R.M. Barth

mit Kindermoeder.

Edwin E. Bryant
MAJ. GEN. CHARLES S. HAMILTON
HISTORY

of

THE THIRD REGIMENT

of

WISCONSIN VETERAN VOLUNTEER INFANTRY

1861 — 1865.

________

BY EDWIN E. BRYANT

Late Adjutant.

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WITH MAPS COMPILED BY WM. F. GOODHUE, VETERAN OF COMPANY C,
AND A COMPLETE ROSTER OF ALL WHO WERE
MEMBERS OF THE REGIMENT.

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MADISON, WISCONSIN:
PUBLISHED BY THE VETERAN ASSOCIATION OF THE REGIMENT.

1891.

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PREFACE.

At the Soldiers’ Reunion in 1889, at Milwaukee, Wis., the Third Wisconsin Veteran Volunteer Association was formed, there being a large attendance present. The subject of the publication of a history of the regiment was considered, and a general desire expressed that a narrative of the service of the regiment be prepared.

Further action was taken at the reunion held October 16, 1890, at La Crosse, Wis., and I was selected to write a history of the regiment, in view of the fact that my residence gave convenient access to the records.

The work assigned me has been performed. It has been a labor of love, and yet a very considerable labor. It could have been much better done, and the book more complete, if I could have had more time in which to prepare it, and less pressure of other labors and cares. I have endeavored to tell the story of the service of the regiment — its marches, skirmishes, battles, sieges and its part in the eventful campaigns, to which the fortunes of war assigned it. No one can expect such a book to be a complete history of the war, nor even of the battles or campaigns in which the regiment participated. In a great movement or battle one regiment bears but a small part; its members see but little of what transpires. They know at the time but little of the position of troops or the part borne by others. The great soldier, Napoleon, once remarked that in the events of a battle there is much that belongs rather to the biography of the regiment than the general history of the action. The effort is made here to tell only in the most general way the story of battles, and more particularly to tell what the regiment did and saw in the battles; and the movements of other regiments in the same brigade are told in some detail, but with no attempt to tell their whole story. If other commands are not mentioned, or if other
parts of a battle field are ignored in these pages, it is simply because the aim is here to throw a light on the part performed by the Third Wisconsin regiment; and whatever glimpses are given of other commands are merely incidental, and necessarily incomplete.

So far as the Regiment is concerned I have endeavored to be full and accurate. Great pains have been taken to give the names of members correctly, but the state of the rolls in the Adjutant General’s Office has rendered it impossible in some cases to know exactly what the soldier’s name was, or its correct spelling. There are doubtless some errors of this kind and some misprints that have escaped the vigilance of proof reading. But any faults in the roster or complete roll at the end of the book must be charged to the imperfect state of the rolls from which the same is compiled, in which names are spelled in so many ways that it is impossible in some instances to know the right ones. The list of casualties are taken from the reports made at the time, which were not infallible.

The book is not written from the standpoint of a military scholar or critic, for the writer is neither. There is much told here that the military student would deem trivial, much omitted that the scientific soldier would deem most essential in such annals. But I have told the story of the Regiment’s experience; and, if I have portrayed the life of the soldier, so that the picture is vivid and true to historic fact, I can, as Macaulay observed, cheerfully bear the reproach of having descended below the dignity of history. I have tried to present the scene to the children of the soldiers of the Third as it was viewed by their fathers, not to discuss strategy or general matters concerning the great war.

I have indulged in but little criticism or expression of opinion. In a few instances I have given what I conceive to be the judgment of able military writers on mistakes that were made, expressing rather the consensus of their opinions than my own.

In preparing the work much aid has been derived from
others, who served in the regiment from first to last, which I did not. Captain Julian W. Hinkley gave me for use a manuscript narrative of his service, which was very well written and helpful, and quite accurate in main particulars. Hon. Wm. C. Meffert, of Arena, Wisconsin, who bore the colors of the regiment in the Grand Review, furnished me his diary, giving each day’s events as he saw and noted them. Col. Warham Parks gave much helpful memoranda of events occurring in the later years of the war. In description and narrative I have been greatly assisted by William F. Goodhue, consulting engineer of Milwaukee, whom the earlier members of the regiment well remember as the “marker” in battalion drills. He has also prepared maps which accompany and illustrate the volume. His long service in the topographical engineer’s office at corps headquarters and his professional work since the war have well fitted him for the task. Wilber F. Haughawout, of Oronogo, Missouri, has also given some valuable aid, as have Capt. S. E. Gardner and Col. George W. Stevenson. The Association is also under great obligations to Governor George W. Peck, to Gen. Joseph B. Doe, Adjutant General, and his assistant Major F. L. Phillips, for a complete and corrected roster of the regiment. A thorough examination of the rolls and every roll, descriptive, list report and paper in the Adjutant General’s office has been made with a view to make the roster accurate according to the records on file. All the official reports have been studied, as far as they are published, and all reliable books of history relevant to the subject, have been consulted as to general facts.

I should have been glad if the book could have embraced more personal biography of the members of the regiment; but this would have expanded the work beyond the limits set; and such matters are really not regimental history. Such biography, I hope, may yet be collected by the secretary of our association, and preserved in some form as supplemental to this record.

The writing of the book has been a pleasant task, a labor among the rich memories of eventful days of youth; and I confess to a feeling of lonesomeness when the work was done.
The Third Wisconsin had an eventful history. Its service was arduous and varied; and few organizations in the war saw more phases of military experience. Its members saw much, endured much, suffered much. Their story is interesting, even though but poorly told; and if these pages shall, in after years, be perused by the children of the brave men whose loyalty, fortitude, courage and manliness made the Regiment famous among the thousands of organizations which composed the Union armies, the writer's work has been successful. Imperfect, though this volume be — and I am painfully conscious of its imperfections — it is affectionately dedicated to the memory of comrades now no more, and to the survivors of the Third Wisconsin Veteran Volunteer Infantry, whose heroic exertions in behalf of Union and good government are here recorded.

EDWIN E. BRYANT.

Madison, Wis., September 17, 1891.
THE FLANNEL BADGE.*

"IN HOC SIGNO VINCES."

In ancient days, the soldiers bold
Who fought in Palestine
Wore on their shields a cross of gold,
And conquered in that sign.
The centuries since have rolled along,
Yet lives the templars' name;
Their honored badge still shines in song
Resplendent with their fame.

Another badge we pledge to-day,
Whose fame through coming time
Shall equal in historic ray
The badge of Constantine.
Here's to that badge! The old red star
Our regiment once wore —
The noble oriflamme of war
That marked our army Corps.

Emblazoned on our guidons blue
It e'er to victory led.
While on the caps of comrades true
It sadly marked the dead.

We all have relics of the past,
Mementoes fondly dear,
Whose fading fragments while they last
Grow precious with each year.
Some tear-stained letters, pictures old,
Love notes from Maud or Madge;
But dearer far than all we hold
Our little flannel badge.

The thinning ranks that meet to-day
Grow less with passing years.
We note how oft the moustache gray
Along the line appears.
Yet what of that? We heave no sigh
At trace of time, of care,
While proudly, as in days gone by,
Our flannel badge we wear.

So clink your glasses, comrades mine;
The toast? "The men who wore
Upon their camp the red star sign
Of Hooker's Twentieth Corps."

*Read at the reunion of the Third Wisconsin Infantry at La Crosse, October 16, 1890.
Written by Lieut. Col. W. F. Fox, One Hundred and Seventh New York Volunteer Infantry.
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ADDENDA — Notes — Biographical Sketches — Incidents — Statistics of regiment — Rosters, etc
HISTORY
of the
Third Regiment of Wisconsin Veteran Volunteer Infantry.

CHAPTER I.
THE ORGANIZATION.

AFTER the election in November, 1860, the action of the southern states in passing ordinances of secession caused intense feeling in all parts of the Union. Thoughtful men saw that events were fast drifting to a collision of arms. The “war spirit” ran high. In both sections the young men, inflamed by the popular feeling of their communities, were eager to be called to arms; and all felt that the striking blow would be the signal for summoning armies to the field.

The blow soon came. On the 12th of April, 1861, the insurgent forces collected at Charleston, South Carolina, under General Beauregard, opened upon Fort Sumter, a government fortress in the harbor, with fifty breaching cannon. As the tidings flashed over the north that the walls were crumbling under the fierce cannonade, that defense was hopeless, and the surrender only a question of a few hours, the patriotic indignation of the people know no bounds. The uprising of the north, now thoroughly aroused, was a sublime spectacle.

On the 15th of April, President Lincoln issued his proclamation calling forth the militia of the several states to the aggregate number of 75,000, to suppress combinations “too powerful to be suppressed by the course of judicial proceedings or by the powers vested in the marshals by law.” Under this call Wisconsin was assigned to furnish as her quota one regiment of infantry or riflemen of 780 men.

Governor Alexander W. Randall on the same day received a telegram calling for one regiment. A letter received a few days later gave further details as to rendezvous and muster. The Governor was a man well suited for such an emergency. He foresaw, as the authorities at Washington did not seem to foresee, that more troops than the number called for would soon be wanted. He had the moral courage and the confidence in the people to act in advance of direct authority in preparing for anticipated further calls. He issued his proclamation, on the 16th day of April, announcing the President’s call, that the demand on Wisconsin was one regiment, required for immediate service, “and further service would be required as the exigencies of the service might demand.” The far-seeing executive further announced that opportunities would be “immediately offered to all existing military companies, under the direction of the proper authorities of the state, for enlistment to fill the demand of the Federal government;” and he invited patriotic citizens of the state to enroll themselves into companies of 78 men each and to advise the executive of their readiness to be mustered into service immediately.

This was enough. The organization of companies throughout the state immediately began. The companies for the First regiment were enrolled and had reported within six days after the issue of the Governor’s proclamation. On the 22d he announced the
enrollment of the regiment called for, expressed his regret that Wisconsin was permitted to send but one, and urged “the formation of companies of able-bodied men, 77 men in each, in every locality where it could be done without expense for subsistence; men would pledge themselves to be minute men, standing ready at short notice to answer call of government. When full, such companies were to elect officers and report to the adjutant general for commissions and orders; but the men were not to be taken from peaceful avocations to be drilled for active service.”

The Governor’s first proclamation met a prompt response. While but one regiment was called for, yet in seven days thirty-six companies had tendered their services. Everywhere the fife and drum were heard, war meetings were held, enthusiastic speeches made, patriotic songs sung; everywhere the people spoke, as with one voice, for vigorous military preparation and the putting down of the rebellion at whatever cost of blood and treasure. Cities, towns and villages raised large funds for the support of the families of soldiers who might enlist. The clergy in the pulpit, the orators from the forum, the mothers and fathers, the wives and daughters exhorted the young and strong to rise up and save the Union from the threatened destruction.

Among the first thirty-six companies which tendered their services in response to the Governor’s proclamation, the following nine were afterwards assigned to the Third Regiment of Wisconsin infantry:

The “Watertown Rifles,” organized at Watertown, Capt. Darius S. Gibbs, accepted April 18, 1861.
“Scott’s Volunteers,” Capt. John W. Scott, organized at Oshkosh, and accepted April 23, 1861.
“Green County Volunteers,” organized at Monroe, by Capt. Martin Flood, accepted April 22, 1861.
“Waupun Light Guard,” organized at Waupun, by Capt. Andrew Clark, accepted April 22, 1861.
“Williamstown Union Rifles,” organized at Williamstown, by Capt. Gustave Hammer, accepted April 22, 1861.
“Grant County Union Guards,” organized at Boscobel, by Capt. George W. Limbocker, accepted April 23, 1861.
“Neenah Guards,” organized at Neenah, by Captain Edwin L. Hubbard, accepted April 23, 1861.
“Lafayette Rifles,” organized at Darlington, by Capt. George T. Whitman, accepted April 24, 1861.
“Shullsburg Light Guard,” organized at Shullsburg, by Capt. Howard Vandagriff, accepted April 25, 1861.

The “Dane County Guards,” were a new company, organized at Madison by Capt. William Hawley, and were accepted on the 24th of April, 1861.

Of these companies the following had been organized in peaceful times, as militia companies under the former system. They were independent of the organized militia, so designated to distinguish them from the enrolled militia, a body existing chiefly on paper, consisting of the entire population capable of bearing arms and between the ages of 18 and 45 years, viz.: Watertown Riflemen, Waupun Light Guard, Williamstown Union Rifles, Neenah Guards. The other companies of the regiment were newly organized for the purpose of entering into the service.

When the several companies constituting the regiment were first accepted, it was upon the understanding that they were to be enlisted only for three months. The First regiment was mustered for that period only. But on the 7th of May the secretary of war notified the Governor that all volunteers should enlist for three years, or during the war. All the companies which afterwards composed the Third regiment promptly accepted the change of terms of enlistment and cheerfully, nay, eagerly, enlisted for the longer period. On the 24th of April, the Governor had in contemplation the organization of the Third regiment, as appears from the following item in the Wisconsin State Journal, then the official state paper: “We hear that it is probably that Gov. Randall will call the Third regiment into camp immediately.”

On the 17th of April the Governor’s order called on all companies of the organized militia, which did not decide to enlist, to deliver up their arms, stating in his order that large numbers of patriotic citizens were offering their services. The fervor to enlist at that time
was pithily expressed by Senator E. L. Browne, who said, in a war speech in the Capitol, that “if we sent 20,000 men, we should not lose half as many in battle as would spoil at home for want of a fight.”

Governor Randall gave the preference to the independent companies already organized and armed, of which, at the time, there were some forty-two on the rolls of the adjutant general’s office. He sent agents to the commanding officers with orders to assemble their commands within twenty-four hours after receipt of order, and call upon them to determine whether they would volunteer and prepare for immediate service. If they declined they were at once to give up their arms and accoutrements. Such of the companies as refused to volunteer gave up their arms, and such of the members of the organized companies volunteering as did not choose to enlist found others only too eager to take their places.

The several companies accepted and understood to be for the Third regiment were engaged in drilling — usually under charge of some civilian who had a smattering of tactics — at their respective localities for some weeks. All were eager to be “sent to the front,” and not very patiently awaited orders, which were every moment expected, calling them to the seat of war.
On the 7th of May the following order was promulgated which threw all into a state of high expectation:

**GENERAL ORDERS NO. 1.**

**STATE OF WISCONSIN**

**Adjutant General’s Office**

**MADISON, May 7, 1861.**

The First, Second, Third and Fourth regiments of the Wisconsin active militia will constitute the First Brigade. Rufus King, of Milwaukee, is hereby appointed Brigadier General of said Brigade, and will be obeyed and respected accordingly.

By order of the Commander-in-Chief.

WM. L. UTLEY,

**Adjutant General.**

This order indicates a fact, well known to exist, that the desire of Gen. King and of Gov. Randall as well, was that a brigade composed exclusively of Wisconsin troops, should be formed and placed under Gen. King’s command. However natural this desire, as matters then appeared, subsequent events demonstrated the wisdom of the decision at Washington, that brigades and divisions should not thus be constituted; but that the regiments of the various states should be indiscriminately mingled, without regard to states, in constituting the various corps, divisions, and brigades of the armies. This policy eliminated from the army in a large degree the embarrassing influence of state jealousy.

The following orders soon came:

**SPECIAL ORDERS,**

**STATE OF WISCONSIN**

**Adjutant General’s Office**

**MADISON, May 7th, 1861.**

The commanders of the several companies named below constituting the Third and Fourth Regiments of Wisconsin active militia, are directed to continue their men enlisted from localities outside of the headquarters at quarters and board at the expense of the state until further orders:

**THIRD REGIMENT.**

Watertown Riflemen, Williamstown Union Rifle Co., Scott’s Volunteers (Oshkosh), Neenah Guards, Lafayette Rifle Co., Darlington, 2nd Co. Grant County Volunteers, Green County Volunteers, Waupun Light Guard, Dane County Guard, Shullsburg Light Guard.

By order of the Commander-in-Chief.

WM. L. UTLEY,

**Adjutant General.**

On the 15th of May, Governor Randall was notified that the general government would receive three regiments, one for three months and two for three years.

On the 28th of May, the following circular order was issued to the commanders of companies, from the adjutant general’s office:
The following companies comprising the Third Wisconsin active militia, will be called into service at an early day, viz.:

THIRD REGIMENT.

Watertown Riflemen, Williamstown Riflemen, Scott's Volunteers, Oshkosh; Neenah Guards, Lafayette Rifle Co., Darlington, 2nd Company Grant Co. Volunteers, Waupun Light Guard, Green County Volunteers, Dane County Guard, Shullsburg Light Guard.

These companies will hold themselves ready for a call into camp on or before June 6, 1861. No company will be received into camp with a less number than eighty three men, willing to enlist for three years or for the war. This must be distinctly understood; and further, that no company will be allowed to fill up its ranks after arrival at camp. Any company above named having in its possession arms belonging to the state, will bring the same into camp. A mustering officer will be dispatched to each of the companies above named, and no company failing to respond on the appearance of such officer will be received into service under the present call.

By order of the Commander-in-Chief.

(Signed) WM. L. UTLEY,
Adjutant General.

This order set the companies named into earnest preparation for departure. Men on furlough were at once called in, the companies were filled to the new maximum and all were in readiness for the order to march.

Two weeks more of waiting followed; and fears that the rebellion would be subdued before this regiment ever saw the field began to be murmured at the different stations. The summer was wearing away, and men idling at company rendezvous, began to feel that they were trifled with.

Capt. Charles S. Hamilton, formerly of the Fifth United States infantry, was at this time in civil life, and a resident of Fond du Lac. A graduate of West Point, he had served with distinction in the Mexican war and seen much service elsewhere. Gov. Randall’s attention was called to his excellent record; and Hamilton was sent for, and on May 11th, commissioned as colonel on the Governor’s staff, to assist in organizing the volunteers for the several regiments, in which service he was a valuable counselor to the executive.

As soon as the rendezvous of the Third regiment was decided upon, Col. Hamilton, who desired active service, was assigned to the command; as his ability and soldierly bearing had made a strong impression on the Governor. On the 28th of May, he was commissioned colonel of the Third, with rank from May 11th, and at once set on foot preparations for the rendezvous at Fond du Lac.

In casting about for bred soldiers the Governor also heard that a young lawyer at Janesville, Thomas H. Ruger, had graduated with honors at West Point, in 1854, and served as lieutenant of engineers, entrusted with important work under Beauregard, while that officer was in the United States army. He had resigned the service six years before. This young gentleman the Governor had called to his staff as engineer-in-chief on the 18th

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1 A biographical sketch of this distinguished officer will be found in a later part of this volume.

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of April, in which capacity Colonel Ruger performed useful service; among other duties visiting the camps of rendezvous in other states, inspecting and reporting on their methods, etc. He desired active service, as the prospect for war became more immediate, and had previously tendered his services to the War department. At the request of Colonel Hamilton, he accepted and was assigned to the lieutenant colonelcy of the Third regiment.

Hon. Bertine Pinkney, of Rosendale, Fond du Lac county, was selected as major of the regiment. He had been for some years a resident of that county, had represented it in the state senate, and was well known as one of the prominent citizens of the state in matters political, agricultural and financial. As military experience counted for a great deal at this time, it was noted that he had previously to his settlement in Wisconsin been a resident of New York city, and had been captain in one of the volunteer regiments of that city, and for five years the adjutant of the celebrated 63rd regiment of New York volunteer militia.

With three field officers of so much experience the regiment was deemed fortunate. The further fact that several of the captains and lieutenants had seen service in the Mexican war led to some criticism in the journals and among the public men of the state, that Gov. Randall was using too much of the material of experienced soldiers in officering this regiment.

The officers of the staff were soon named:

Louis H. D. Crane, of Ripon, adjutant, was a well-known citizen, who, as chief clerk of the assembly of the state legislature, was very popular, a man of fine presence and great affability, naturally adapted to staff duty.

Skidmore E. Lefferts, of Fond du Lac, was a business man selected for his energy and executive ability, as quartermaster.

Dr. Don A. Raymond, of Fond du Lac, was surgeon — an excellent physician and man of much force of character.

