield in July, 1913, and, in recognition of his efficient services in that capacity, he was awarded a silver medal by Governor John K. Tener of Pennsylvania. In the year 1910-1911, he was Senior Vice Department Commander of the G. A. R. of Iowa. In 1912-1913, he was commander of the Loyal Legion, and in 1914-1915, was unanimously elected as Commander of the Grand Army

of the Republic Department of Iowa. He was prominently active in church, Y. M. C. A., Social Service, Mission, Y. W. C. A., and all philanthropic, patriotic, and Masonic activities.

He was long a pillar of the Plymouth Congregational church in Des Moines. He served for fifteen years as president of the Young Men's Christian Association, and for twelve years as president of the Sunbeam Mission.

He was active and prominent in the York Rite of Masonry, holding the position of Master of the Blue Lodge and as an officer in the Chapter of Royal Arch Masons, in the Council of Royal and Select Masters and in the Commandery of the Knights Templar. He was in constant demand for addresses before these bodies, and, among such addresses he gave one to the Knights Templar of Temple Commandery on Christmas day during the administration of the writer who was Eminent Commander in 1920, his subject being, "Some Reasons for Belief in Immortality." This address was declared to have been one of the most eloquent and philosophical addresses ever delivered before that body. He had a rare gift of imagery and poetic expression of practical truths.

A son was born to Mr. and Mrs Ward, July 24, 1868, -- Herbert Clark Ward -- who grew to manhood in Iowa, graduated from Grinnell college, became a secretary of the Y. M. C. A. of Des Moines, and who died after a very brief illness in Muscatine where he was doing special Y. M. C. A. work, on June 10, 1892. His name is revered among those who know the history of the Y. M. C. A. of Des Moines and those who are acquainted with the activities of Grinnell college. In 1893, Grinnell college selected the name Ward Field for the athletic field of the institution as a memorial to and in honor of the young alumnus.

Mrs. Ward followed her son in death, September 3, 1898. "There are true kings and queens, heroes and heroines, who, folding a pall of tenderest memory over the faces of their lost hopes and perished loves, go with unfaltering courage to grapple with the future, to strengthen the weak, to comfort the weary, to hang sweet pictures of faith and trust in the silent galleries of sunless lives, and to point the desolate whose paths wind ever among shadows and over rocks where the green moss grows, to the golden heights of the hereafter where the palms of victory wave and the weary are at rest." That is the picture of the lives of devotion led by Mr. Ward and his faithful wife, especially following the death of their son.

Byron C. Ward died 11/18 — 1922, after a brief illness, at his home, 1017 West Ninth Street, Des Moines, Iowa, following an attack of heart disease with complications incident to his advanced age of eighty-three years. He passed quietly and without pain, as a tired child falls asleep. His death bed was surrounded by near relatives and friends including the writer who was one of his confidential and most intimate friends for over thirty years.

Frank L. Cramer.
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