

## **Johnson City Ready to Welcome the Boys Home Tomorrow**

*Johnson City Staff, April 15, 1919*

**Decorations, Inside and Out, Eats, Fireworks, Music, No Speeches,  
Mayors, State, County, Municipal and Governmental Officials,  
Generals, Colonels, Majors, Captains, Soldiers, Sailors, Marines,  
Every Man in Uniform**

**Celebration Begins at Daylight, Lasts all Day – Thousands Will Be  
Here – Hurry!!!**

Welcome Home.

Wednesday.

In the morning between 7:30 and 7:45 o'clock the special train carrying men of the Second Battalion, 117<sup>th</sup> Infantry will arrive in Johnson City.

The approach of the train will be heralded by blowing whistles, and the firing of "daylight shells."

At the train the men will be met by thousands of friends and relatives.

Automobiles will be lined along West Market Street to carry them and all other men in uniform to the National Soldiers Home Mess Hall for breakfast.

Breakfast finished, the entire squadron of uniformed men will be brought back to town in automobiles to the intersection of West Watauga Avenue and West Main Street at a point near the West Side School building. After unloading passengers the cars each in turn will proceed forward along Watauga Avenue and clear.

Along West Main Street between the avenue and the Armory building the parade will be formed in the order set out in the program printed elsewhere.

The men will march to the "Welcome Home" arch opposite Fountain Square without a stop. At Fountain Square there will be a brief ceremony. Brigadier General L. D. Tyson will in this ceremony exemplify the breaking of the Hindenburg Line.

The parade moves over the following streets: West Main and Main, Roan, Millard, Boone, West Market. The time of the parade is 10:30 A.M.

### **Automobiles**

Inasmuch as it is impossible to estimate the actual number of men who will be taken to the Soldiers Home for breakfast, the invitation is being extended to every man in uniform. Marshal of the Day Hugh L. White requests that car owners, whether they have given him their name or not, be at the Southern Railway Station with the automobiles by 7:30 Wednesday morning.

All automobiles will be lined up along West Market Street facing Roan Street. After they are loaded they will drive north along Roan Street to Watauga Avenue; proceeding thence to the National Home mess hall.

It is important that automobiles be in line promptly and in readiness to drive immediately to the Soldiers Home as soon as the men arrive on the special train, and the men already returned here have been taken into the cars.

It is expected that there will be a congestion of people surrounding the Southern station and some slight confusion is bound to occur. By having automobiles lined along West Market Street instead of attempting to use Fonde Circle the marshal and his aides hope to get the men to breakfast without unnecessary delay. Except for an occasional clouding up among sub-committee members the weather is fair, propitious, and seasonal... and please **HOPE that it won't rain.**

The principal business thoroughfare of the city under the deft touches of decorators has magically assumed a gala appearance. A continuous line of bunting zigzagging from high to low columns stretches on either side of Main Street, the white pillars forming a gleaming vista bedecked with flaunting colors, the red, the white, and the blue. Fourteen festoons of rhododendron span the streets in a single block. By night all of this will be lighted with globes secured especially for the occasion, while from the roof of the tallest building on the street a powerful search light to pierce the night with moonbeams.

### **Soft Drinks**

Fountain drinks will be served all day long to men in uniform thanks to work of the committee headed up by Mrs. Walter Haun and Mrs. A. N. Scutt. A booth will be erected on Fountain Square and another at the street railway transfer station in front of the H. C. Miller Drug Store on

Main Street. Iced drinks free of charge will be dispense to all men wearing the uniform.

### **Colored Troops**

Colored men wearing the uniform will participate in the parade, will be fed, and altogether participate in the exercises of the day.

### **Free Movies**

During the day all men in uniform will be admitted free of charge in all moving picture theaters of the city.

### **Music**

The Soldiers Home Band and the fife and drum corps, composed of Civil War Veterans will participate at the parade. In the evening the Home Band will play for an open air dance and concert.

### **Explosives**

Six inch clay shells will be fired from a piece of artillery designed especially for this form of explosive. Anti aircraft guns, these howitzers fire their missives thousands of feet into the air, the bomb exploding unfurls the American flag and various other emblems and figures. By night rockets and iridescent and vari-colored streamers will light the heavens.

### **Dancing**

In the evening a section of pavement will be swept and paraffined, and the Soldiers Home Band, furnishing the hop stuff, soldiers and their girls may "push a wicked foot." Beginning at nine o'clock another dance under the direction of Frank Sanders, and his committee, will be given at the Avalon. A ten piece orchestra has been secured for furnishing the music.

### **Final Stop**

The special train arriving from Chattanooga over the Southern Railway at 7:30 or 7:45 will stop at Johnson City. Bristolians, desiring to welcome members of the Company who are to participate with the Second Battalion, immediately upon their arrival will come to this city on Southern train number one, or by automobile.

## **Schools**

Wednesday is a holiday for all pupils of the public schools of this city. As the parade will pass along Roan Street in front of the High School grounds, Superintendent D. Riley Haworth has invited the parents of all pupils to witness the marching from the commanding elevation of the High School grounds. The building is today being decorated by pupils and patrons of the various schools.

## **Factory Whistles**

When the special train reaches the National Home, the power plant whistle there will be blown. This will be a signal for all factory whistles in the city to join in. A cannonade from the "day light" shells will further notify the crowds of the approach of the special train.

## **Thousands Will Be Here**

Besides General Tyson, Colonel Spence, and Colonel Gleason, who will arrive this evening, there will be fourteen other officers participating in the ceremonies including those from Bristol, Elizabethton, Erwin, Hampton, Jonesborough, Kingsport, Greeneville, and other towns. The special train over the E. T. & W. N. C. Railroad will bring hundreds from Cranberry, North Carolina. The early train from Erwin will carry extra coaches, while the southbound C. C. & O. Railway train from Dante and Kingsport will arrive in time for the parade. Morning trains on the Southern Railway arrive before nine o'clock in time for the earliest welcoming participation.

Wednesday, April 16<sup>th</sup>, promises to be one of the most memorable days in the history of Johnson City. The town and surrounding country will extend one of the grandest welcomes ever accorded returning soldiers.