Dr. Horace O. Crane was first assistant surgeon. He was at the time a member of the state senate from Winnebago county, a fine physician and able man. Failing health compelled him to resign in May, 1862.

Dr. John B. G. Baxter, of La Crosse, was second assistant surgeon. He soon was promoted as assistant surgeon of volunteers, and rendered responsible service as medical director or chief of hospitals during the war. He returned after the war, was a member of the legislature in 1869, and, driven from active practice by ill health, he has for some years been a medical examiner in the pension bureau at Washington.

The chaplain was Rev. William L. Mather, an old school clergyman of rather too fine fiber to be influential with the rough material out of which soldiers are made.
The officers of the line were, as mustered in:

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<tr>
<th>Captains</th>
<th>First Lieutenants</th>
<th>Second Lieutenants</th>
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<td>A</td>
<td>Darius S. Gibbs</td>
<td>Henry Bertram</td>
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<td>B</td>
<td>John W. Scott</td>
<td>William S. Moscrip</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>Martin Flood</td>
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<td>D</td>
<td>Andrew Clark</td>
<td>Seth Griffith</td>
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<td>E</td>
<td>Gustave Hammer</td>
<td>Nahum Daniels</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>Geo. W. Limbocker</td>
<td>Emanuel J. Bentley</td>
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<td>G</td>
<td>Edwin L. Hubbard</td>
<td>Andrew J. Cady</td>
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<td>H</td>
<td>Geo. J. Whitman</td>
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<td>I</td>
<td>Howard Vandagrift</td>
<td>John E. Ross</td>
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<td>K</td>
<td>William Hawley</td>
<td>Theodore J. Widvey</td>
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Of the line officers, it was said that Gibbs, Scott, Vandagrift, Hawley and Bertram had served in the Mexican war, a qualification then deemed to be of great value.

Mention will be made of the changes in the roster as they occurred; and as much space as limits will allow given to a recognition of the merits of the many excellent officers who served in the regiment during its eventful career.

The non-commissioned staff were appointed as follows: Edwin E. Bryant, sergeant major; John Gowan, quartermaster sergeant; Charles J. Rasche, hospital steward.
CHAPTER II.
THE RENDEZVOUS.

THE authorities having decided to call the Third regiment into the field, the city of Fond du Lac was selected as the place of rendezvous. It appears to have been fixed upon as early as the 26th of May, having been announced in the journals on that date. The grounds selected were described in a local paper as situate north of Forest street, about half a mile west of the West Branch. They afforded an open field for camp, with ample space for drill by company or battalion.

A large mess house was built, 100 × 90 feet, in dimensions, sufficient to seat the whole regiment at table at once. The contract for subsisting the regiment was awarded to one J. W. Carpenter, at 26¼ cents per ration, to include three meals per day per man. The rate, $1.87¾ per week, was hardly a warrant for a very luxurious bill of fare.

GENERAL ORDERS NO. 7.
STATE OF WISCONSIN
Adjutant General's Office
MADISON, June 12, 1861.

The companies comprising the Third regiment are commanded to hold themselves in readiness to rendezvous as below stated, and to provide rations for use on the route.

Third Regiment, Col. Hamilton, Fond du Lac.
Dane County Guard, June 14.
Green County Volunteers, June 14.
Union Guard (Boscobel).
Grant County No. 2, June 14.
Williamstown Union Rifles, June 15.
Scott's Volunteers, June 15.
Neenah Guards, June 15.
Waupun Light Guard, June 15.
Watertown Rifles, June 17.
La Fayette Rifles, June 17.
Shullsburg Light Guard, June 17.

By order of the Commander-in-Chief.
Wm. L. Utley,
Adjutant General.

The companies came in, on the days designated in the order, and before June 20th they were all in camp. An incident that happened to the Green county volunteers is well worthy of mention here. While marching from the cars to the camp, in crossing the bridge over the "Branch," the men were marching in perfect step and time to show they were not raw in drill. The steady step broke down the side walk of the bridge, and several men were thrown into the water. One of them, William Carter, struck upon a saw log and
was considerably injured. Thus was learned the military rule to march over bridges at route step.

Space will not permit a lengthy record of the experiences in camp. We were put to drill at once; and toes and heels were soon sore from the treading of the men before and the kicks of those behind, as we marched by file, by flank and in line. Not having any arms we held out hands at our sides, directing our mental faculties to the task of keeping our little fingers on the seams of our trousers' legs, and the more difficult requirement of keeping step. As duty was then impressed upon us, the salvation of the Union seemed to depend on our fidelity in just covering the seams and keeping step with our front rank men or file leaders.

The men were a motley host, mostly between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five, full of animal spirits, light hearted, disposed to see fun in everything; and what witty thing one did not think of some one else did. There were men of all trades and professions. Clergymen from the ranks preached earnest discourses on gospel themes on Sunday. There were athletes who could “do” all the feats of the circus ring. There were clowns, too, full of a waggery that kept the camp in a roar. Tailors, barbers, expert clerks to keep company records, teamsters, lumbermen skilled with the axe; in short, the regiment could find in its ranks men adapted to any service from running or repairing a locomotive to butchering an ox. There were but a small number of ne’er-do-wells in the camp. Only a few were the slaves of drink. They became frequent tenants of the guard house and soon in one way or another got out of the service. Their pranks and strategems [sic] to get liquor were many and witty, musing to men and annoying to officers. One scape-grace would make shoulder straps out of orange peel, pin them on his coat and stride out of the guard house past the innocent sentry with the consequential air of a major general, only to turn up a little later roaring drunk in camp.

Life in camp was very regular. At five o’clock the reveille sounded, and all must rise at once, and bound from the little A tents in which six men slept in straw and blankets. As soon as straw and chaff could be combed from the hair, the line was formed in each company street for roll-call. A half-hour was then spent in “policing” camp, that is, in cleaning up the streets, airing tents, blankets, etc. At half past six, the companies formed to march to breakfast, each man armed with a knife, fork and tin-cup. Marched to the mess hall, opening files to surround tables, the command “inward face” brought the company in line of battle in front of rations. “Touch hats — seats,” was next ordered and executed. The rattle of knives, forks, cups and tin plates, and the roar of a thousand voices, calling in every key for “bread,” “coffee,” “water,” presented a scene of very active service.

At half past seven a tap of the drum called for squad drill. For an hour
squad of men — nearly all the regiment marches, filed, faced, turned, double-quicked, invariably holding on to the seam of the trousers’ legs, and soon became familiar with the simpler movements and motions in the school of the soldier.

At nine the guard mount came, a pompous ceremony, in which the sergeant major and adjutant figured as great dignitaries.

At eleven battalion drill for an hour gave all an insight into how much our company commanders did not know about war. Then dinner and some lolling about in the heat of the day; but two o’clock found the battalion again formed, and executing many movements, the command and execution of which are long since forgotten. We drilled in Hardee’s tactics, then thought to be the perfection of simple, direct evolution. We formed line, advanced and retreated, charged front forward and to rear; we marched in close column, formed square, we charged at double-quick, and retreated slowly, as if yielding the field inch by inch; and we kept the little finger on the seam of the trousers, though the sweat tickled our faces, and the flies tortured our noses. A grateful country never fully appreciates the services and sufferings of the raw recruit.

“Dress parade” came off at five o’clock, the grand ceremonial of the day, described by one of the wags of the regiment as “a —— hard job o’standing still.” At six o’clock, supper, and then the play spell of the day. Usually a “circus” was organized and the athletes of the regiment vied with each other; while the wags made the welkin ring with their drolleries.

As the darkness stole on the noise subsided into a hum of conversation in the tents, or the singing of plaintive songs, for the hallowing influence of eve steals over the rough soldier as well as the sentimental poet. At nine o’clock the tattoo was beaten, the evening roll called. Then, a little later, “taps” commanded stillness; and soon the camp was in slumber. Boots for pillows, straw and a blanket, worse than a white horse in coat-shedding time, made us comfortable beds — whatever our opinion may have been of them in those days of our callow experience.

On the 29th of June the United States mustering officer appeared upon the scene. Rolls were made out and the companies mustered in, each man passing before the mustering officer as his name was called. Two or three fickle fellows who had enlisted refused to muster. They were dealt with in a manner that did not secure many followers of their example. The colonel ordered their heads to be shaved or cut closely and they were then drummed out of camp, objects of boisterous derision. We were “mustered in” by Capt. J. B. McIntyre, of the regular army.

The secretary of war sent orders on the 5th of July for the Third and Fourth regiments to repair to Hagerstown, Md., by way of Chambersburg, and
report to Gen. Robert Patterson, whom Gen. Scott notified the same day that the Wisconsin regiments were coming; and our departure was hastened. Uniforms were furnished us — a gray hat, a blouse or frock, such as old-fashioned, western people call “wamuss,” and light gray trousers, and blue flannel shirts. The uniform was far from graceful, though comfortable for hot weather. The hats soon went out of shape. The trousers were of exceedingly tender material not suited to rough service; though it is undeniable that “the boys” had more fun out of them than shelter in them. They were excellent for ventilation.

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CHAPTER III.
THE DEPARTURE.

WE STRUCK tents on Friday, July 12th at 1 o’clock, took cars at 7; and as the long train of twenty coaches pulled out, the cheers from many throats mingled with the farewell of friends. It was well that we were lighthearted, and that like Sidney Smith, we took “short views of life.” No thought seemed to come to mind, that of that body of men some would die in battle or hospital or in the prison pen. We could not have set out more gaily on any pleasure excursion. We reached Chicago early in the morning, before the city was much astir. Thence we got an early start for Toledo by the Michigan Southern. The women in the far cottages waved their kerchiefs; and the sweaty harvesters in distant fields cheered and swung their hats as we swept through Indiana and all along the route. At Adrian, Mich., we were treated to lemonade. At Toledo, where we arrived Saturday evening, a substantial supper awaited us. At Erie city on Sunday morning a large crowd greeted us laden with baskets of dainty food. The stuffing we got made light work for the commissary sergeant, but double duty for the surgeons. At 4 o’clock we drew into Buffalo. The military were out in fancy uniform, and all the population turned out to see the wild woodsmen of the northwest. We had to march through the streets with our knapsacks on; we listened to a speech of welcome from the mayor. We had a grand banquet in the depot building; and we took cars again at 6 o’clock for Elmira. There we marched to the barracks where a number of New York regiments had been quartered, and the ladies of Elmira gave us a sumptuous breakfast. We thought then we had never seen so many beautiful women as those who served us. An immense crowd escorted us back to the cars, and a cloud of kerchiefs waved us a cheering adieu.

A long ride through the picturesque, mountain scenery of northern Pennsylvania brought us to Williamsport, Penn. A princely feast served by the ladies of the town regaled us here; and the ladies urged us to fill our haversacks with the daintiest of cakes and the choicest of cold meats. Blessings on the noble women of 1861! One could go nowhere in all the land, but they were doing something for the soldiers. Along our entire route, I might almost say, we did not pass a house, the dwellers wherein did not make some demonstration of encouragement and sympathy. At midnight of Monday, we were at Harrisburg, supposing that we were to halt here; for our destination was unknown, except to the colonel and those about him. It was expected that we should stop and arm at this place; and we were much surprised to find that we were moving to Hagerstown, in Maryland.

The journey was very fatiguing, as we were unable to lie down and
sleep. There were two men to each seat in the car, and four nights of such broken sleep as could be got in that position were anything but refreshing. [sic] Marching with opportunity to lie down and sleep was ease and comfort compared to such a sleepless journey.
CHAPTER IV.
OUR FIRST MARCHES.

VERY weary of travel night and day in crowded cars we reached Hagerstown on the morning of the 17th of July. It was then a quaint, old-fashioned town, with red brick houses, worn out brick sidewalks, and an air, as it seemed to Western men, of great antiquity. There was some military bustle, as at the time a regiment of Connecticut troops was in camp near by, and the place was or had been the base of supplies of Patterson’s command, then across the Potomac. We went into camp here a short distance from the town; and glad enough we were to drop down and sleep.

In our military verdancy, we, the men of line and ranks, deemed it a great piece of blundering to set us down in an enemy’s country — for so we deemed it — unarmed. What if an army of rebels should swoop down upon us and massacre us all? The possibility was considered and much alarm felt. A few guns and cartridges were borrowed for the use of the guard of the regiment. After we were well composed to sleep we were awakened and thrown into much excitement by the firing of the sentinels. There fears working upon their imaginations saw enemies approaching, and they fired at bushes and what not, with great recklessness. The humor of the scene was taken in by Lieut. James G. Knight, officer of the guard, who patriotically declared that the “guard would protect the regiment, if they had to shoot every calf in northern Maryland.” Years after, when the regiment had grown steady, the men used to laugh till the tears ran down their cheeks, while they told on each other the silly expressions of alarm uttered on our first camp night in Maryland, with no armed enemy within fifty miles.

Here we received our arms, old muskets, smooth-bore, with percussion locks. The disgust of many of our men was emphatically expressed. To give marksmen, expert with the rifle, such weapons was simply to delay us in the work of annihilating any hostile force. We could finish up the rebellion much more speedily, it was thought, if we only had rifles. Not long afterward we were furnished with the rifle musket, a much more effective arm; though, now, they would be deemed unserviceable by any civilized nation. But those old smooth-bores, with their cartridges of round ball and three buckshot, gave a reasonable chance of hitting a barn door at short range. The arm that we were furnished later, and which we carried through the war, was the Springfield rifle musket, made by inserting a steel sleeve rifle into the old smooth-bore barrels of earlier manufacture. The cartridge had the conical ball, and that and the charge were rolled in paper greased to prevent moisture. The barrels of the rifles were unstained, and to keep them from rusting required much rubbing and polishing. It was common remark among
the “boys” that it took more time to keep a gun clean than it required to keep a horse well groomed.

We were ordered to march on the 19th, having been supplied more wagons to haul our luggage than in the later years of the war were allowed to a division. We had little idea where we were going but unbounded curiosity. Each of the men had a plethoric knapsack, a haversack with two day’s rations in it, the musket and a huge cartridge box to hold forty rounds of the bulky cartridges of those days; and each had a canteen filled with water. We moved southward on a pike. The wagon trains had powdered the macadamized road to a dry penetrating dust that soon hung over the marching column like a cloud. The day was intensely hot, no air stirring; and the fiery rays of the July sun smote us. The romance of war began to assume a phase not altogether comfortable. We pushed on six miles without a halt and then stopped, stacked arms and ate our dinners. The knapsacks, one by one, found their way into the wagons for the latter part of that day’s march. Sixteen miles were stepped off that day; and we went into camp near Rohersville, a little hamlet in Maryland, just north of the northern end of Maryland Heights. A large detail was put on guard; and the rest pitched tents, got out the camp kettles, made coffee, ate suppers, and the camp after dark was unusually quiet. A shower in the night, deluges our tents, and taught us the lesson, not afterwards forgotten, to dig little trenches about each of the tents, if we wished dry ground inside. The good nature, the cheery spirit with which these disagreeable incidents of service were met by the soldiers, the quaint and witty remarks they made furnished much amusement, and prevented much realization of the truth that military service was not play.

Early next morning we resumed our march, skirting southward along the western side of South Mountain. The march soon brought us into a narrow valley, between the mountain last named and Maryland Heights. A progress of some eight or ten miles, on a road that led over hills and along the margin of deep ravines, brought us in sight of the Potomac river, about a mile below Harper’s Ferry. On the other side was Virginia, the bold face of the Blue Ridge, overhanging the river and frowning at us in defiance. We moved up the river a mile or so, then turned up a steep mountain road, and in a sloping, stony field some three hundred feet or more above the river, on the south-eastern slope of Maryland Heights, we established our camp. The scenery

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3 The reason we were sent to Harper’s Ferry is explained in a letter of Gen. Robert Patterson, to the War department, July 18, 1861. He says, “I sent Capt. Newton, to-day to Harper’s Ferry, to arrange for defense and establish communication with Maryland; also, the (Second) Massachusetts regiment. The Third Wisconsin will soon be there.” * * * On July 21st, to the Department, he wrote, “The Third Wisconsin will be placed temporarily on the canal, which parties have attempted lately to destroy, and will remain till I am provided with troops for active service.
about us was grand. Here the Potomac river, flowing southeasterly, is joined
by the Shenandoah, which flowed northeasterly down the valley of Virginia,
and through a huge gap in the mountain chain called the Blue Ridge, the
united waters seem to have forced a passage and continued their course
easterly. The Blue Ridge on the south abuts close up to the river bank in a
bold, rocky face, called Loudoun Heights. On the northern side of the river,
the Maryland Heights, a continuance of the Blue Ridge, overhang the shore
in beetling cliffs, leaving barely space on the banks for the canal, the track of
the Baltimore & Ohio railroad and a narrow roadway. On the western side, in
Virginia, is the little village of Harper’s Ferry, then a famous spot, on a little
tongue of land between the two rivers, part of the town being down on the
banks of each stream, and part on higher land, a little back from the shores.
Here John Brown had made his raid in 1859, and on the banks of the
Potomac, and above the confluence, were then the ruins of the arsenal in one
of the brick buildings of which he had entrenched himself, and from which he
was dislodged by a party of United States Marines, commanded by Robert E.
Lee. The place was in a wretched state of dilapidation when we were there.
The Confederates had been obliged to abandon it a few weeks before and
had destroyed the United States arsenal, which formerly had been the main
support of the little community. The few inhabitants who remained, when we
were there, got a precarious support by selling villainous pies to the soldiers.

Our camp on the hillside was named Camp Pinkney. Here we were put
to drill and instruction in the manual of arms. The issues of government
rations soon made us acquainted with the soldier’s bill of fare. It was really
an excellent ration — good coffee, brown sugar, bacon, hard-tack, and
dessicated [sic] vegetables, which were a preserved form of cabbages,
parsnips, and other like roots. We had an abundance; it would have been
better, perhaps, if we had had less. But the men craved other dainties, took
unkindly to hard-tack; the transition from the wholesome plenty of home was
too sudden; and the peddlers of pies made of green peaches drove a brisk
business. Soon there was much sickness in camp. The change of climate,
the water, the heat of the day, and the sleeping on the ground at night,
brought on that worst foe with which the soldiers had to contend, the camp
diarrhœa. Under its debilitating effects the vigor and strength soon vanished;
men wasted to skeletons; and while most of its victims still clung to duty, did
drill their drilling and guard duty, it was in weakness and languor. When it became
chronic, as in many instances it did, the poor victim, with a face like shriveled
parchment, eyes wandering, form shrunken, lips bloodless, and nearly
paralyzed with sheer, muscular weakness, was an object pitiful to see. Of all
the hardships endured during the years of field service, the veterans of that
war will agree with unanimity that from this fell disorder they suffered most;
that it aggravated and made harder to endure the hardships and privations incident to service in the field. The measles, too, broke out in camp and gathered in all who had not in their childhood had this disease, when it was "going around the neighborhood."

In our camp on the hill we heard faintly but distinctly the cannonade of the first battle of Bull Run, fought July 21st. When the reports came in next day of the disaster and the most exaggerated details of the slaughter and annihilation of Union regiments, all ideas of holiday soldiering vanished from our minds. Few men in the regiment then saw much hope for a close of the war in the three years for which we had enlisted. The Bull Run disaster was a great humiliation, but a blessing in disguise. It awakened the people of the North to the magnitude of the struggle impending, and better still, it for the time silenced those northern editors, who, without a single idea of what was feasible or practicable in war, were clamoring for forward movements and immediate attacks, with an unceasing din. This class of strategists, keeping themselves clear of danger and ignorant of the real situation, made "On to Richmond" the theme of editorials of savage criticism of the military authorities; and to their unreasoning demand, the country owes the shame and sorrow of the first battle of Bull Run.

The day after our arrival at Camp Pinkney, Gen. Patterson’s column fell back upon us, marching in through Harper’s Ferry and down the canal tow path along side the Potomac. A number of regiments under his command were “three months’ men,” and they refused to serve longer;4 having had a taste of war quite sufficient for themselves. But, it is true, that on returning to their homes nearly all the three months’ men enlisted again in the three years’ regiments. But when we saw them in July, after their bootless and nearly bloodless campaign in the valley of the Shenandoah they were glad enough to return to their homes, and their zeal to do so made our men feel for a moment a little homesick, it must be confessed.

