

LOCAL HISTORY

Butler led unit in Spanish-American war

Each week, the Onondaga Historical Association looks back at important events:



John Butler of Syracuse fought in both the Civil War and the Spanish-American War. (OHA photo)

118 Years Ago: On Feb. 15 1898, the Battleship Maine exploded in Havana Harbor, part of an escalating series of events that would ultimately lead to Congress declaring war on Spain and the beginning of the Spanish-American War. Shortly after the declaration of war in April of 1898, the Forty-First Company of the New York State National Guard, under the command of 65-year-old Capt. John G. Butler, a Civil War veteran, departed Syracuse for Camp Black at Hempstead, Long Island. After the cessation of hostilities in September of 1898, the 41st, led by Captain Butler, returned home to Syracuse and was welcomed by 20,000 people at the railroad station.

— Dan Connors for the OHA