

Seminary heights; this was our opportunity to get revenge for our defeat the first and second days. We fired case shot into their advancing lines until they got within canister range, then we gave them that in double charges; as we saw this charge we don't believe there was a fighting rebel that penetrated our lines...³⁸

Running low on ammunition, Thompson fought on with his three remaining guns until Gen. Hunt, surveying the damage, ordered Btry. C & F to withdraw to the Artillery Reserve park and send forward a replacement unit.

For James Thompson and the men of Consolidated Lt. Ind. Penn. Btry. C & F, the battle at Gettysburg was over. Their losses were substantial: two killed or mortally wounded, 23 wounded, and three missing for a total of 28, or 26.7% of those engaged. No other unit in the Artillery Reserve suffered a higher casualty rate, except Bigelow's Mass. Btry., which shared a 26.9% loss rate. The dubious distinction of heaviest casualties on the III Corps line fell to the Btry E, 1st R.I. Lt. Arty., but no other Pennsylvania battery suffered higher losses during the battle. McGilvery said in his official report that Thompson's men, "on July 2nd, where the battle raged most furiously... C and F consolidated Pennsylvania Artillery contested every inch of ground, and remained on the field to the very last." The war would go on: Btry. C & F went with the Army of the Potomac back into northern Virginia and participated in the inconclusive Mine Run campaign. In December, all but 17 men reenlisted as veteran volunteers for three more years. Battery F was separated from Battery C on March 25, 1864. At that point both units were recruited up to strength and each became a single unit again. On April 5, both batteries were ordered to Camp Barry outside Washington D.C., to re-fit. They remained in and around the Washington defenses until June 20, 1865 when Battery C was ordered to Pittsburgh, where it was mustered out on June 30.

James Thompson had made a tremendous impact on the success of his battery and of the Artillery Reserve. His experience from Balaclava, Second Manassas, and Antietam paid dividends for the Union army and for his men at Gettysburg. Promoted to Brevet Major for his actions at Cedar Mountain, and then to Brevet Lieutenant Colonel for his work at Antietam, Thompson could honestly say he had a successful career. A life-long military professional, he walked away from the army with a discharge signed and dated June 13, 1865. Forty-seven days later, he put his signature to another piece of paper, this one perhaps, more valuable to him than any other. On July 29, 1865, James Thompson, the 44-year-old son of Ballynahinch, Northern Ireland, officially became a citizen of the United States of America.³⁹

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