On the 23rd, the little command in the Harper’s Ferry region were thrown into no little excitement by the telegram to Patterson from Gen. Winfield Scott, then general-in-chief, that it was “useful and perhaps highly important, to hold Harper’s Ferry. It will probably soon be attacked, but not, I hope, before I shall have sent you adequate reinforcements.” This report spreading through the camps, and not at all shrunken in transmission from mouth to mouth, soon became the basis for a story that a large Confederate army was just ready to

4 In a letter to the War department, dated July 18, Gen. Patterson says, “I to-day appealed almost in vain to the regiments to stand by the country for a week or ten days. The men are longing for their homes, and nothing can detain them.” The gallant First Wisconsin was not one of these regiments, it is a pleasure to record.
pounce upon us. This state of expectancy kept us in readiness to jump to arms at a moment’s notice. On the 5th of August, a spirited firing of musketry was heard on Maryland Heights just above us — for the steeps of the Heights abutted close up to our camp — and presently Col. Hamilton galloped into camp and ordered the regiment under arms. It was but the work of a moment to parade the companies, and the general belief was that in five minutes we should be engaged in close contest with the foe.

It must be borne in mind that at this time we were ludicrously “green” as soldiers, and that our credulity was constantly played upon by a myriad of camp rumors, none of which, however ridiculous, seemed either improbable or unlikely. The firing that had alarmed the camp was the discharge of the arms of some guard that had been relieved in another camp. Col. Hamilton was simply putting our alacrity to the test.

Gen. Robert Patterson was severely censured for letting Gen. Johnson [read: Johnston, Joseph E.] escape from him, and marching to help Beauregard in the battle of Bull Run. He was accordingly retired from the service, and roundly abused by that class of patriots who stayed at home and demanded victims to be sacrificed to the popular indignation.

On the 10th of August, our colonel was commissioned brigadier of volunteers, and soon after was assigned to the command of the brigade in which our regiment was serving in Banks’ command. He remained for some time with the regiment, making the headquarters of his brigade in our camp. His brigade, as at first constituted, was composed of the Third Wisconsin, the Ninth New York, and Twenty-ninth Pennsylvania, two companies of the First Artillery Battalion, U.S.A., with a battery of guns. Efforts were made to have other Wisconsin regiments assigned to the brigade, but they appear to have been unsuccessful. Col. Ruger was promoted immediately to the colonelcy.

About these days an order was issued prohibiting the harboring of slaves in camps. Colored men flocked to our camps and were anxious to be cooks, servants, anything “to be wid de sojers.” Loud complaints were made by slave owners; and in those days the slavery question was touched quite gingerly. One or two poor colored men had been in our camp, and “the boys” became quite interested in them. The slaves were turned out of camp in obedience to the order, but were supplied with provisions and started northward to the Pennsylvania border.

On the 19th of July, an order of the War department (No. 46), directed that Patterson be honorably discharged on the 27th, and that Major General Nathaniel P. Banks proceed to the valley of Virginia, relieve Patterson and assume command of the army of Pennsylvania, — as Patterson’s command had been called — and that Banks’ department would then be called the department of the Shenandoah, headquarters in the field.
Gen. Banks appeared on the scene on the 25th day of July. Other troops were gathering in the locality, and some joined us during these days from July 18th to August 17th, with whom the regiment was afterward to participate in many a march and battle.

We were glad enough to get away on the day last named. Our regiment moved out in the morning and marched back from the Potomac several miles, into a pleasant country, and bearing southeasterly down the river. The Second Massachusetts was left to guard the crossings of the river at the ferry. We ended our march for the day at a little place called Buckeystown, and encamped on low ground along the Monocacy river, a little stream that takes its rise at the base of South Mountain, flowing southerly past the city of Frederick, and then bending westerly empties into the Potomac near Edward’s Ferry. The valley of the Monocacy is regarded as a rich and fertile portion of Maryland. Here we remained until the 24th, then changed camp for higher ground.5

From this, on the 25th, we were moved out at 6 o’clock in the afternoon, marched six miles and bivouacked. The next morning the regiment started at sunrise, made a march of some eight miles, going into camp at Barnesville, Md., some twenty miles southeast of Harper’s Ferry. The morrow put us in motion again nearly to Edward’s Ferry, on the Potomac. Here we encamped near the First Minnesota regiment. Remaining only one night, we marched back in the rain on the 29th, in deep mud, to Darnestown, a little dilapidated hamlet, about eighteen miles northwest of Washington and eight miles east of Edward’s Ferry on the Potomac. Here we encamped in a grove of second growth pine trees, with General banks’ headquarters near by.

The reason of this movement, as we now know from the published correspondence, was to have us in hand to repel an invasion of the enemy at any point on the river. After the battle of Bull Run it was feared that the enemy flushed with victory would make an advance on Washington or to cut the communications between the capital and the north.

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5 Here adjutant Crane received his commission as major, and Sergeant Major E. E. Bryant was promoted second lieutenant of Company A. Lieutenant Bertram was appointed adjutant. Two valuable and intelligent officers, Lieut. Nathan Daniels and Edwin J. Meeker were here detached from the regiment and assigned to duty in the signal corps, in which they rendered useful and adventurous service during the entire war.
CHAPTER V.
TO FREDERICK.

BUT the camp at Darnestown soon lost its novelty. The locality was not healthy. The September evenings began to be chilly, with malarial tendency in the atmosphere. We were glad enough to be ordered elsewhere, for which orders came on the 12th. We marched a few miles, encamped, and the next day, in a roasting September sun, we made twenty-two miles and encamped after dark, selecting in the darkness a place that had long been the camp of supply trains. Hundreds of mules had better fitted the soil for a crop than a soldiers’ bivouac; and we were not long in moving to a better ground the next morning, in a trim field of clover on the south side of the city of Frederick.

Frederick was then a tidy city of the peculiar style in Maryland and southern Pennsylvania. The houses of the older style stood broad side to the street with chimney at each end; and the sidewalk took the full drip of the eaves. But there was an aspect of good, prosperous cheer about it; a quiet, restful air, that made it a pleasant place to visit. The old town clock struck the hours with a moderation that admonished not to be in a hurry. The great numbers of elderly people, jolly, healthy, good-natured and full of hospitality, bespoke a healthful climate.

The city, like all other cities in Maryland, had its intense sympathizers with the South, and its equally intense adherents to the Union cause. The former kept remarkably still. The latter took the Third Wisconsin into their homes and hearts; and for days our regular issues of rations were but sparingly used, so sumptuous was the fare of cakes, pies, fruits, milk, dainty biscuit and loaves which were given by these loyal and hospitable Marylanders. Of all the memories of the war, none are more pleasant than those of our sojourn in the goodly city of Frederick.

In these days, our “uniforms” — the old state blouses or “wamusses,” our gray hats and satinet trousers — presented a tout-ensemble anything but soldierly. What with original shabbiness and slouchiness, grease, dirt, tears and patches, the appearance of our regiment was ludicrous in the extreme. It must be confessed, we were the laughing stock of our military neighbors. When we marched by the camp of another regiment, its men roared with laughter at our looks. It was common to hear the remark, “A bully lot of men, but oh G——, what uniforms!” The eastern regiments were well dressed and had fine equipage, and our garb was abominable. But they soon saw that the regiment was equal to their best in discipline, drill and the manual of arms; and the bluff, hearty western ways of our men soon made them popular, despite their shabbiness. The regiment marched into the good will of the
Frederick loyalists at once. They did not mind our rage, but the ladies said they “could see the man through the clothes,” a remark that in numerous cases was more literally than metaphorically true. The rough and ready gallantry of our men, their perfect manliness — and by the way, they were for the most part a handsome lot of boys — made them favorites with the ladies; and there were but few of the younger lads of the ranks who did not find some bright-eyed Frederick lasses who loved to bring them fruits and dainties. It was a common remark later on that every Third Wisconsin soldier had a sweetheart in Frederick.

Soon after our arrival, we learned the object of our march so far to the rear. The Maryland legislature had convened at Frederick in the preceding April, and by a decisive vote had resolved not to secede. But there were some of the members eager to reconsider that vote; and they had called irregularly a special session of the legislature there, in the hopes of taking the state out of the Union. An active intrigue had been on foot for months between the secession element of the legislature and the Confederate authorities. Governor Hicks, at that time the executive of Maryland, was true to the Union cause. But the secessionists were determined to drag “My Maryland” into revolt, and the meeting in September had been called in furtherance of the scheme. The authorities at Washington determined to prevent this meeting, and on the 11th, the secretary of war instructed Gen. Banks that the passage of any act of secession by the Maryland legislature must be prevented, and, if necessary, all or any part of the legislature must be arrested. “Exercise your own judgment as to the time and manner, but do the work effectively.” For this duty Gen. Banks had selected and ordered our regiment to Frederick. Meanwhile, Allen Pinkerton, the celebrated detective, had been at work, and numerous arrests of secessionist members had been made in Baltimore. Only part of the members came to Frederick, but the morning train brought in quite a crowd of well-dressed men with the air of politicians. Many more came in on the turnpike roads, and groups began to collect on the street corners and saloons. It was evident that some deep-laid scheme was being worked. Meanwhile, the regiment to all appearance was as indifferent as a stranger to all these actions. But some trusty soldiers in civilian clothing were out among them; and loyal Unionists were giving the names and pointing out the persons of the secessionist portion of the legislature. The lingerers around the camp did not notice that the men had loaded their guns. The passing out of several ambulances also escaped their observation. Some unarmed soldiers passed out of camp in couples, while other disorderly squads rambled off through the fields. Others went unarmed into the town. Nothing was suspected outside, though hundreds of eyes watched our every movement. Apparently it was a listless day in camp.
Suddenly, as if by magic, the city was surrounded by a cordon of bayonets. Pickets bristled on the roads leading from the town, and on the knolls and in the cornfields; and the streets of the city were full of patrols from the regiment armed with revolvers. The lounging soldiers in the streets at a signal assembled in charge of some trusty sergeant or other officer, and the work of arresting began. Almost simultaneously the members found themselves surrounded, and politely requested to accompany some ragged files of soldiers to the headquarters. They were obliged to comply, and soon there were a dozen or more in camp. At first they put an air of offended dignity, a sort of I-am-an-American-citizen expression, but when they saw their game had been spoiled, they tried to see the situation in its ludicrous aspect. A detail in charge of Capt. Martin Flood, with Lieut. George W. Rollins and Sergt. Wallace Hunter of Company C, took the prisoners to Baltimore. The fact that several arrests had been previously made at Baltimore had given the secessionists alarm; and they did not appear at Frederick in large numbers as had been anticipated. This timely action stamped out the secession movement in Maryland. Gov. Hicks wrote to Gen. Banks concurring in the action taken, saying “we can no longer mince matters with these desperate people.”

Two other events, occurring during our stay in Frederick, caused lively satisfaction. We received the blue uniforms of the United States soldiers, and we drew our pay. The paymasters brought us partly coin and partly the treasury notes, known as “greenbacks,” then recently issued. Some of the companies at first refused to take the paper; and were given Hobson’s choice, “this or none.” One simple-hearted German boy, on receiving his greenbacks, said philosophically, “Uncle Sam give us dis baper, und if we doand fight like h—, dis baper vas good for nottings.”

On September 21st, Adjt. Bertram was commissioned captain of Company A, in place of Gibbs, resigned.

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6 There were ten members of the legislature and the chief clerk of the house arrested and sent to Annapolis, and there placed on a government steamer to be sent north. A number of subordinate officers were also arrested but released on taking the oath of allegiance.
CHAPTER VI.
THE SKIRMISH AT BOLIVAR.

SOON was the monotony of camp life to be broken to a small part of our
regiment. On Wednesday, October 9th, three companies of the
regiment — Company A, commanded (now) by Capt. Bertram,
Company C, commanded by Lieut. O'Brien, and Company H, to which were
detailed 13 men of Company F, all commanded by Capt. Whitman — were
ordered to report to Major Gould of the Thirteenth Massachusetts, as Sandy
Hook, for an expedition into Virginia. Marching to Monocacy Junction we took
cars on the Baltimore & Ohio railroad for Sandy Hook, the little hamlet
opposite Harper's Ferry. On arrival Major Gould ordered the detachment to
go up to the Ferry, opposite the old burned arsenal, and there cross the river.
The crossing was effected in small skiffs, carrying eight men at a time. Late
in the afternoon, the little column ascended the hill road that leads from the
river streets to the upper town, and took quarters in the government buildings,
which were the residences of the officers of the arsenal, elegant and
substantial abodes, then unoccupied. The next day we learned the object of
our mission, which was to remove some 20,000 bushels of wheat then stored
in an old mill on the Shenandoah river, a few hundred yards above its mouth.
Three companies of the Thirteenth Massachusetts assisted in the work.
Pressing into service every team that could be found and every vehicle on
which bags could be laid, and as many colored men as ventured near, the
wheat was transferred rapidly to the banks, placed upon barges taken across
the Potomac and loaded into canal boats. Meanwhile a part of the command
was kept on duty as a picket guard. We soon learned that Col. Turner Ashby,
a notorious cavalry officer of the Confederates, was hovering about with
considerable force. The second morning after our arrival Lieut. O'Brien, in
charge of the guard, had a spirited brush with some sixty or seventy of
Ashby’s men. A few well-directed shots from the picket of Company C, and
a volley from Company H, which came up at double-quick to the support of
the picket, emptied some of the saddles and sent the squadron “whirling up”
the pike over the Bolivar ridge. The several companies deployed while this
little brush was going on. Surely the service was growing active! We had
been under fire, had seen armed rebels, had exchanged shots with them, and
seen them holding their wounded on their horses, as they scampered away.

Our pickets were at once extended and strengthened. And, here, a brief
description of the locality and ground is necessary to make clear this
narrative.

Harper’s Ferry, as has been said, lies at the confluence of the Potomac
and Shenandoah rivers on an angle of land between the two. The lower town
is down on the banks of the rivers, and back of it on a little knob of ground is
the upper town. Just beyond, on the main turnpike, is the little suburb of Bolivar, a hamlet separated from Harper’s Ferry by a little valley and standing on higher ground. Extending from the Potomac just above the Ferry is a high ridge which runs southwesterly, just to the westward of Bolivar, and the turnpike that leads into the heart of the Shenandoah valley, crosses the heights at a point about one and a half miles southwest from the Potomac and half a mile from the outskirts of Bolivar. The Shenandoah road runs along the northwest side of the river close to the bank; and on the right or northwest side of the road bold, rocky banks overhanging the path, and ranging, perhaps, 100 feet high, extend up the river far beyond the Bolivar plateau.

On learning that the Confederate cavalry was lurking about us constantly, the pickets were placed along Bolivar Heights, and a company stationed on the heights at the point where the turnpike passes over them; and here a breastwork of logs to command the approaches was erected, and videttes were kept out beyond at night.

For two or three days the enemy kept out of sight. Our boys grew venturesome; and foragers went out and brought in mutton, poultry, fresh pork, honey and garden vegetables to garnish the monotonous ration. These forays were made a night by small squads, self-detailed. Wonderful strategists these night bummers were, in flanking beehives, poultry-yards; and they never were convinced during the entire war that southern sheep were loyal.

On the morning of October 16th, our job in the flour mill was nearly completed, and we were expecting orders to return. But it seems the Virginians were planning to facilitate our departure.

While our operations were going on, our friends, the enemy, deeply resented this invasion of the “sacred soil,” especially the depredations of the foragers, and collected a force to bag us or hustle us out. Col. Turner Ashby, with about 300 militia, 230 mounted men and two pieces of cannon, one rifled and one a 24-pounder (as he reports) — the infantry being a part of two regiments, one under Col. Albert and one under Major Finter — prepared to attack us. He arranged with Gen. Evans, who was in command at Leesburg, to send a battery with supports to ascend Loudoun Heights, on the bold end of the Blue Ridge, which is directly across the Shenandoah from Harper’s Ferry, to shell us from that quarter and use sharpshooters as much as possible, while he, Ashby, advanced upon us from the direction of Halltown.

At about eight o’clock in the morning a spirited fire was heard from our picket line along Bolivar Heights. A detail of thirty men, under Sergeant Marvin, from Company H, were on duty as a reserve to the picket line. When it was attacked, Marvin boldly led his men to the aid of the picket at the ridge and stoutly resisted the advance. But the enemy came down the road, disregarding the opposition of Company H, and pressed on so fast that
Marvin’s men did not have time to stop and get their overcoats and blankets, at their reserve post. The other companies at once flew to arms. Colonel Geary, who had been apprized of the advance of the enemy — it had been expected for two or three days — soon appeared upon the scene. One or two of his companies had been sent over a day or two before to assist in picket duty. He ordered Capt. Bertram to protect the left flank and Shenandoah road. Lieut. O’Brien was as the same time directed to protect the left flank of Bertram, and Capt. Whitman to hold the center. Company A, under Bertram, at once deployed skirmishers and advanced from the upper town toward Bolivar, but on coming to the ravine between the two towns, he filed down into the Shenandoah road. Advancing up this road we found no rebels approaching from that direction. Bertram then climbed up the rocks and found himself on the flank of the enemy, who were moving over the heights, down toward Bolivar. He directed Lieut. Bryant to bring the company up the bluff. Clambering up the steeps, the company was ranged in skirmish line along the top of the heights, just as the enemy had planted their gun in the outskirts of Bolivar, sheltered from our battery on Maryland Heights by a large brick house. A large force of infantry was just behind the battery. Just at this moment Bertram’s company opened upon them a galling fire. This they returned, but in a moment showed symptoms of disorder. Our line of skirmishers advanced. Lieut O’Brien seeing that Company A was engaged, rushed forward with Company C and poured in a volley. The enemy then fled across the field to the timber on Bolivar Heights. The two companies advanced upon a sharp fire to a large brick house. From the windows and doors of this we kept up a brisk fire. The enemy’s marksmanship was good. Stewart Mosher of Company C was killed while near this house — shot through the heart. Not satisfied with our work here in merely holding in check, the impetuous Bertram ordered a charge upon a gun planted in the road on the southeasterly side of Bolivar Heights. Lieut. Bryant with a dozen men of Company A was ordered to bear off to the left and protect the flank, while the rest of Company A, and a part of Company C, charged up the road for the gun. This little line charged on at more than double quick. But it brought the charging party under the fire of all Ashby’s infantry; the 300 militia entrenched behind the log breastworks, which they had relaid to front our advance, poured in a hot fire. Still the party pressed on. The gunners undertook to haul off their gun, the 24-pounder, but in their haste they broke the axle, drove in a spike and scampered away. The fire had become so hot that our little party with no support on its right, sought the shelter of the trees and hillocks; and

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7 One of the stories the Confederates tell to illustrate Ashby’s prowess, is that in this skirmish, “His cannoniers were shot down and the enemy rushing with loud shouts upon his artillery, he seized the sponge staff and loaded and fired with his own hands, driving them back with shattered ranks into the town.”
Bertram seeing no chance for support to come up, ordered a retreat. The instant they began to fall back, Ashby’s cavalry dashed over the hill upon them with dare-devil impetuosity. Lieut. Bryant and his group of flankers were in open field on the left of the road; and they had a long run with the cavalry close upon them; but an old garden fence over which they leaped unceremoniously saved their heads from the sabers which were swishing about their ears very unpleasantly.

The cavalry gave Corp. William H. Foster, who had been wounded in the leg and was limping off the field, a blow about the back of the neck, which, but for his coat collar, would have finished him. He suffered from it for some time. In this pell-mell retreat the hindmost of our party were likely to fare hard, for the horsemen were among them and about them. It would have been the end of Bertram and his men had not the gallant O’Brien rallied his men, some twenty of which were near him, and fired into the troopers, who were saber ing right and left, shooting revolvers and yelling like Indian devils. This brisk and timely fire took all the courage out of Ashby’s cavaliers; and they turned and scampered back behind the hill as fast as horse flesh could carry them. We then clung to the edge of Bolivar. The enemy had by this time a line of sharp shooters along Bolivar Heights, and their fire was very annoying. The minie balls whistled every time one of our men showed himself; and frequent shots from their rifled gun went screaming down the street. Meantime, the enemy’s battery on Loudoun Heights had got into position with four guns over across the Shenandoah and high over our heads. They began to rain down upon us shell and slugs. The latter were made of railroad iron, cut into pieces about 15 inches long, with pieces of pine board fitted around them and the whole wound with telegraph wire to make the slug fit and fill the bore of the gun. These missiles did us no harm; but the buzzing, whizzing, humming sound with which they went whirling through the air was enough to frighten forty battalions into panic. When one of those howlers passed over our heads, we shrunk into the smallest space possible, and ducked our heads in no time and one motion. Never was heard a more terrifying sound, it is safe to affirm, in all the war.

While our skirmish line was under cannonade from front, and rear from Loudoun, with sharp shooters all along the Bolivar Ridge, we held our own and watched patiently. Further to the right was Capt. Whitman with Company H, well up to the work, and still farther, the Thirteenth Massachusetts company held their own. Major Gould in command bore himself well; and the enemy all along were prevented from advancing over the ridge. Soon Col. Geary had Capt. Tompkins run some guns up on Maryland Heights, and they began to play very closely on the rebel battery on Loudoun. It was quite musical for an hour or more, when Col. Geary, who had taken charge on our side, ordered up four companies of his own regiment, the Twenty-eighth
Pennsylvania, and Lieut. Martin, with one gun, of the Ninth New York battery. Two of the Pennsylvania companies on the right flank got well upon the ridge, and our whole line was at once advanced. Martin poured his shell into the breastworks on the crest of Bolivar Heights, shooting off the wheel of their small cannon, and out line swept on, the enemy fleeing before us. When we had gained the Heights, their column was in full flight toward Halltown, and Martin’s gun sent after them a few farewell shots, that added materially to the nimbleness of their departure.

In this brisk, little skirmish — which, being our first, seemed to the participants a momentous battle — we lost four killed, seven wounded and two prisoners. All the losses save one of the prisoners, were from Companies A and C, of the Third regiment. Company H was more fortunate, though equally brave and conspicuous in the action from first to last.

The losses were in killed: Henry Clemens and Franklin L. Tuttle, of Company A, Stewart E. Mosher and Henry Raymond of Company C. Edgar Ross of C was mortally wounded and died at Halltown, a prisoner. George Buxton, of Company I, also died of wounds received, making six deaths in all. Our other wounded were three in Company C, Corp. George Gay, Corp. William H. Foster and private Thomas Hayden. Capt. Bertram had a narrow escape, a bullet passed through his clothing; and many of the men, as one expressed it, “got wounded in their clothes.”

This little action came at a time when there was no war news of interest; and the newspapers made much of it, and much was printed that was ridiculous. The New York and Philadelphia dailies had long accounts of the battle; and the 24-pounder that we had driven the enemy from, and prevented his removing, was claimed by the Pennsylvania journals as a trophy of the valor of her sons. It was presented to the city of Philadelphia as such trophy. The pictorials had Geary charging over the gun, and his advancing line in hand to hand conflict with the enemy in solid mass before him; all which shattered the sweet faith of our boys in pictorial representations of battle scenes ever after.

Our victory was complete. The enemy lost thirteen in killed and wounded and four prisoners, according to Ashby’s report of the casualties and Geary’s of the captures. Our men, who were confident that every one of their shots had taken effect, figured the enemy’s loss up into the hundreds; and Geary reported it at 150. Somehow, the reports of engagements made by the officers on opposite sides never could be made to agree.

It remains to be told that some of the riflemen on Loudoun Heights came down uncomfortably near to Harper’s Ferry, and from their high, hiding places covered the ferry across the river at the lower town. They were shelled out by

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8 So Ashby describes it. We took it to be, and Geary reported it, a 32-pounder.
our batteries. Our mission being accomplished, Col. Geary relieved us from
duty; and on the 17th we returned by rail to Frederick, bringing our dead and
wounded with us. The other companies of the regiment received out
detachment and escorted us to the camp with military honors, through streets
thronged with citizens, amid huzzas and waving of handkerchiefs by the loyal
ladies; and every one of the sharers in the skirmish at Bolivar felt himself for
the time a martial hero. It was our first baptism in fire; and it made a great
sensation in camp. They had heard at Frederick the cannonade at Harper's
Ferry; and the news of our little victory had preceded us. It created in the
regiment an ardent desire to participate in battles — a desire that later
experience completely eradicated and made us very willing that fields should
be won by strategy instead of the bloody collision of regiments in close
engagement.
CHAPTER VII.
BACK TO THE RIVER

ON THE 21st day of October we changed our camp ground, moving just across the street, and made extended arrangements for a long stay. Floors were put down in tents; for there was much sickness and several deaths in the regiment as the autumn chill came on. A busy day was spent in getting ready for tidy, camp life, and the many cheap comforts which we were fast learning how to provide. Tired with the day’s work the men were retiring to test their new made beds as soon as tattoo was over. Then the unwelcome command came to each company commander: “Cook one day’s rations, pack knapsacks, be ready to march in one hour.”

Then all was bustle. In less than an hour the wagons were loaded and all ready for march. Then a drizzly night rain set in. Momentarily expecting the order to march, we waited till dawn, with wind and rain for our boon companions for the night. Daybreak found us pressing on to Edward’s Ferry. We heard the booming of cannon in the distance. News came to us of the disaster at Ball’s Bluff. McClellan had ordered Banks’ command to the spot; and it was reported that our division was crossing the Potomac. Cheer upon cheer rung out as we trudged on faster. We reached Poolville early next morning, and found great preparations made to cross the river. Our brigade (Hamilton’s) was up the river at Conrad’s Ferry; and thither we hastened. Gen. Hamilton greeted us cordially, as we had been absent nearly two months. Next morning we were up early. In the near neighborhood were the Fifteenth Massachusetts, the “Tammany regiment,”9 and Col. Baker’s First California regiment, which had suffered terribly in the Ball’s Bluff affair,10 in which our forces across the river, had been routed with loss in killed, wounded, drowned and captured of 921 men. We waited for orders to cross.

On the 27th we marched with the whole of Banks’ command down the river to the former headquarters at Darnestown, and went into camp in a jungle of small pines, which was named “Camp Jo. Holt.” In the heart of the woods we were cozy enough, sheltered from the winds that soughed dismally in the boughs overhead. Here we remained for some weeks.11 The men built cabins of pine logs, lined them with boughs, and made very comfortable quarters. The most exciting event was the daily arrival of the mail. Rumors

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10 ED. NOTE: Colonel Edward Dickinson Baker, 24 Feb 1811 - 21 Oct 1861, was killed at this battle.

11 Here Adjutant Bertram was promoted captain of Company A; Bryant, 1st lieutenant, and O. S. Howard 2d lieutenant; Lieut. Van Brunt, Company I, was appointed adjutant, and Reed, of Company I, 1st lieutenant.
kept us constantly expecting a move. Once we thought we were selected for a southern expedition. The paymaster came and paid us two months’ pay on the 26\textsuperscript{th}. On the 29\textsuperscript{th}, Charley Johnson, the sutler, set a royal thanksgiving dinner for the officers. But the weather and the woods were dismal; and we longed for a change.
CHAPTER VIII.
WINTER QUARTERS.

MONDAY, December 2d, we packed up, made a bonfire of our log houses, and started for Frederick, the band playing “Ain’t I glad I’m out of the wilderness?” We marched a race with the Ninth New York; and a lively one it was. At eve we halted near Barnesville; but somehow our trains did not come up. The men had very generally hired a few farmers to haul their plump knapsacks and overcoats; and these were behind with the trains. We bivouacked on the cold side of a hill; and a “norther” soon came on, so cold as to freeze the mud solid. We spent a cheerless night, shivering about fires, and helping ourselves to straw from the neighboring farms. Next day we moved to Monocacy Junction. On the 4th we marched some five miles east of Frederick into a hilly, woody region — a dreary place, abounding in wood, water and stone. Col. Ruger was detailed as the earnest solicitation of the citizens of Frederick, as the provost marshal of the city; and his regiment was selected to act as its military police or provost guard during the winter. So just at night on the 5th, we marched back to Frederick, as lighthearted and self-satisfied as a battalion could be. We were soon snugly back in the old camp ground which we had left October 22nd, and soon had all the duty we wanted. The troops in the woods poured into town for adventure; and we had our hands full to keep them out of mischief. Between bad whisky and bad women and the bad boys in a dozen or more regiments, our patrol duty for the winter was of a kind to which field service is far preferable. The rogues when driven from town profanely insisted that the Third Wisconsin had a monopoly of all the vices. The winter wore away. Furloughs and leaves of absence were given in stinted measure; and all predictions were for an early campaign in the spring. The discipline of the camp was strict, and camp duty very regular. Several changes had been made in the officers’ roster. Capt. Vandagrift was discharged from the service, February 25th, and soon after Lieut. Moses O’Brien of Company C, was promoted to the captaincy of I company. Lieut. Moscrip, of Company B, resigned January 16, 1862. Sergt. J. T. Marvin, Company H, was promoted second lieutenant of Company C. Sergt. Julian W. Hinkley of Company D, was promoted second lieutenant of Company E. Lieut. Cady, of Company G, had resigned November 5, ’61, and Lieut. Shepard had taken his place; and Sergt. Ephraim Giddings was promoted second lieutenant. Lieuts. Griffith and Martin had also resigned.

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12 A little example of the waggish spirit of the boys is found in the drawer of Harper’s Magazine for March, 1862, contributed probably, by “Porte Crayon,” Maj. Strothers, of Banks’ staff. “In the Third regiment Wisconsin volunteers, it is a rule that no soldier can leave camp without a pass. The chaplain one day was distributing tracts; among others was one headed, Come to Jesus. Soon after, the tract was picked up in camp, and under the heading was penciled, ‘Can’t do it. Col. Ruger won’t sign my pass.’”
EARLY spring brought signs of activity. As part of the general movement which President Lincoln ordered to begin on February 22d, Gen. Banks, with his command somewhat strengthened, was to enter the valley of the Shenandoah. Accordingly the Third Wisconsin left Frederick by rail February 25th, halted at Sandy Hook and went into camp on our old ground, “Camp Pinkney” of the year before. During the night a pontoon bridge arrived with U. S. engineers. A detail of 100 men from our regiment soon laid the bridge, after a little drill by the pontoniers, and we marched across and up through Harper’s Ferry to Bolivar Heights, the scene of our skirmish of the previous October, where we encamped. The rest of Banks’ corps were coming on. Companies A, C and H of the Third were put on the outposts, having picketed and foraged there before. It rained a dismal, drenching, winter rain, and was a black night. The rebel mounted pickets were close by at sunset; and we probed for them in the darkness. Towards morning it began to freeze. Next day the Second Massachusetts came up from the woods beyond Frederick.

Gen. McClellan came up on the Heights that day, and we had a good look at him. He ordered an armed reconnaissance [sic] to start at dawn next morning. The Third and Second Massachusetts, with two sections of the First New York batters, and a detachment of the First Michigan cavalry were started. With Company A out as flankers, and a line of skirmishers from the Second, we pushed on at a brisk pace in the crisp morning, and soon came into the sleepy, inland village of Charlestown, where John Brown was tried and hung. As we marched in, a squad of some twenty or thirty of the enemy’s cavalry cantered off towards Winchester. Soon McClellan and staff came up; and he ordered us to remain. The weather was savage. Rain and snow fell together. Our train and knapsacks were ordered up, and meanwhile we took refuge in the churches and public buildings, the court house and jail. We remained here and near here some days, while forces were collected and concentrated. The advance on Winchester was delayed. By March 6th, Williams had moved his brigade to Bunker Hill; and Hamilton in command of our was at Smithfield. Shields moved out from Martinsburg to Bunker Hill.

Our sojourn in Charlestown was exceedingly disagreeable to the inhabitants. It annoyed them to have their churches occupied by Yankee soldiers; and the little organ was kept in full blast in one of the churches occupied by a part of the Third, while a hundred or more stout lungs vented the song, then new and expressive of the northern feeling:

“John Brown’s body lies a-mouldering in the grave,
But his soul is marching on.”
The boys of the regiment determined to keep that song going constantly during our stay in Charlestown; and though we staid there several days they came near keeping good the resolve. The song and the throats of the singers were rather worn-out and ragged for sometime after. It is to be feared that the organ was a little wheezy, too.

While here, the commanders were besieged with complaints from the citizens. Their geese, turkeys and chickens disappeared. They murmured that “private property was not respected.” The orders were strict enough; and officers did not countenance their violation. But so it was, everywhere that soldiers marched a great mortality prevailed among poultry, pigs and sheep. The women were most indignant and most outspoken. They took such revenge as bitter tongues and prayers that we might be exterminated could afford them. One well-to-do farmer protested against his corn and grain being taken as he had a large number of negroes dependent on him for support. In a week he was doing his own chores, milking with his own hands his last cow, and as woe-begone a secessionist as could be found anywhere. His slaves had left him; and his stock and poultry had joined the Union side, too.

The significance of this movement may here be explained. McClellan had organized the army of the Potomac into several divisionary [sic] corps under McDowell, Sumner, Heintzelman, Keyes and Banks. He, with Sumner, Keyes and Heintzelman, was to operate below; Banks was to move up the valley. The effective strength of Banks’ command — composed of his own, Shields’, part of Stone’s and Geary’s — was about 30,000 men. This force was to take Winchester, then occupied by the Confederate general, “Stonewall” Jackson with a force said to be 11,000 strong.

Hamilton was to move by Smithfield, which is about midway between Charlestown and Bunker Hill, a little hamlet in the Martinsburg pike. Shields was to advance on that pike and join Williams. Abercrombie’s brigade, one of Banks’ was to advance simultaneously by way of Berryville, a village at the junction of a road leading from Charlestown with the turnpike from Snicker’s Gap in the Blue Ridge to Winchester. This brought the several brigades within eight or ten miles of Winchester, and in easy supporting distance.

What was Jackson doing meanwhile? On the 24th of February, the day before we left Frederick, he wrote to Gen. Joseph E. Johnston: “I have reason to believe that the enemy design advancing on this place in large force.” He had considered the necessity of fortifying and set about it, and had assured the people of Winchester that they should not be abandoned to the enemy.
On the 6th day of March, when an advanced reconnoissance of Williams’ brigade had moved to Stephenson’s depot, within four miles of Winchester, Jackson awaited him drawn up in line of battle in front of his fortifications. He was much exercised in mind whether to fight or flee. At one time he was in a mood to hazard everything to make good his promise to the people that he would protect them from the incursion of the Yankees; again, seeing the matter in a military light, he would conclude to retire, as he deemed our forces too strong to cope with.  

On the 11th, the Union columns from Martinsburg and Charlestown were united at a point about six miles from Winchester. About 2 o’clock A.M. that day Ashby’s cavalry picket were driven off. Reinforcements sent them were also driven by our advance. Jackson then threw forward his whole force. But banks did not accept battle. His dispositions were not then made. He prepared to advance at early dawn next morning. After midnight Jackson drew off his infantry, leaving Ashby with his cavalry as a rear guard, and started south. He removed all the public property, and hauled overland a railroad locomotive on a vehicle drawn by forty-two horses.

The Federal lines were formed and swept along in fine style through the open fields toward Winchester. Gen. Hamilton, as senior officer, was in command, and his dispositions were admirably made. His troops were in excellent spirits and eager for fight. Ashby’s cavalry was brushed out of the way; and soon we were at Winchester to find the enemy gone, and all our bracing up for a battle needless. Ashby’s cavalry galloped out of town on the south, as out column entered from the north.

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14 His biographer, Cooke, [Ed. Note: ?? John Esten Cooke, 1830-1886, author of “Wearing of the gray: being personal portraits, scenes, and adventures of the war”] tells us that he was loth to leave the valley and to abandon Winchester. He wrote a friend on the 3d of March, “If this valley is lost, Virginia is lost.” “On the night of the 11th of March,” says Cooke, “he visited the family of the Rev. Mr. Graham, a Presbyterian clergyman of the town, with whom he was intimate, and the whole family were struck with the unusual buoyancy of his bearing. His manner was animated; his countenance smiling, almost gay; and he came with a rapid and elastic tread which indicated high spirits. As the hour for evening prayers had arrived, he asked permission to read a chapter in the Bible and offer a prayer. When the family rose from their knees, Jackson remained for a moment silent, and then said: “My good friends, I can tell you what I am going to do to-night; I shall attack the enemy and beat him.” After a few more words he left the house, but, to their great surprise, returned for a moment silent, and then said: “I will never leave Winchester without a fight! — never, never!” He stood looking at the astonished auditors for some moments without uttering another word; and then his excitement disappeared, his sword was driven back with a ringing clash into the scabbard, and in tones of profound discouragement he said, ‘No, I cannot sacrifice my men. I intended to attack on the Martinsburg road, but they are approaching on the flanks and would surround me. I cannot sacrifice my men. I must fall back.’
Captain Bertram of Company A, was then acting as provost marshal of Banks’ command. He, with his company, A, and Company C, as guard, at once entered — the leading citizens, meeting him, surrendered the place. It is said that this town was occupied and re-occupied some thirty times by one side or the other, subsequently in the war, but was never formally surrendered. Jackson fell back doggedly. Gen. Shields followed on. Not until he had reached Mount Jackson, forty-five miles from Winchester, did the Confederate general allow his men to go into camp. Banks halted with his division about Winchester; and here his command was re-organized. Gen. Hamilton was sent to the corps of Gen. Heintzelman. The Second Massachusetts was brigaded with our regiment, also the Twenty-seventh Indiana, and Twenty-ninth Pennsylvania, and Col. Geo. H. Gordon of the Second Massachusetts took command as ranking colonel.

Of the four regiments comprising the Third brigade, thus formed, three remained united during the war — the Twenty-seventh Indiana, the Second Massachusetts and the Third Wisconsin — sharers together in a period of service lasting till the final overthrow of the rebellion and in “a common history and common glory.”

General Shields pursues Jackson up the valley, and on the 19th entered Strasburg, eighteen miles above Winchester.

And, here, let us leave the narrative of operations, and briefly describe the country into which the initial movements of this campaign have brought us.

The valley of the Shenandoah is that part of the great valley of Virginia, lying between the Blue Ridge on its southeastern side and the North mountain and other ridges which run parallel to and are the eastern lines and rows of the great Alleghenies. From Harper’s Ferry northwestward up the Potomac it is about twenty-four miles in width, growing narrower upward. The Shenandoah river extends from its mouth at Harper’s Ferry upward and southwest, close along the base of the Blue Ridge for thirty-six miles to Front Royal, and near there divides into two branches called the North and South forks. Near the confluence of these branches and between them a mountain chain called the Massanuttons rises abruptly and stretches off southwest parallel to the Blue Ridge for fifty miles, then sinks into the general level. Being nearer to the Blue Ridge than to the North mountain, it divides the valley into two much narrower valleys trending in the same direction; the eastern one being called Luray valley. The western side of the Massanuttons is known as “The Valley.” The north fork is the smaller branch of the river, rises in the North mountain, to the westward of Harrisonburg — which lies near the southern terminus of the Massanuttons — flows down the valley on the northwestern side; but at Mount Jackson it crosses the valley to the base of the Massanuttons and skirts along the foot of that chain in a tortuous course to near Strasburg. There it bends around the north end of that
mountain chain, flows eastward past Front Royal to join the South fork. The latter is the main branch, and extends with numerous windings up the narrow Luray valley to Port Republic, a little south of which three streams — the North, Middle and South rivers — drain a large portion of the upper valley and unite to form the fork. Numerous small streams called “runs” flow across the valley discharging at various points into the main river.

Martinsburg, on the Baltimore & Ohio railroad, is a considerable town in the northeast part of the valley, about eighteen miles from Harper’s Ferry. An excellent turnpike, wide and durably made, runs from Martinsburg twenty-two miles to Winchester, hugging the western side of the valley, thence eighteen miles to Strasburg, thence through numerous villages — Woodstock, Edensburg and New Market being the more important — to Harrisonburg, some eighty-eight miles from Winchester, thence onward about twenty-four miles to Staunton.

At Strasburg, going southward, the main valley becomes quite narrow. The Massanuttons here consist of three ridges, between which are two small valleys, called Powell’s Big Fort valley and Powell’s Little Fort valley. The main valley is much broken in its narrow part, above Strasburg, with deep ravines and heights affording good defensive positions, well situated to resist advance either up or down the pike. Common dirt roads run parallel to the turnpike. An unpaved road runs from Port Republic down the Luray valley to Front Royal. From Winchester another macadamized road leads to Harper’s Ferry, and another road running eastward crosses the Shenandoah at Castlemain’s Ferry, leads over the Blue Ridge through Snicker’s Gap to Manassas and to other points between the Blue Ridge and Bull Run mountains.

A good turnpike also leads from Winchester south up the valley to Front Royal, running for several miles nearly parallel with the Strasburg pike, and from one to two miles apart, then this latter bears off southwesterly and the Front Royal bends easterly and swings around again so that its general course is due south. Front Royal is twenty-two miles south of Winchester.

The scenery in the valley, and especially from Strasburg southward is beautifully picturesque. The turnpike runs along a natural ridge, winding and undulating to conform to the road-bed nature had provided. A column of troops in march never presented a finer sight than when moving in good order on this excellent roadway. Col. Gordon went into ecstacies at the sight; and two years later Gen. Sheridan was delighted at the same view, as his gallant legions pressed up the valley on the heels of the fleeing Early; and from the head of his column he could look backward over them all.

The streams flowing down from the mountains on either side are remarkable translucent. The fields put forth a rich green in the early spring. The orchards of apple and peach blossom luxuriantly in the first warm days,
well sheltered from the northern winds and the humid chill of the Atlantic coats. The summer haze mellowes the scene and softens the tints on the mountain sides. This valley, destined to be harried, desolated and torn by the blasts of war, to be the scene of alternate victory and defeat for either cause, seemed, when we entered it in the spring of 1862, to be the sequestered vale where peace herself would choose her abode.

About this time the Confederates fell back from Manassas to Gordonsville, south of the Rapidan; and plans of campaign were changed. McClellan was to move on Richmond by the peninsula; and Banks was to cover Washington. So, March 16, Banks was ordered with his corps to the vicinity of Manassas. Shields was recalled from Strasburg. Williams, now in command of a division, started over the Blue Ridge. The Third Wisconsin in his command encamped on the night of the 22nd at Berryville, and moved next day up through Snickers’ [sic] Gap and three miles east of the Ridge.

Jackson soon learned of this movement, and, divining its purpose, resolved to attack whatever small force might be left at or about Winchester. He retraced his steps quickly, attacked Gen. Shields and received a sound threshing at Kernstown, the particulars of which do not belong to this history. During this battle which began at about sunset of March 22d, Shields sent orderly after orderly with dispatches to Gen. Williams. Gordon’s brigade while crossing the Blue Ridge had heard the distant cannonade in the valley. As soon as dispatches came, they retraced their steps, marching twenty-six miles on the 24th, reaching Winchester late at night.

Banks, who had pursued on with Shields to Strasburg, ordered Gordon to report to him there. On receipt of this order Gordon’s brigade moved out at about sundown, and made a night march towards Strasburg. The signs of Jackson’s hasty retreat were along the route. The dead and wounded of his command were in the houses; bridges had been destroyed to hinder pursuit; and people said his flight had been rapid and exceedingly hard on his men. On the evening of the 26th the Third Wisconsin encamped at Strasburg.

The next day Gordon’s brigade was thrown forward, to a camp back from the road concealed behind Round Hill. Sullivan’s brigade was in front of the hill. Near Sullivan was Jackson’s rear guard; and it was a matter of some sport that Sullivan was in a state of constant excitement lest Jackson should be upon him.

On the first day of April the column advanced up the valley, driving Jackson from his camp near Woodstock in such haste that his men left their dinner cooking over the fire. Pushing on in pursuit to near Edensburg, the

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15 The writer, with Company A, Third Wisconsin, was in Winchester at the time on duty as provost guard, and witnessed part of the movements of this battle; and spent the night in taking care of the wounded of both sides. Some of Company A’s men went out and did some shooting in the battle, “on their own hook.”
brigade encamped on the 2\textsuperscript{nd}, near Tom’s Brook. The rebel forces were on a range of hills beyond; and they amused themselves by throwing shells at our pickets.

The weather was abominable. Rain and snow, and a bleeding of snow and rain, that made disagreeable every phase of camp life, picket or march. The spring had been arrested by one of those storms peculiar to the climate, when the ground is covered with watery snow, the air dense with the chilliest and most penetrating moisture, and everything saturated. For several days this weather continued; and men shivered on sentinal \textit{[sic]} duty and in camp about sputtering fires.

And now a new programme was laid out for us. Gen. McClellan, and the 1\textsuperscript{st} of April, sent a letter to Gen. Banks, that the change in affairs in the valley had rendered necessary a change of previous plans. Jackson was to be kept well back; and Banks in certain contingencies was to push on to Staunton.

On the 17\textsuperscript{th} of April the welcome news came to advance to New Market, fifteen miles southward on the pike. There was Mill creek to cross; and here the enemy could offer serious resistance, if he chose. As the creek ran across the road at right angles, the passage, if disputed, would be difficult to force. South of the creek was Mount Jackson a few hundred yards distant, and there Jackson had made his camp at a point easy to be held, as the hill commands all the passage of the creek. Here Jackson made a show of fight. The position must, therefore, be turned. Col. Gordon, with his own brigade and Col. Dunnings of Shields’ command, was ordered to proceed along the north side of the creek to the middle or dirt road that led up the valley to new Market. Under a pelting sun Gordon’s flanking column moved over a road all ledges of rock and quagmires of mud. Dunnings’ brigade in leading, straggled fearfully, as the early start and the heat had much fatigued the men. This column halted at 9 o’clock P.M., and slept till morning in its tracks. In the morning they learned that Jackson had scampered off; and Shields was pursuing down the main pike. To join the main column the North fork of the Shenandoah must be forded. The water was up to the armpits, cold as ice and swift, but the men crossed with uproarous \textit{[sic]} hilarity. Many stripped off their clothes and held the bundle high over their heads; and all roared with laughter when the current carried the legs from under some luckless comrade and ducked him clothes and all.

On the 25\textsuperscript{th} the column was again in motion along the base of the Massanuttons on the left to Harrisonburg, 80 miles up the valley from Winchester. But Jackson had left the valley, and turning to his left had moved over into Elk Run valley across the South fork of the Shenandoah. Behind him was a gap in the Blue Ridge through which was a turnpike to Stannardsville and Gordonsville, putting him in communication with Ewell. He
had a good line of retreat. Before him was the Shenandoah to guard him from Banks’ advance, and on either hand spurs of the Blue Ridge protected his flanks. The camp was admirably selected for an inferior force; from it he menaced Banks’ communications, and prevented his advance southward.

During the advance up the valley the good news came of Grant’s victories at Donelson and Henry, the evacuation of Yorktown, the occupation of New Orleans, Portsmouth, Norfolk. When Gen. Williams received the dispatches he celebrated the news with a bottle whiskey and sent word to his brigade commanders to “let the boys yell.”

At this early period of the war, there was much plenty in the upper valley. Poultry was abundant and prices for butter, eggs and other articles of food were quite moderate. The devastation of the valley came later.

On Sunday, May 4th, Gen. Banks left his headquarters at New Market and went up to the front, to discuss with his brigadiers the practicability of a movement against Jackson. While this conference was in session, orders came from the Secretary of War to fall back to Strasburg, with Williams, the cavalry and artillery. Shields, with his division, was to cross the Blue Ridge and join McDowell at Fredericksburg. The next day Williams’ division retraced steps twenty miles down the valley. Arriving at New Market, the headquarters were found in alarm lest Jackson, who was reported to be in the Luray valley over the Massanuttons, should be doing some mischief. Gordon’s brigade weary as it was, was ordered to cross over into Luray valley and attack a detachment of Jackson’s forces said to be there. At 12 o’clock at night it started. The turnpike to Luray leads over the Massanuttons range in one of those depressions called a “gap,” but really a slight depression here, and the pike ascends and descends the mountain in zig-zag courses. The dawn of the 6th found the column on the summit weary enough; but the magnificent scenery on which they gazed was itself refreshing,16 Behind the the beautiful

16 An incident that comes to memory may here throw a little light on the condition of the people of that region at that time. While Gordon’s brigade was lying in the Luray valley Lieut. James G. Knight, quartermaster of the regiment, and the writer crossed over this mountain from New Market to the camp of the Third. When on the top of the mountain we dismounted to give our horses a rest and to view the scenery. At some distance from the road, nearly hidden by the trees, we saw a little cabin. Curiosity impelled us to visit it. We found there two elderly women, evidently living in loneliness and poverty. To make an excuse, we asked if they could sell us some dinner. “Deed and double, we can’t,” said one of the women. “There ain’t a thing to eat in the house, not a thing.” “Well then,” said Knight, “you will boil a little coffee for us, won’t you?” “Coffee?” replied the dame. “Coffee” It’s only rye coffee we’ve had for a year, and not that is all gone. There ain’t a kyurnal in the house.” “Oh, well,” said Knight, “I’ll find the coffee and sugar; you find the water and kettle, and we’ll all have a nice cup.” “What, ra-al coffee?” said the old lady, “ra-al coffee?” “Yes,” said Knight, who was a “good provider,” both for his regiment and himself, as he drew from his saddle bags a little sack of nicely browned coffee. The two dames looked on it with gloating eyes, and soon the pot was simmering in the rude fireplace. When the kernels had been pounded the old woman said: “I’m groan’ to sarch around and see if I can’t find a bite o’ bread and meat to
[sic - , & the the] valley of Virginia, below them in front the lovely Luray valley, with its apple, peach and cherry trees in bloom the verdure well started in the groves, and the rich green of the grass and wheat fields presenting in the morning sunlight a scene of such tranquil beauty that the soldiers could hardly realize that they were descending into that beautiful vale seeking to drench its fields with blood. A short rest, and the descent was quickly made. The brigade encamped near the Luray caves, now a resort but little less famous than the Mammoth cave in Kentucky. It was found that no enemy was there, none had been there. The long, night march had been made on a false alarm. Instead of going into battle, the tired men sank down to welcome slumber, save the luckless detail who were posted out on all approaches as pickets. They with stiffened joints must stand on watch while the camp was drowned in sleep.

There were in the valley many wives of poor men who had been forced into the Confederate ranks. These poor women, often with large families of children, were left in destitution, and were the pictures of wretchedness. There were many Dunkards, a religious sect having conscientious scruples against bearing arms. They hid in the mountains during Jackson’s occupation, but came from their hiding places when our forces appeared, only to flee again as soon as we fell back.

go along with that coffee.” Putting on an old sun bonnet, evidently one she had had in her youth, she disappeared among the bushes, with an old knife in her hand. She soon returned with some milk, some slices of bacon and some corn meal. With remarkable celebrity she soon had some corn cakes browning by the fire, and the odors of frying bacon and boiling coffee filled the room. A rude table was set; and we four sat down to a repast with a hearty relish. It was a pleasure to see those poor women enjoy their coffee, and grow cheerful and garrulous under the stimulant. “In these times o’ worrit and trouble,” said the old lady, “there ain’t anything so liftin’ as a cup of coffee.” We paid them for the dinner; but they seemed to feel rich when Knight emptied the coffee bag into the dish which the old dame brought for the purpose, and her opinion of the Yanks rose many degrees by the time the dinner was over.
CHAPTER X.
The Skirmish at Buckton.

On the 8th day of May, the Third recrossed the Massanutton and lay listless in the warm weather at New Market till the 13th, when we fell back to Strasburg. Soldiering grew tame. We seemed likely to remain simply as a guard. All were discontented. The officers of the Second petitioned the secretary of war to send them to a more active field. Since we had entered the valley, Donelson, Henry, Shiloh had startled the nation; Yorktown was evacuated and McClellan nearing Richmond, and we, alas! were rusting in a sleepy valley. We were soon given more activity than we desired.

While Banks was drawing back, Shields withdrew from New Market and moved over to join McDowell who from about Fredericksburg was to move on to join on McClellan’s right. Jackson at Elk Run valley burned to fall upon Banks. His command had been increased. He made an expedition to McDowell, off to the southwest, united forces with Gen. Edward Johnson, and fell upon Milroy, in the Bull Pasture valley, drove him over into West Virginia; then returned with Johnson’s 3,500 men, and was joined by Ewell, and turned upon Banks with a force of 17,500 men.

They arranged the movement with skill. One brigade of Ewell’s was to move with Jackson down to New Market, thence over the Massanuttons. Ewell was to move from Elk Run valley down the South fork of the Shenandoah in Luray valley. The plan was put in execution on the 19th, and both columns in motion. Jackson crossed the Massanuttons, and fell in rear of Ewell, moving down to Front Royal, and bivouacked on the night of the 22d within ten miles of that place.

Turning now to the Union camps we find the situation as follows: On the morning of the 23d, Williams’ one division of two brigades — the First commanded by Col. Donnelly, the Second by Col. George H. Gordon — was at Strasburg, and stretched along from there to Front Royal. Three companies of the Second Massachusetts were at the bridge just out of Strasburg; one company of the Third Wisconsin (Company G), commanded by Capt. Edwin L. Hubbard, and one company of the Twenty-seventh Indiana, Capt. Davis, were near Buckton Station, six miles from Strasburg, toward Front Royal, having been sent there May 16th, by orders from the War department, to guard the railroad between there and Strasburg. The town is a small one, lying at the west base of the Blue Ridge, with high hills all about it, and is about a mile and a half south of the confluence of the two forks of the Shenandoah. On the east, a turnpike and the Manassas Gap railroad lead through the gap of that name to the southeast, another road leads through Chester Gap in the Blue Ridge. The Winchester turnpike leads north from the
town and crosses both forks of the Shenandoah. The road to Luray runs southward up the valley.

Banks heard on the 21st of Jackson’s presence within eight miles of Harrisonburg, but he seems to have lost further track of his active adversary until he heard of him at Front Royal.

As Jackson approached Front Royal, in order to get as close as possible without being discovered, he turned off from the main road to the right, and passed up into the steep wooded hills and approached the town from the south by a narrow, secluded road, well hidden in the forests of the Blue Ridge. His purpose was to pounce upon the town from an unexpected quarter and capture the force there without giving them opportunity to alarm Banks at Strasburg.

It was necessary, also, to cut off the little force of two companies near Buckton Station and other bridge guards, lest they hearing firing at Front Royal communicate with Strasburg. And it was necessary also to destroy railroad communications and bridges between the two places. So Ashby’s cavalry was turned from the main road of advance to the left at Spangler’s cross-roads to cross the south fork and move west up under the Massanuttons, to skirt along the base of that mountain and destroy the bridge guarded by Captains Hubbard and Davis and others, also guarded nearer to Front Royal.

Captain Hubbard was in command of the little detachment of two companies. Some advance scouting parties had captured two of his men the day before, and he was on the lookout. On the morning of the 23d he sent Capt. Davis and Lieut. Giddings down the track a little ways to report to Lieut.-Col. Parham, who with five companies of his own, the Twenty-ninth Pennsylvania regiment was guarding other bridges and points on the railroad. Parham had ordered Hubbard to report to him for instructions as to building defenses. Hubbard sent these officers instead, and fearing attack remained with the command. They reported and started back to their companies, but the enemy had come between, and they were compelled to fall back to Parham’s camp. Captain Hubbard, therefore, commanded and made such

17 Lieutenant Giddings reported back to Front Royal that he was unable to join his own command and tendered his services to Col. Murphy of the Twenty-ninth Pennsylvania, who assigned him to a company in his regiment. In the retreat of that regiment toward Winchester, the enemy’s cavalry charged upon it, broke its lines, and Giddings with others took shelter in the timber and in that way tried to get beyond the rebel advance toward Winchester. When they approached the pike they found it filled with Confederate stragglers. They kept concealed until dark and then tramped all night toward Winchester. On the 26th about sunrise, near Winchester, they, Giddings and his companions in flight, were captured near Winchester by several farmers, who had discovered their tracks in the dewy grass. He was taken to Winchester, sent thence to Staunton on foot, thence by rail to Salisbury, N.C., remained there about two months, was then sent to Libby Prison, was paroled, and rejoined the regiment in the winter, after his exchange, at Stafford C.H.,
dispositions to resist attack as he deemed prudent. In front of the railroad on the southern side was a wheat field and back of it a large wood. In this timber out of sight of Hubbard’s pickets Ashby’s cavalry — about 400 — massed. At 2 o’clock they charged across the wheat field, with a whoop and yell, two or three officers in front swinging their sabers, toward the camp of the companies. Hubbard with his Company G, and the brave Indianians did not flinch. It might will shake the nerve of veterans to see so solid a column of cavalry bearing down upon them in the momentum of full gallop; but the Indiana boys gave the advancing host a volley. Both companies then got behind a fill in the railroad, and when the still advancing cavalry came within 100 yards gave them a volley well directed which threw them into confusion, emptying many saddles. Horses fell; others riderless ran in all directions; two or three of the cavalry charged up to the fill or embankment, but were killed before they got back. Among them was Capt. Fletcher, a splendidly mounted and fine-looking officer. His followers broke and fell back into the timber in confusion and at a break-neck pace. They soon rallied, and made another charge on the right. The little force was waiting them, every gun loaded, and the men confident and cool. Hubbard’s company, lying behind a fill in the track, gave them a volley at close range, which was more than they could stand. They broke and fled precipitately to the woods, not daring to face another fire. Such is Capt. Hubbard’s version of this skirmish.18

One incident connected with this skirmish has a humorous aspect well worth record. When Banks was operating the valley in 1862, some enterprising printer had printed cartloads of a fac-simile of Confederate money, and circulated it through the army. There were many instances where

18 The Confederate accounts do not agree. Allan says: “Ashby came suddenly upon the infantry guard, consisting of two companies (Davis’s of the Twenty-seventh Indiana, and Hubbard’s of the Third Wisconsin), that had been posted at and near Buckton, for the protection of the railroad. This force, however, quickly threw themselves into the depot building and Mr. Jenkins’ house and stable, and from this cover maintained a very spirited contest with the Confederate cavalry, in which fell Capts. Sheets and Fletcher, two of Ashby’s best officers. The Federals were finally overpowered and dispersed and the railroad track torn up.”

Jackson reports: “Ashby met with a body of the enemy posted as a guard at Buckton in a strong position, protected by the railroad embankment. Ashby drove back and dispersed the enemy, but with the loss of some of the most valuable of his followers, among them Capts. Sheets and Fletcher.: (Off. Records of Rebellion, vol. XII., pt. 1, p. 703.)

Cooke, in his “Biography of Jackson,” page 143, says: “Ashby was meanwhile scouting along the base of the Massanutton. At Buckton he came upon a body of the enemy, posted as a guard at that point, in a strong position, and protected by the embankment of the railroad. Ashby charged and dispersed them, gaining possession of the place and capturing a train of cars.” From all this it is evident that the infantry they did disperse and drive away was a part of the Twenty-ninth Pennsylvania, who were at Buckton Station. Lieut.-Col. Parham, commanding below, reports that his men at the station were driven away by Ashby’s men.
soldiers had passed these fac-simile bills on the unsophisticated Virginians as genuine money, although it was clearly printed on the margin that the same were fac-similes. The Confederate government caused it to be circulated that any Federal soldier having this imitation money in possession upon capture, would be treated not as a prisoner of war, but as a counterfeiter, and sent to state’s prison. It happened that the Company G men had their pockets crammed with this paper when the rebels were charging upon them. While waiting between charges, they so gallantly repulsed, the men buried their money in the bank. Every vestige of it was hidden. They meant not to be captured, but they had no notion of wearing stripes in the Virginia prison. They called it “putting their money in the bank.”

Captain Hubbard, after this repulse, called for volunteers to swim the Shenandoah and take a dispatch to Banks. Two men volunteered, ran to Strasburg, and Col. Ruger, with his regiment, at once marched to the succor of the brave outpost. Never was reinforcement more welcome. Ruger was soon ordered back to Strasburg, and the whole command was in motion, as we shall presently see.
CHAPTER XI.
THE RETREAT FROM STRASBURG.

WHILE Ashby was attacking the companies at Buckton, and finding them so hard to ride over, the head of Jackson’s column had pounced upon Kenly at Front Royal, and taken him by surprise. Kenly made “a spirited resistance,” as Jackson admits, destroyed a part of his stores, and then fell back across the South fork and took a commanding position on a height, and played on the enemy with his rifled artillery. Jackson sent the First Maryland rebel regiment to attack them, supported by a battalion of Louisiana troops, while his artillery was posted to take them in flank. Kenly fell back across the North fork, and attempted to destroy the bridge, but the enemy was too close upon him. He continued to retreat; but Ashby’s and Flourney’s cavalry were soon upon him, they having come down from Buckton to join in the pursuit. At Cedarville, five miles north of Front Royal, Kenly made another stand; but there the Confederates overpowered him, captured his section of the battery of 10-pounder Parrotts and several hundred prisoners.

Jackson’s advance pushed on with all speed towards Middletown, a little village on the Strasburg pike, five miles north of Strasburg, and thirteen miles from Winchester in the hope to intercept and cut off Banks and capture his entire command. While his advance had attacked and pursued Kenly at Front Royal, his main body was slowly moving upon that place. The fact that Banks’ command was not cut off and entirely destroyed is due to a blunder and to the terror of a scared boy. Mention has been made that Jackson had turned off to the left from the main traveled road in his advance so as to come down upon the town unperceived from an unexpected quarter. But he never intended his whole command to march over that steep, rough, crooked path. He was up with the head of his column, and when Kenly’s pickets were driven in, he sent back a boy orderly — a green recruit from a cavalry regiment — to direct his rear brigade to come straight on by the main road and not to take the circuitous path in the hills, which the head of the column had taken. The lad started with his message; but when Kenly’s artillery opened, the youngster, scared out of his wits, thought only of escape and cantered for home. So Jackson’s troops all marched over the jagged mountain road and came much belated into Front Royal on the night of the 23rd, wearied utterly by the long, needless march. Pursuit that night was out of the question; and, hence, Banks was given a chance of escape that would have been lost had not Jackson’s plans miscarried through the terrors of his panic-stricken

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19 Ed. Note: John Reese Kenly, born in Baltimore, MD, 11 Jan 1818, died at Baltimore on 20 Dec 1891.
orderly.

Banks at Strasburg did not know until late in the night of the 23rd of the havoc that had been played with his outpost at Front Royal, nor of the purposes of Jackson. At about 10 o’clock he swore, says Gordon, “By G—, sir, I will not retreat! We have more to fear, sir, from the opinions of our friends than the bayonets of our enemies.” Gordon urged a speedy retreat, for he fully divined the purposes of the energetic Jackson.

Ruger had been recalled from Buckton. On the morning of the 24th Banks’ mind was wavering to and fro, whether to stay or fall back. In the forenoon he issued an order to Gordon that “our force will remain at Strasburg until further orders.” He had reports that Jackson’s advance had returned to Front Royal. But a few minutes later, he sent other orders to move at once toward Middletown. At three o’clock in the morning he had started out some ambulances with the sick, and some hundreds of Shields’ broken down men, partly on foot. His main column moved out at a brisk pace about eleven. The long train of stores and equipage was headed by Col. Donnelly’s brigade, followed by Gordon’s. The Third Wisconsin started out by no means fresh for such a march, as it had marched nearly all night to Buckton and back, bringing in Company G, who, from their excitement of the day before, and their anxious vigil of the night were hardly in spirit for a forced march. So, on the morning of the 24th, Jackson’s columns started from Front Royal toward Winchester on the turnpike northward, while Banks a few hours later started out for the same destination on the Strasburg, or main valley turnpike, each eagerly pressing forward. It was then a foot race to Winchester — as Banks says in his report, “the key of the valley and to us the place of safety.”

The day was cool and misty. When about two miles in the march, signs of panic ahead were apparent. Frightened teamsters came galloping back on their mules in a frenzy of fear. A wagon train a few miles ahead had become demoralized, seeing or thinking they saw rebel cavalry. Behind us the town was smoking. The stores for which there was no transportation were set on fire. Before us a mingled mass of terrified wagoners, and the column of infantry and artillery pushing on. It was a wild, exciting march. Droves of horses from a cavalry corral were started with the column. They would take fright and dash through the columns. The train of wagons was interspersed with refugees fleeing for life, men, women and children, colored men and women, some carrying babes, or leading little ones, and all panting, sweating and scampering along under the spur of a mortal fear. When the teamsters would become scared, the wagon masters, rough, resolute men would curse, swear and yell out orders adding to the tumult.

A theatrical company had followed us up the valley, giving nightly performances in a large tent, by which means they gathered up much of the money of the soldiers. They were the pictures of despair, as in this hasty
retreat their tent and baggage was left behind, and their actors and actresses were fleeing in terror and misery. The troops were cool, kept their places, and none shared in the panic that afflicted the camp followers and refugees.

While Jackson’s advance was pursuing Kenly, he was urging forward his tired men. He dispositions for the 24th, were to strike the valley pike near Middletown. He sent Ashby to that point by a cross road from Cedarville on the Front Royal pike, following with his infantry. Ewell marched by the Front Royal pike directly on Winchester. His force being treble that of Banks, he could safely divide it, and with one column strike us in flank, and with the other head us off. An advance party of Ewell’s cavalry pushed on to Newtown on the valley pike at dawn, and there struck a part of the ambulance train which left Strasburg at 3 A.M., captured a few prisoners and killed some of the unarmed sick. Stewart sent a few cavalry men up the Strasburg pike; and they firing a few shots had created a panic which extended to the rear.

When these alarms reached Banks, he gathered in his flying teamsters, reorganized his columns, and pushed Donnelly rapidly forward to Middletown. Here the Forty-sixth Pennsylvania were sent out to dislodge a squadron of rebel cavalry on the right. This was handsomely done. A section of Cothren’s New York battery was brought up, then the Twenty-eighth New York; and the enemy were driven back two miles. This “episode,” Banks thinks, saved his column. Stewart drew off and joined Ewell. The head of our column pushed on to Newton, six miles down the valley.

The space between the two places was a continuous line of wagons. At 1 o’clock Gordon’s brigade was there, but as the column neared Newtown the roar of cannon in the rear was ominous. Soon cavalrymen came galloping down from behind with report that Jackson had attacked the rear. This was too true. He had pushed on to Middletown and struck our column just as the rear guard of cavalry were passing through the town. They made a gallant effort to cut their way through. There were six companies of the Fifth New York cavalry, and six of the first Vermont cavalry. They made, as Jackson says in his report, a “spirited resistance” before “this fragment of the Federals fell back to Strasburg,” with the rear wagons, some thirty-two in number. There they gathered up Capt. Collis’s Philadelphia company of Zouaves d’Afrique, who had been left to burn the bridge across Cedar creek, and finding themselves cut off had returned to Strasburg, and taken a side road to the left, marched by a dirt road down the valley. Approaching Winchester

\[20\text{Ed. NOTE: }\text{Bryant erroneously refers to J. E. B. Stuart as “Stewart.”}\]

\[21\text{Banks says in his report, “The column had passed Cedar Creek, about three miles from Strasburg, when information was received from the front that the enemy had attacked the train and was in full possession of the road at Middletown. This report was confirmed by the return of fugitives, refugees and wagons which came tumbling to the rear in fearful confusion.”}\]
they found themselves again cut off, and pushing to the west came down part of them on the east side of the North mountain and part on the west side, and escaped into Maryland at Cherry Run. General Hatch, with part of his cavalry, after the clash with the head of Jackson’s column at Middletown, turned with his artillery to the left at Middletown, pushed down the valley by a parallel road, and rejoined the column at Newtown.

Jackson having cut our column and driven back our near guard at Middletown pushed on with all speed down the valley in pursuit of our fugitive trains. He had it all his own way between Middletown and Newtown. There were many wagons then on the road. He sent Ashby on ahead; and the hard-riders of that lively cavalry became demoralized over the rich booty. They stopped and scattered to plunder the abandoned wagons, and many of them loaded with booty straggled off on the side roads to store it away in places of safety. Their lust for pillage compelled Ashby to discontinue pursuit. Poague’s artillery, unsupported by cavalry, pushed on to near Newtown. Jackson with his “foot cavalry” pressed on. At Newtown he met opposition. Gordon’s brigade had reached there at about 2 o’clock and passed on. Banks then made his appearance and directed Gordon to send back a new rear guard to Newtown. Colonel Colgrove, with the Twenty-seventh Indiana, was sent back, and with his line of 431 men boldly confronted Jackson’s advance. The Second Massachusetts and Twenty-eighth New York and a section of Colthren’s battery with two Parrots under Lieut. Cushing went back, too. This drove them out of Newtown and forced his advancing column to halt, deploy, plant guns on high ground and begin a furious cannonade. This little rear guard held Jackson there from 4 o’clock until dark, enabling Hatch to rejoin there with his cavalry, having come be detour down from Middletown. Jackson admits in his report that this stand “retarded them until near dark.” They were held in check for four hours. Then as darkness stole on Gordon slowly fell back, assured from a prisoner captured that Jackson’s force was overwhelming and would soon surround him.

But, meantime, our column had swept on to Winchester. The Third Wisconsin was not engaged during the day, as it had been on the march during most of the previous night.

Before falling back Gordon set fire to all the disabled wagons, distributing to the Indiana men such clothing as was in them. He then assigned Lieut.-Col. Andrews to slowly retreat. The enemy followed on. As they came though Newtown, says Cooke, the people gave Jackson the

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22 Among the wagons cut off from escape, deserted by the teamsters and burned by our people to keep them from falling into the enemy’s hands, were several used by the companies of our regiment. Company G lost its company wagon and property. Company D lost the wagon containing its rations and cooking utensils, and went from Strasburg to the Potomac, two days and a night, without food.
welcome of a conqueror. “They illuminated their homes, embraced the soldiers; and bringing into the streets bread, meat, pickles, pies and everything they could raise, forced them upon their half-starved countrymen.” Captain Cogswell and Capt. Abbott of the Second, were the rear guard, Capt. Williams’ company were flankers. A company in the road moved in squares to resist cavalry, and a platoon on each side was ready to give a volley as any appeared. Jackson pushing on with his escort came uncomfortably near and received a volley that sent them scurrying back out of range, and their artillery was called up. Again, Jackson brought up his cavalry escort, says Dabney, and ordered them in crisp, sharp tones, “Charge them, charge them.” Another volley from our rear guard sent them back pell-mell. Jackson in anger, said, “Shameful! Did you see any one struck? They need not have run, at least until they were hurt.”23 Jackson then called up three regiments of the Stonewall brigade, and the Confederate historian speaks of it as a “night combat.”

Andrews came slowly in pressed closely, but doling out the ground stingily to his pursuers. His wounded he brought in on gun carriages. Gordon came in to Winchester with his Twenty-seventh Indiana and Twenty-eighth New York at 11 o’clock. The Second Massachusetts came in at 2 o’clock in the morning, and threw themselves down in bivouac for a brief rest.

Colonel Gordon at once sought out Gen. Banks. He found him in his room, having enjoyed the luxury of a bath. Meanwhile Gen. Jackson spent the hours of that chilly morning in making his dispositions for another attack at daybreak. He was at the front at earliest dawn without overcoat or cloak, taking note of every movement, and overseeing every arrangement. As the day drew on, his troops were in position. Ewell, who had been moved down on the Front Royal pike and slept in arms within a mile of Winchester, was close at hand. In the early morning Jackson gave in quiet undertone, the word, “Forward.” His soldiers, chill and stiff from their bivouac, arose and prepared to fight the battle of Winchester.

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23 Dabney; Life of Jackson, p. 103. [Ed. Note: presumably Robert Lewis Dabney, 5 Mar 1820 - 3 Jan 1898, though I could not find a text with this title.]
GENERAL JACKSON was up all that night, out on his front arranging for battle, while Gen. Banks took a bath and retired. General Williams, too, put on his long, red flannel night-gown and snuggled up in bed at the hotel. Colonels Gordon and Donnelly and the colonels of regiments made such dispositions for attack as they could, having arrived after dark, and placed their brigades thus: Gordon’s right was on the ridge running southwest from town, west of the turnpike, and about half a mile from the suburbs; the Second Massachusetts was on the right, well up the ridge, Cothren’s battery was on the bluff end of the crest of the ridge facing south. On his left the Third took position, its left resting on the Strasburg pike. A little in reserve were the Twenty-ninth Pennsylvania and Twenty-seventh Indiana, ready to be moved when needed. Near the turnpike two guns were posted, supported by Col. Hatch’s cavalry. On our left Col. Donnelly placed his brigade — the Twenty-eighth New York on the left, the Fifth Connecticut in center and the Forty-sixth Pennsylvania on the right, in crescent form to face south and southeast the roads from Front Royal and Millwood. Behind him on higher ground were the eight guns of Best’s battery. With this little force of about 3,600 effective men, Banks resolved to “test the strength and substance” of an enemy 17,500 strong, with eleven batteries of forty eight guns, three times out own number. This enemy was to be resisted on ground selected hap-hazard by brigade commanders as they came in during the night.

The ball opened at dawn, while a thick mist overhung the valley. Ewell rose from bivouac, extended his line on our left, brushed away our outpost and swept on. His Twenty-first North Carolina met a bloody reception. The little brigade was game to a man. From behind stone walls they gave the Carolinians a front and flank fire, which emptied the saddles of the field officers and stretched eighty-seven killed and wounded on the field. The rest broke and ran. But the Confederate line overlapped, and swinging around on the left of Donnelly enfiladed his line and pressing on northward. He saw that the plan was to envelop him, and he fell back nearer town slowly, in good order.

Let us now turn to the left, where Jackson is reaching out his long claws to grasp Gordon. In the earliest light, he saw the Federal skirmishers on the hill — Cogswell’s men of the Second. He ordered Winder to seize the hill. That brigadier threw out the Fifth Virginia, and put in order of battle and advance, the Second, Fourth, Twenty-seventh and Thirty-third Virginia. Two Parrott guns from Poague’s artillery and the batteries of Cutshaw and Carpenter were promptly posted to reply to Peabody. Campbell’s (Second)
brigade was sent to support the batteries, Taliaferro’s\textsuperscript{24} brigade was to stretch further to their left, behind the ridge and sweep down upon Gordon’s right and rear. Seeing this movement, Gordon extended the Second Massachusetts further to the right, sent part of Peabody’s guns there, and threw the Twenty-ninth Pennsylvania and Twenty-seventh Indiana on the right of the Second. Jackson then ordered up his Louisiana brigade, 4,000 strong, which passed to the rear of Winder and with two regiments of Taliaferro’s, they reached beyond Gordon’s power of extension. Thus deployed they had only to advance. Our line of fire could confront but a small part of their extended ranks. During this movement, Gordon threw out a company of the Second as sharpshooters. Sheltered behind a stone wall, they poured such a hot fire into Poague’s drew out of range and brought up other guns to throw solid shot against the walls.

Col. Ruger sent forward two companies under Major Crane, and they, sheltered behind a stone wall some seventy-five yards in front of the regiment, did good execution. The regiments through under heavy fire, suffered little here, the enemy’s bullets and shells flying overhead. Jackson says: “Regardless of the artillery fire and the musketry of the sharpshooters this (his line) strong body swept magnificently down the declivity and across the field, driving back the Federal troops and bearing down all opposition before it.” Gordon says: “They were received with a destructive fire of musketry poured in from all parts of my brigade that could reach them. Confident in their numbers and relying upon large sustaining bodies ¶ ¶ ¶ the enemy’s line moved on, but little shaken by our fire (this was on his flank). At the same time on our front a long line of infantry showed themselves rising the crest just beyond our position. My little brigade numbering in all 2,102, in another moment would have been overwhelmed.

While this long line was advancing, the Twenty-seventh Indiana and Twenty-ninth Pennsylvania being on the hill could see the entire length of the advancing brigades. After changing front and delivering several volleys they fell back, the Indiana regiment to a stone wall, and there held its ground until the retreat became general.

When the right regiments gave ground, the Second Massachusetts also began to fall back. Gordon called out: “Why are you falling back?” “I can’t help it,” replied Andrews. “Move in good order then, and retreat steadily.” Gordon ordered Ruger to move to the rear, and take post behind a stone wall. Calling in his two companies, Ruger about faced, and retired, as he says, “with as much regularity and in as good order as the broken and obstructed

\textsuperscript{24}Ed. NOTE: William Booth Taliaferro, Confederate general, 28 Dec 1822 - 27 Feb 1898.
The wall was only sufficient to cover the right wing, the left being exposed. Here a brisk fire was opened on the enemy’s lines, now in full view and close range. The part of the enemy’s line to which the fire of the Third was directed then halted, began firing, and a battery was brought up which sent shell into the little field behind the wall and against the wall and several rounds of canister. But the enemy, though stopped in this space of front, were advancing on every side. It was evident that our stand had checked them as long as check was possible. Col. Ruger gave the command to retreat. The left wing of the regiment passed into the street west of the main street. The right wing, not hearing the command, and engaged at the stone wall, did not move quite as promptly, but passed through an alley and continued on the same street through the town. The rear of the column, and some of the men who had remained to give one or two more bullets to the enemy, found in retreat the victors close on their heels. Here numbers of our men in the rush

25 Gordon says in his “Brook Farm to Cedar Mountain”: “The scene unfolded to Jackson was one in which two regiments were retiring somewhat in disorder down the hill towards the town; another, the Second Massachusetts, breaking to the rear in columns of companies, as quietly and orderly as on parade; while the fourth and last, the Third Wisconsin, with line of battle formed to the rear by an about face, was moving leisurely in retreat. Seeing this, Jackson, setting spurs to his horse, bounded upon the crest, and shouted to the officers nearest him, ‘Forward, after the enemy.’”

In his official report Gordon says: “Where all the regiments of any brigade behaved so well, it is not intended to reflect in the least upon the others in mentioning the steadiness and discipline of the Second Massachusetts, Lieut.-Col. Andrews, and Third Wisconsin, Col. Ruger. The enemy will long remember the destructive fire which three or four companies of the Third Wisconsin, and a like number of the Second Massachusetts, poured into them as these sturdy regiments moved slowly in lines of battle and in column from the field.”

“Colonel Gordon held the remaining regiments of his brigade (Second Massachusetts and Third Wisconsin) unbroken, and checked the advance of the rebels until it became evident that the attacking columns were overwhelming and would soon cut off the avenues of retreat. The regiments were then withdrawn, for the most part in columns, after reaching the edge of the town, through which they passed in good order.” (Williams’ report.)

“The Federal forces, upon falling back into the town, preserved their organization remarkably well. In passing through the streets they were thrown into confusion, and shortly after debouching into the plain and turnpike to Martinsburg and after being fired upon by our artillery, they presented the aspect of a mass of disordered fugitives.” (Jackson’s report.) The large number of camp followers that were fleeing at this time probably led Jackson to think the entire command was in disorder.

26 Captain Julian W. Hinkley says: “Just as we turned into the main streets of Winchester, which is a continuation of the Martinsburg turnpike, the whole street behind us toward the south was swarming with Confederate soldiers not fifty feet away, and in such a confused mass that it was impossible for them to fire effectively, and in fact they did not seem to try to fire, but from that point until we were clear of the streets, it was simply a foot race, in which we were the winners. About the time we were clear of the street shot and shell were flying over our heads. One of our batteries had taken position at what was still our end of the street, and as soon as we were clear of it, began firing rapidly down it.”
Company A, then on provost guard duty, had marched down from Strasburg the day before and encamped at the south end of Winchester. It was on duty at headquarters when the battle began. Captain Bertram at once led the company to the scene of action; and it stood in support of the guns on the turnpike until Donnelly’s brigade fell back. Pushing through the town it joined the Third regiment just as it was marching out of Winchester.

As we drew out of town and the victorious enemy poured in pell-mell, the uproar was one never to be forgotten. It was a roar of cannon, a bursting of shells, the sharp, irregular rattle of rifle-shots, the clatter of artillery and caissons, the shouts of soldiers. The citizens of Winchester were half crazed with delight. The men and women rushed into the streets, jeering and taunting the pursued and cheering and embracing the pursuers. Pistol shots were fired from windows. Reports state that some of our men were shot down in the streets by women from their doors and windows. But in such a roar, tumult and excitement, it is to be doubted whether accurate observations were taken at the time.

Gen. Jackson was beside himself with joy, so his biographers tell, and for the first and only time in his life he pulled off his old, greasy, faded forage-cap, and swinging it in air cheered in triumph. The streets were full of gray and blue. Many of the Union soldiers were captured or gave themselves up in the streets, fearing to run the gauntlet of such a host in their attempts to escape. Cavalrymen in fright ran over and knocked down foot soldiers; and woe betided the footman who did not get out of the way when the artillery galloped through the throng in their mad haste to take some position to check the yelling host of rebels.

The Third regiment, still in line, stood in this battery a few minutes gathering in the men who had become separated in the crush in the street; but the enemy could be seen on the hills west of the town hastening to throw a cordon around the north end to cut us off from the Martinsburg turnpike. On this road our trains and non-combatants were in full flight, and it was but prudence to move on. The regiment did no more running, and for some distance kept in good order; but, as the road was filled with vehicles, felling cavalry and the cloud of refugees and colored people, who were following, the regiment was obliged to march in the fields beside the road. The climbing of walls and fences soon broke up the formation, and for the rest of the distance, thirty-five miles, the retreating body was an indistinguishable mass.

The pursuit was feeble. Ashby’s men were not there. They had broken and scattered when they got a chance to plunder a few wagons between Middletown and Newtown; and now, when they could have reaped a rich harvest in pursuing our broken column, they were away. Jackson lamented this, and upbraided Ashby for the failure of his cavalry to be there.

“Tell the troops to press right on to the Potomac,” was Jackson’s

27Company A, then on provost guard duty, had marched down from Strasburg the day before and encamped at the south end of Winchester. It was on duty at headquarters when the battle began. Captain Bertram at once led the company to the scene of action; and it stood in support of the guns on the turnpike until Donnelly’s brigade fell back. Pushing through the town it joined the Third regiment just as it was marching out of Winchester.
command. But Gen. Stewart, who commanded most of the cavalry present, higgled about receiving orders direct from Jackson, as he was under Ewell, and lost time thereby that was valuable to us. The Confederate infantry dogged our steps for some five miles; and a battery shelled us just enough to keep our column of fugitives well closed up.

When we were out some five miles, Banks made an appeal to the soldiery to rally and make a stand. “My God, men, don’t you love your country?” he pleaded. “Yes,” said one, near the writer, “and I am trying to get to it as fast as I can.” Here a halt was made, quite a line was formed, the enemy checked, and the train was allowed to move further to the rear; and then the line, formed of volunteers without respect to organization, soon melted into the retreating mass.

At Martinsburg a brief halt was made. There was nothing to be had in the way of food; and the tired band soon moved on to the Potomac, thirteen miles further, arriving at from 10 till 11 o’clock. Those who were fortunate enough to have saved in the retreat their regimental wagons and to find them in the chaotic jumble on the banks had some supper. Those not so fortunate sand down to rest, too weary to heed the pangs of hunger. Gen. Banks took a cup of coffee offered him by a soldier and drank it with much relish. The Third Wisconsin pulled itself together in part and lay down until three o’clock when the men were roused up to take the ferry which had been plying all night. Two companies of the regiment and two of the Second Massachusetts were left on the Virginia side as rear guard. The other companies as soon as they had crossed were put in line of battle to cover the remnants still hovering on the Virginia side waiting their turn at the ferry.

Here, when we got the chance to rest, we lay torpid for a day or two, gathered in stragglers, and then took an inventory of our losses. The Third Wisconsin had suffered less than some other regiments. Our killed were, as reported:

Private Ansel A. Edwards, Company G, who was shot at Buckton while defending the bridge; private Cyrus B. Van Doozer Company G, mortally wounded at the same place; John Killalee, Company D, killed near Front Royal; private Carl Matte, Company E, mortally wounded at Winchester; private Henry L. Beach, Company H, shot through the head at Winchester while firing over the stone wall; private August Ruter, Company I, killed at Winchester, and private Andrew Johnson, Company K. The latter was shot in the streets while on retreat. It was reported at the time that he was shot from a house, but the story needs verification. Killalee, of Company D, was captured, and afterwards discharged for disability.

The missing, as appears by the regimental monthly return, were the following:


The official compilation from nominal lists, published in the Official Records of the Rebellion (vol. XII., pt. 1, p. 553),\(^{28}\) gives the losses in the Department of the Shenandoah, at Buckton, Front Royal, on retreat to Winchester and at Winchester, at a total of 2 officers and 60 min killed, 16 officers and 227 men wounded, 51 officers and 1,633 men captured or mission, a total of 2,019. Jackson in his report claims that he captured 2,300 prisoners, besides 750 sick and wounded in hospitals. He gives his own loss at 68 killed, 329 wounded and 3 missing; total 400. Our loss in wagons was reported at 55, out of a train of 500. The enemy claim larger captures. Most of our abandoned wagons were burned.

The Third got some praise for its behavior in this campaign. A correspondent of the New York *Evening Post*, who witnessed the battle of Winchester said: “The Third Wisconsin, as cool as if on parade, faced about and marched toward the town,” and speaking of the Second Massachusetts, in terms of praise, he says: “So also the Third Wisconsin moved in excellent order through the town, though exposed to a galling fire.” This was from one who was a stranger to all the members of the regiment. A regular army officer

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\(^{28}\)ED. NOTE: the full title of this resource is *Official records of the Union and Confederate armies*. Published under the direction of the Secretary of War by Robert N. Scott — Washington D.C., Government Printing Office, 1880-1901.
writing to Capt. N. B. Van Slyke, of Madison, said soon after the retreat: “The regular army officers unite in saying that the Third Wisconsin, under Col. Ruger, did splendidly throughout the retreat, and while other troops (in a measure abandoned to themselves), were raising the devil to get across (the river at Williamsport) anyhow the Third formed as on parade, crossed in detachments under proper officers, and were then reformed for duty on the other side. Other regiments behaved well, but the Third took the palm.” The regiment would hardly claim the palm, but we can safely affirm that at all stages of the dismal retreat it was ready for duty.

Jackson’s exploit made a great excitement. The North feared invasion. He came down to the shores of the Potomac, menacing Maryland, and accomplished the greater object of preventing McDowell from going to McClellan. A plan was devised to bag Jackson. Shields was to move with 20,000 men on Front Royal. Fremont was to cross the Alleghenies to Harrisonburg and join Shields. The wily Jackson was too quick for them; and met them before they had joined, giving each a battle in which he had the advantage. He then went to the reinforcement of Lee against McClellan.

Although Jackson left the lower valley on the 30th of May, and by June 1st had moved his entire command with his prisoners beyond Strasburg, yet Banks did not recross and push on in pursuit until June 10th, after the battles of Cross Keys and Port Republic had been fought. To cope with a man like Jackson, a general must know the value of time, must move men rapidly, start them promptly and push them to their utmost. At this stage in the war, our generals had not all learned this secret of the success of all great captains.

On the 10th of June, Banks’ command was again put in motion. The Third, with its brigade, crossed the Potomac at Falling Waters. Thence on the 11th to Newtown, and on the 12th to near Front Royal, where the duty was to guard the passages of the Shenandoah.
CHAPTER XIII.
THE CAMPAIGN UNDER POPE.

THURSDAY, June 26th, 1862, Gen. John Pope assumed command of a force designated the Army of Virginia. Of this Fremont’s force was the First corps, Banks’ the Second and McDowell’s the Third, all told on paper about 43,000 men; of efficient men about 25,000. The cavalry, about 5,000 was poorly mounted and armed. At this time Banks and Fremont were in the valley between Winchester and Front Royal. One division of McDowell’s command was near Fredericksburg and one at Catlett’s Station. No enemy, save small bodies of cavalry, was within a week’s march of any of these scattered commands.

Pope set vigorously to reorganizing his command, and to co-operate with McClellan he planned a movement on Gordonsville, northwest of Richmond, there to destroy a railroad from Lynchburg to Richmond. The situation of McClellan soon became critical; and Pope changed his plan, intending to make a descent on Gordonsville and Charlottesville, as opportunity might invite. He at once began the concentration of his troops. Sigel, who had relieved Fremont in command of the First corps, was ordered to move from Middletown, near Winchester, up the valley to Front Royal, there to cross the Shenandoah, proceed along the west side of the Blue Ridge, thence through Luray Gap to Sperryville, which lies east of the Blue Ridge and about twenty miles northwest of Culpepper. McDowell was to push out Rickett’s division from Manassas Junction to Waterloo bridge, the point where the Warrenton turnpike to Sperryville crosses the upper Rappahannock. Banks was to cross the Shenandoah at Front Royal — thus forming a line facing south extending across the valley between the Blue Ridge and Bull Run mountains.

Accordingly, Williams’ division broke camp near Front Royal, July 9th, crossed “the forks” at that place, turned to the left, marched through Manassas Gap to Markham, arriving there the 7th. The road through the gap was along a ravine overhung on either side for some distance by high, bare rocks. The livid rays of the sun descended upon the sweltering column, and numerous cases of sunstroke occurred. At Markham the command remained some ten days. Pope was feeling the enemy as well as he could with Hatch’s cavalry, and baiting Hatch with promised promotion to be active. Two

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29ED. NOTE: John Charles Frémont, Union General, 21 Jan 1813 - 13 Jul 1890.

expeditions failed; and Pope put Buford at the head.

While Buford was moving on Gordonsville, Gen. Ewell suddenly appeared at that place. Pope’s movement into the region of the upper Rappahannock had arrested Lee’s attention. He prepared to checkmate it. July 13th, he dispatched Stonewall Jackson, with his own and Ewell’s divisions to Gordonsville. On the 16th, his head of column, under Ewell, was there. Jackson was to watch Pope and attack as chance offered. Aid was promised him if he got in a tight place.

Banks’ column moved July 17th, to Washington, a little hamlet, west of Warrenton, about midway between Sperryville and Gaines’ Cross Roads, and northward of the former town. Here we went into camp in a little mountain-rimmed basin, on a hillside, from which we could see far to the south toward Richmond. The white tents of Shurz’s division dotted a hillside a few miles to the southwest; and his men had taken all the lately-harvested wheat for miles about for bedding. Here we waited and drilled. The intense heat of summer made much sickness in all the regiments. The mournful music of the funeral dirge was heard every evening in the neighboring camps. Cause: too much green fruit and too many dead animals polluting the air. Here Banks assembled and reviewed his corps. He had a splendid voice for command, at least. Pope took the field about this time and visited his army. His famous order was here promulgated, which gave offense to eastern generals. It contained many phrases, which in the light of subsequent disasters, became the subject of ridicule. For some days we awaited developments. Lee, finding McClellan inactive on the James, sent A. P. Hill’s division to join Jackson in his movements against Pope. Meantime, one brigade of Williams’ division under Crawford was stationed at Culpepper.

Learning that only a part of Pope’s army was at Culpepper Court House, Stonewall Jackson with his wonted promptness resolved to swoop down upon it before reinforcements could arrive. Jackson was wily, vigilant, and he possessed the advantage of knowing every foot of ground and the exact position of every part of our force. Accordingly, August 7th, he moved from Gordonsville northward toward Culpepper.

Pope was then at Sperryville inspecting Sigel’s corps. He there learned

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31ED. NOTE: John Buford, 4 Mar 1826 - 16 Dec 1863 [typhoid], 16/38 in West Point class of 1848.

32ED. NOTE: Carl Schurz, 2 Mar 1829 - 14 May 1906, Prussian born journalist, statesman, and soldier.

33ED. NOTE: Ambrose Powell Hill, 9 Nov 1825 - 2 Apr 1865, 15th in West Point class of 1847, shot and killed by VI Corps soldiers.

34Samuel Wylie Crawford, 8 Nov 1829 - 3 Nov 1892, achieved rank of MajGen.
of Jackson’s movement, and prepared to meet it. Banks and Rickett’s division were at once started for Culpepper. Pope, now at Culpepper, was unable to determine whether Jackson was heading for that place or Madison Court House farther west. Early on the morning of the 8th, he sent Crawford’s brigade in the direction of Cedar, or Slaughter’s mountain, some eight miles southwest of Culpepper. Sigel was ordered to move at once to Sperryville, but strangely enough, instead of starting promptly, he sent back twenty-two miles to inquire by what road he should come. There was but one direct road, a broad turnpike. This, of course, delayed his start many hours. Banks’ corps, when ordered, had started at the word, and had been halted at Hazel Run.
CHAPTER XIV
THE BATTLE OF CEDAR MOUNTAIN.

GORDON’S\(^{35}\) brigade was ordered to march at 3 A.M., but Augur\(^{36}\) had the lead and did not start until eight. The sun was then raging, the air breathless, and the marching troops soon enveloped in a cloud of dust. The wagon trains in front delayed us, so that we made but six miles that day. On the 8th [8 Aug 1862] at 2 P.M., we were ordered to Culpepper. Geary’s\(^{37}\) brigade was in front, and he got on so slowly that we started at 5 P.M. Then it was a halt every few minutes — the most wearisome of marching. At 11 o’clock we reached Culpepper — eight miles in six hours! Here we bivouacked. The movement of Jackson\(^{38}\) was by the morning of the 9th understood. Pope\(^{39}\) sent Banks\(^{40}\) to join Crawford\(^{41}\) at Cedar Run. He says that he directed Banks to take up a strong position at or near Crawford’s brigade, to check the advance of the enemy, to determine his force, and the character of his movement as far as practicable. His orders seem to have been misunderstood. They were verbal and Bank’s adjutant took them down in these words:

“Culpepper, August 9th, 9:30 A. M. From Col. Lewis Marshall Gen. Banks will move to the front immediately, assume command of all the forces in the front, deploy his skirmishers, if the enemy approaches, and attack him immediately as soon as he approaches, and be reinforced from here.”

General Banks called on Pope as he passed through Culpepper and asked whether there were further orders. Pope referred him to Gen. Roberts\(^{42}\), the chief of cavalry, who was to go with Banks to the front and point out the line to be occupied. On the way Roberts repeatedly said to Banks, “There must be no backing out this day.” These words stung Banks, as he says, and in connection with his orders, left no doubt in his mind, as he


\(^{36}\) Ed. Note: Christopher Columbus Augur, USA, 10 Jul 1821 - 16 Jan 1898.

\(^{37}\) Ed. Note: John White Geary, USA, 30 Dec 1819 - 8 Feb 1873.

\(^{38}\) Ed. Note: Thomas Jonathan “Stonewall” Jackson, CSA, 21 Jan 1824 - 10 May 1863.

\(^{39}\) Ed. Note: John Pope, USA, 16 Mar 1822 - 23 Sep 1892.

\(^{40}\) Ed. Note: Nathaniel Prentiss Banks, USA, 30 Jan 1816 - 1 Sep 1894.

\(^{41}\) Ed. Note: Samuel Wylie Crawford, USA, 8 Nov 1829 - 3 Nov 1892.

\(^{42}\) Ed. Note: Benjamin Stone Roberts, USA, 18 Nov 1810 - 29 Jan 1875.
testifies, that he was to invite and bring on the battle. This understanding was all the more natural, since Pope had in his order taking command of his army announced his purpose of taking the offensive in terms that so plainly reflected on the eastern generals as to excite no little criticism at the time. He had on the same day that he assumed command in the field, July 14, written to Banks “to dismiss any idea that there is any purpose whatever to retreat from the position you are instructed to take, or that there is any design whatever to await any attack from the enemy.” Banks read his orders in the light of these previous declarations, as is claimed by himself and his friends.

The needless and unaccountable delay of Sigel rendered it impracticable for his corps to be pushed to the front, as Pope had intended on the afternoon of the next day. The head of his column began to arrive in Culpepper at about half-past four, on the 9th, just as the battle was opening eight miles to the southward. They had come, in disregard of orders, unprovided with subsistence and had to borrow rations for supper, before they could move to the front.

Whatever doubts Pope might have had as to the objective point of Jackson were soon dispelled. Gen. Bayard, in charge of four regiments of cavalry, reported to Pope that he was falling back and the enemy following him. Jackson’s plan, as he wrote Lee, was to be in Culpepper by noon. But Hill had not come up; and his men, too, had suffered dreadfully with the heat. Crawford’s brigade then occupied a position in the low ground of Cedar Run, with Bayard’s cavalry in his front and Roemer’s battery of six 3-inch rifled guns and two sections of Knapp’s 10-pounder Parrots posted in the rear.

Banks’ corps moved out to join Crawford a little before 10 o’clock in the morning of the 9th. The heat was intense, the pike “shadeless and

43 ED. NOTE: Franz Sigel, USA, born in Baden, 18 Nov 1824, died 21 Aug 1902 in NYC.

44 ED. NOTE: George Dashiell Bayard, USA, 18 Dec 1835 - 14 Dec 1862.


46 ED. NOTE: Ambrose Powell Hill, CSA, 9 Nov 1825 - 2 Apr 1865.

47 ED. NOTE: Captain Jacob Roemer, L Company, 2nd New York Artillery.

48 ED. NOTE: Captain Joseph M. Knap, Pennsylvania Artillery.

49 ED. NOTE: Iron artillery piece designed by Robert Parker Parrott, distinguished by its single reinforcing band on the breech. One of the most widely used guns in the Civil War, it came in 10-, 20-, and 30-pounder versions.
waterless,” pace rapid, with few halts. We passed Rickett’s division of McDowell’s corps, who were at ease in their tents, at the intersection of the Madison and Orange roads. We pushed on five miles further under a broiling sun, at a speed that caused many to fall. One Second Massachusetts man fell dead. Here, Cedar Mountain — or as Virginians call it, Slaughter’s mountain — rose high before us, a conical hill, as seen from its north face, with stunted timber and underbrush on its sides. Crawford’s brigade was in line of battle with his skirmishers out. General Roberts, Pope’s chief of cavalry, was there. As we came up Gordon took a look, and seeing a little elevation off to the right some three-fourths of a mile from the road he said to Roberts: “That hill yonder should be held by our right; shall I take it?” “Yes,” said Roberts, “do so.” Gordon moved his brigade there. Banks soon came up and said to Roberts, “Gen. Pope said you would indicate the line I am to occupy.” Roberts replied, “I have been over this ground thoroughly and I believe this line,” meaning the one on which Crawford was in position, “is the best that can be taken.” Banks concurred with him and placed his command there.

The little force was soon up and in line. From right to left it was in the following order: Gordon’s brigade on the right, consisting of the Second Massachusetts, Collis’s company of Zouaves de Afrique, Twenty-Seventh Indiana, and the Third Wisconsin. Crawford’s brigade of our division, made up of the Fifth Connecticut, Tenth Maine, Twenty-eighth New York, Forty-sixth Pennsylvania, was on our left, and both brigades on the right of the Culpepper road. On the left was Augur’s division, with Geary’s brigade, its right resting on the road, made up of the Fifth, Seventh, Twenty-ninth and Sixty-sixth Ohio. The batteries held positions on higher ground in rear of the two brigades. Prince’s brigade, consisting of the Eighth and Twelfth United States regulars, One Hundred and Second New York, One Hundred and Ninth and One Hundred and Eleventh Pennsylvania, Third Maryland and Robinson’s Maine

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50 ED. NOTE: James Brewerton Ricketts, USA, 21 Jun 1817 - 22 Sep 1887.

51 ED. NOTE: Irvin McDowell, USA, 15 Oct 1818 - 4 May 1885. 23 of 45 in West Point class of 1838.

52 ED. NOTE: Cedar Mountain is 829 feet above sea level at its summit.

53 ED. NOTE: 114th Pennsylvania Infantry Regiment.

54 ED. NOTE: Henry Prince, USA, 19 Jun 1811 - 19 Aug 1892 (suicide) graduated 30th in his class at West Point in 1835, was captured at Cedar Mountain and held until December 1863. Commanded Second Brigade, Second Division at Cedar Mountain.

55 ED. NOTE: Captain O’Neil W. Robinson, Fourth Maine Artillery.
battery was next in line; and Green’s\textsuperscript{56} small brigade of the Seventyeighth New York, and a battalion of the First District\textsuperscript{57} volunteers was somewhat refused in support of McGilvery’s\textsuperscript{58} Sixth Maine battery on the left. Thus (Augur’s) division extended toward the little frowning mountain. Our position was a good one from which to resist attack, but too far off to be a favorable one from which to advance. Near the center of our line was Knapp’s battery, which had an unobstructed fire over the open fields, but all our guns were commanded by the mountain. The force mentioned in the field was, as officially stated, 6,289 infantry and artillery, 30 guns, and from 1,000 to 1,200 cavalry — an effective force of less than 7,500 men.

When Gordon had placed his brigade in position, he sent out skirmishers from the Twenty-seventh Indiana into the woods on his right. In his front, over Cedar Run, into the timber beyond, he sent Col. Ruger\textsuperscript{59} with six companies of the Third Wisconsin, while the Second Massachusetts, the remaining three companies of the Third Wisconsin (A, B and E), and the Twenty-seventh Indiana rested in ranks, ready to move at the instant of command, the Indiana regiment on the right; the Second Massachusetts next; and the Third Wisconsin companies at this time on the left.

Let us now turn to the other side and note the disposition made there. Jackson pushing on toward Culpepper had Ewell\textsuperscript{60} in advance. On the morning of the 9th his forces were nearly up or within supporting distance, and on reaching Cedar Mountain and finding infantry in his front he prepared for battle.

The turnpike from Culpepper, southwest, crosses Cedar Run a little creek about eight miles from Culpepper, then passes through open but undulating ground. About a mile on the left of the road were then cornfields. About a mile and a half southwest from the point where the creek crosses the road, the northeast end of Cedar, or Slaughter’s mountain, rises some hundreds of feet above and dominated the surrounding country. The mountain is nearly a mile southeast of the turnpike. But a dirt road runs around its base, and one leads from the turnpike, southeast, to the north end of the mountain; and on the northwest side of the turnpike, the ground is

\textsuperscript{56} ED. NOTE: BGen George S. Greene, Third Brigade, Second Division.

\textsuperscript{57} ED. NOTE: District of Columbia.

\textsuperscript{58} ED. NOTE: Captain Freeman McGilvery, Sixth Maine Artillery.

\textsuperscript{59} ED. NOTE: Thomas H. Ruger, Third Wisconsin Infantry, West Point Graduate, and a LtCol at the time of the Battle of Cedar Mountain.

\textsuperscript{60} ED. NOTE: Richard Stoddert Ewell, CSA, 8 Feb 1817 - 25 Jan 1872.
wooded and somewhat elevated, as compares with the position taken by Banks. At a point northwest from the north face of the mountain, a country road turns southwesterly from the turnpike. Northeast of this dirt road was a wheatfield of some thirty or more acres, lying on the northwest side of the turnpike, surrounded by woods on its northeastern and southwestern sides, and this field is prolonged, growing narrower into a little field, in which were many briers and underbrush.

As Jackson’s forces came up they found the Union line formed as above indicated. Ewell’s division was turned to the right, and along the slope of the mountain, and there secured a position well up the hillside, from which his artillery could command the Union ground. Ewell’s brigade, on the same line, moved out on the Culpepper road toward us, on the Confederate’s right, and formed his line on the southeast side of the road. Our batteries opened upon him with such vim that he withdrew his troops behind a little rise of ground. His own artillery at once got into position and returned our fire with spirit.

At this moment Gen. Winder came up with Jackson’ [sic] old division, arriving at the point where the dirt road leads northwestward from the pike through the woods. He disposed Campbell’s brigade to the left, under cover of the wood and near to and on the southwest side of the wheatfield. A little to the left in reserve and in mass, was the “Stonewall” brigade commanded by Ronald. Taliaferro’s brigade was placed parallel to the road in rear of the batteries of Poague and Carpenter. Winder was an accomplished officer, much esteemed by Jackson. While directing the movement of his batteries he was struck by a piece of shell from one of the Union guns, and borne dying to the rear.

While these dispositions were taking place, Ewell, with Trimble and Hayes’ brigades, reached the northwestern termination of the mountain, and upon an elevated spot, some 200 feet above the valley, planted Latimer’s battery, which poured a rapid fire on our gunners below. Reply to these high-

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61 Ed. Note: Charles Sidney Winder, CSA, West Point Class of 1850, 18 Oct 1829 - 9 Aug 1862; horribly mangled by an exploding shell at Cedar Mountain, he died a few hours after the incident.

62 Ed. Note: Colonel Charles A. Ronald.


64 Ed. Note: Captain William T. Poague, Rockbridge Artillery, Virginia.

65 Ed. Note: Captain Joseph Carpenter, Alleghany Artillery, Virginia.


67 Ed. Note: Captain J. W. Latimer, Courtney Artillery, Virginia.
posted guns was difficult; though Major Andrews,\textsuperscript{68} chief of Jackson’s artillery, was here severely wounded. Ewell’s two brigades now stood out on the northwest face of the mountain, spectators of what was below.

The lines as now developed placed Campbell’s brigade in front of Crawford’s and well covered by the woods. Crawford was also concealed by the woods northeasterly of the wheatfield, and by the undulation of the ground. The “Stonewall” brigade was a little in rear of Campbell’s left, massed in reserve, but close at hand. Hill’s division of six brigades was still farther to the rear, but in easy supporting distance and moving up.

The batteries grew more furious in dispute at about 3 o’clock. Our guns were admirably served; the enemy’s had the best ground. Banks now advanced his whole line, except Gordon’s brigade, about 400 yards. As he had seen but little infantry, he thought there was no large force in his front. At about 5 P.M. he ordered a regiment out on each flank. Crawford, in preparing for this movement, discovered such force that he asked to send in his brigade, Banks ordered it. Meanwhile, Col. Ruger with his six companies had swept the woods on the northwest side of the wheatfield, but did not discover the enemy, not having penetrated beyond the wheatfield. Crawford, in sallying forward with his men, ordered Ruger to join him. Col. Ruger replied that he momentarily expected orders from his own brigade commander, and suggested that before detaching him from his brigade, it should be directed by superior authority. Crawford’s appeal to Banks obtained the required direction. Gen. Williams\textsuperscript{69} gave the order to Gordon, and Ruger at the same moment advanced his companies, which rallied from their skirmish deployment, and formed on Crawford’s right, then advancing.

At this stage in the movements, we will look once more at the general situation. Prince and Geary of Augur’s division were at our left confronted by Early\textsuperscript{70} and Thomas’s brigade of A. P. Hill’s division. On the mountain were two brigades of Ewell’s division with their batteries — four brigades against two on our left. Opposite our right, confronting Crawford and Gordon’s brigades, was Winder’s division of three brigades, one of them, Campbell’s, being in line in the woods on the southwest side of the wheatfield, and to his left, in rear and in mass, was the Stonewall brigade, then commanded by Ronald. Then Taliaferro’s brigade closing the gap between Campbell’s right and Early’s left, and five of the six brigades of Hill’s division were successively formed on the enemy’s left up on our right or where most needed. This was

\textsuperscript{68} Ed. Note: Major R. Snowden Andrews.

\textsuperscript{69} Ed. Note: Alpheus S. Williams.

\textsuperscript{70} Ed. Note: Jubal Anderson Early, CSA, 3 Nov 1816 - 2 Mar 1894.
about half past five o’clock. Geary on the left of the road and Prince on his left moved forward simultaneously with the brigade of Crawford to the attack.

Let us now look to Crawford’s brigade (the Forth-sixth Pennsylvania, Twenty-eighth New York and Fifth Connecticut). It swept through the woods up hill to the little wheatfield, dashed with loud yells across it, struck a high, rail fence on the edge of the timber, bounded over it and disappeared in the forest on the southwestern side of the field. It struck Campbell’s brigade so suddenly and from so unexpected a quarter that this brigade, one of the stoutest of Jackson’s division, gave way. Jackson himself says: “It fell upon his left, and by force of superior numbers, bearing down all opposition, turned it, and poured a destructive fire in its rear. Campbell’s brigade soon fell back in disorder. The enemy (Crawford’s brigade) pushed forward, and the left flank of Taliaferro’s brigade being by these movements exposed to a flank fire, fell back, as did also the left of Early’s line. During this advance the guns of Jackson’s division becoming exposed they were withdrawn.” Cooke, in his life of Jackson, says: “So sudden and determined was this assault, that the troops were almost surrounded before they knew it, and nothing remained but for them to fall back to a new position. The enemy gave them no time to reflect. They rushed forward with deafening yells, pouring a terrific fire into the wavering line, and the day seemed lost.” But the six companies of the Third moved forward to the right of Crawford with less rapidity — because of the woods, briers and rough ground over which they forced their way — to a more severe exposure. As they advanced, either by their direction being oblique or that of the other bearing to the left, a considerable interval was made between the Forty-sixth Pennsylvania and Ruger’s left; and as he approached the enemy in the woods and underbrush, the two regiments were not in sight of each other; the view being obstructed in part by a cluster of straw stacks in the northwestern part of the wheatfield. The Forty-sixth Pennsylvania and other regiments to the left got into action a minute or two earlier by reason of their advancing over less difficult ground.

Near the edge of the woods there was a rail fence; and in climbing over it and in advancing into the little stubble field in the northwestward of the wheatfield the Third regiment became fully exposed to the enemy. There was the Stonewall brigade with four strong regiments in line advancing from the opposite direction. They had been thrown forward the instant Crawford had struck and shattered Campbell’s brigade. “The enemy’s line extended beyond the right or ours considerably, overlapping our regiment sufficiently to give by an oblique of that part of their line a most destructive cross fire on

\[71\text{ED. NOTE: Commanded by Colonel Joseph F. Knipe, Colonel Dudley Donnely, and Colonel George B Chapman, respectively; the Tenth Maine under Colonel George L. Beal was also in this brigade.} \]
the right wing of the regiment.” {Ruger’s Report}

The companies had advanced but a little way into this field — which is in fact only about 125 yards across — when they received a volley from the Second Virginia in their front, which an officer of that regiment, who witnessed its effect, says, “was one of the most effective that he ever saw delivered in a battle.” The Fourth Virginia stood off on higher ground to the left of the Second, with its left thrown forward so as to give an oblique fire of its whole line upon the little front of Ruger. The Fifth Virginia on the right of the Second opened fire, with its left wing on Ruger, and then wheeled to the right and helped to close around Crawford’s broken brigade. Under such a concentrated fire it was annihilation to remain. Men were falling by scores each instant. Colonel Ruger on his horse, with balls flying about him, coolly ordered the men to fall back behind the fence. Lieutenant-Colonel Crane, in his place, on the right, called on the men to be steady while the storm of bullets rained through the cloud of smoke in front. The companies at once fell back in some disorder. The loss in this two minutes engagement had been fearful. The numbers, taken into action of these six companies and losses of each were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Companies</th>
<th>H</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>K</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Taken In</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Killed, wounded or missing</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Lieutenant Colonel Crane riding a cream colored horse, was a conspicuous target. He fell from his horse, shot dead, while slowly retiring over the fence at the command to withdraw. Also mounted and in the field, Maj. J. W. Scott received a cruel wound in the shoulder, which ever after rendered useless his left arm. Captain William Hawley (afterwards Colonel)
was severely wounded in the ankle. Captain Moses O’Brien,\textsuperscript{75} of Company I, was wounded early in the action, in the leg, but continued resolutely in command, and helped to rally his men and took them a second time into action. The list of casualties in full is subjoined.

Crawford’s brigade, when it advanced into the wheatfield, to the left of the Third, and with more of an interval between them than had been intended, encountered at first a less fierce opposition. It therefore rushed across the wheatfield, crushing in the Second or Campbell’s brigade, as has been narrated. But its success was only apparent and momentary. Its men were soon in hand to hand fight, (so Crawford says, and the Confederates agree in the statement). Jackson with his prompt and decisive energy, brought up his heavy reserves. Branch’s\textsuperscript{76} brigade, which stood not far in rear of the line which the onset of Crawford’s men had shattered, took Campbell’s place. At the same time, the Fifth Virginia, the left regiment of the Stonewall brigade, came into the wheatfield in rear of the ground then occupied by the Forty-sixth Pennsylvania, and by a half wheel to the right, captured a large number of Crawford’s brigade. Thus beset the little brigade of three regiments, which force spent, broken and disordered by its tumultuous charge, and suddenly confronted by fresh and solid lines of the enemy in front and flank fell back, and did not again rally in that action. All the field officers, who led this command in, were either killed, wounded or captured; and many of the company officers had been shot down at the head of their companies.\textsuperscript{77}

Whatever may be said of the wisdom of ordering such a charge, it is undeniable that more gallant and heroic conduct on the part of the troops was never displayed on any battlefield of that gigantic war.

While the brigade of Crawford was inflicting and in turn receiving this harsh usage, Gordon’s brigade was awaiting with impatient anxiety the order to go in. The Tenth Maine, one of the regiments of Crawford’s brigade, for some unexplained reason had not been ordered into the first charge, and was also waiting breathlessly the command to engage in the hot work before it. It had not long to wait. One of Gen. Banks’ staff, Major Pelouze,\textsuperscript{78} by the general’s direction, conducted them into the fight. The regiment gallantly led

\textsuperscript{75} \textit{Ed. Note:} Moses O’Brien, of Monroe, was 1stLt in C Company, then Captain in I Company. He died 12 Aug 1863 of wounds received at Cedar Mountain.

\textsuperscript{76} \textit{Ed. Note:} Lawrence O’Bryan Branch, CSA, 28 Nov 1828 - 17 Sep 1862, killed by a sharpshooter at Antietam.

\textsuperscript{77} \textit{Ed. Note:} Out of 88 officers in the engagement, 8 were killed, 27 wounded and 21 captured or missing. Of the 1,674 enlisted men who took part in the charge 88 were killed, 370 wounded and 353 missing. (Crawford’s Report, Official Records of the Rebellion, vol. XI, part 2, p. 153.)

\textsuperscript{78} \textit{Ed. Note:} Possibly Louis Henry Pelouze, 1841-1878.
by Col. Beale, advanced somewhat to the left of the path of Gordon’s brigade, and took position far into or beyond the middle of the open wheatfield. At this time Crawford’s brigade was partly in retreat, and partly, as Col. Beale, of the Tenth Maine, says, in a hand-to-hand fight in the woods. The Tenth Maine regiment stood here some ten or fifteen minutes bravely fighting with the concentrated fire of two brigades upon it, and after losing 173 officers and men out of 461 taken into action, it fell back.

While the Tenth Maine was receiving its hard punishment, Gordon’s brigade was moving in. General Williams had previously given Gordon directions to observe him, and when he (Williams) gave a signal by waving his handkerchief, Gordon was to throw his whole command — the Second Massachusetts, Twenty-seventh Indiana and the three remaining companies, A, B, and E, of the Third Wisconsin — forward. Gordon, expecting the command, had his brigade in order to start at a second’s notice, and had his field glass on Williams, to watch for the signal. None came for a few moments, which to us who were waiting seemed hours. A messenger soon dashed up to Gordon with an order from Gen. Banks, to send the Second Massachusetts down to him on the pike. The regiment was in execution of this movement and had passed to the left of the Third Wisconsin companies when Capt. Pitman, aide to Gen. Williams, galloped up with the order from Williams to move forward the whole command. This order came a little before 6 o’clock. Gordon in his spirited narrative, “From Brook Farm to Cedar Mountain,” thus tells the story:

“The Second sprang forward; so did the remaining companies of the Third Wisconsin; so did the Twenty-seventh Indiana. The rattle and roar of musketry had now given place to a dreadful and ominous silence. A thick smoke curling through the tree-tops as it rose in clouds from corn and wheatfields marked the place to which we were ordered — the place where the narrow valley was strewn with dead. “Double-quick,” I gave the order and my brigade responded. Down the slope from Brown’s house (the little cottage) at a run, through the marshy land at its base, over Cedar Creek to the steep hill and up its sides into the woods, I pressed my troops with speed unabated. At the edge of the woods I rallied and gathered up the companies of the Third Wisconsin, part of the broken fragments of Crawford’s brigade, a second time to be baptised [sic] in the fiery flood of Cedar Mountain. So we went until we had penetrated the woods, and stood in line of battle on the very edge of the wheatfield. We had come at top-most speed to support Crawford; but his whole line had melted away. We had come to sustain, but we remained alone to bear the brunt of the fight ourselves unsupported. The whole distance we had passed over, in an incredibly short space of time, was about 1,500 yards, of which 400 was through the woods.”

[Ed. Note: This is actually George Lafayette Beal, 1825-1896]
The line of battle was quickly formed. On the right the Twenty-seventh Indiana, next the three companies, A, B, and E of the Third Wisconsin, on the left the Second Massachusetts. The rallied companies of the Third also came in and formed on the left of the Indiana regiment. As we stood there we could see the enemy across the wheatfield. Their long lines were coming out of the underbrush and into the wheatfield, and they opened upon us a heavy fire, to which the Twenty-seventh Indiana and Third Wisconsin immediately responded. The Second Massachusetts had borne off to the left a little and took position where at first it could see nothing of the enemy. Gordon came up and shouted to Andrews, “Why don’t you order your men to fire?” “Don’t see anything to fire at,” coolly replied Andrews. Gordon then ordered him to move by the right flank and join on with the Third. He did so promptly, and soon he was giving and receiving fierce fire.

Let us now pass to the other side of the wheatfield into the woods, there to note the movements of the enemy to counteract the assault of Crawford and the later advance of Gordon. Jackson, to whom his Virginia biographers give the credit of turning a rout into a victory by her personal exertions and prowess, set about repairing the breach made by the assault of Crawford on his line. As he had plenty of material close at hand, it was but a simple matter. He merely brought to the front the reserve brigades. Branch’s[80] brigade came in to the relief of Campbell. The Stonewall brigade was put forward on the left, and two fresh brigades of Hill’s division, commanded by Archer[81] and Pender,[82] were extended to Jackson’s left, and, closing round, completely enveloping Gordon’s right. First Branch’s and Winder’s brigades engaged, and, as Jackson says, “the fight was maintained with obstinacy, when Archer’s and Pender’s brigades came up.”

The enemy could now see his advantage, especially such an enemy as Jackson. He ordered a charge. Pender and Archer swept in upon our front and right. Branch and Reynold’s brigade and the four brigades, with the rallied fugitives from Campbell’s and Taliaferro’s brigades swarmed in front and on the flank of Gordon’s little command of three regiments, one of which (ours) had been so effectually cut to pieces in the first assault.

Gordon tells the story so well that he may here be quoted:

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80 ED. NOTE: Lawrence O’Bryan Branch, 28 Nov 1828 - 17 Sep 1862, killed by a Union sharpshooter at Antietam.

81 ED. NOTE: James Jay Archer, Lawyer, CSA, 19 Dec 1817 - 24 Oct 1864. Taken prisoner at Gettysburg, held for about one year before release. First CSA general officer to be taken after Lee took over the CSA.

“In the woods upon which Jackson now directed his attack, nothing but my three small regiments was left to confront not less than five entire brigades of the enemy, of which four were in line when we came upon the field, and one reaching far around to envelop our right. Of the ten brigades — out of the twelve of his army — which Jackson threw into the fight at Cedar Mountain, one-half of them awaited our attack on the right of the road across that deadly wheatfield. My force was less than 1,500 men; the enemy’s could not have fallen short of 8,000, out of his whole command of from 20,000 to 25,000 men. It will be seen that the woods opposite must have been literally packed with rebels, and that they must have extended far beyond our right.

“This was the situation when we alone of all Banks’ corps, when the light was growing dim on that fatal August night, opened fire on the long lines of Archer’s brigade, as his troops, disdaining cover, stood boldly out amid the wheat stacks in front of the timber. As may be imagined, our position was an exposed one. It is almost in vain to attempt to convey an impression of the fierceness of that fire; there was no intermission, the cracking of musketry was incessant. To Col. Colgrove, commanding the Twenty-seventh Indiana, to the right of the Second Massachusetts, the enemy seemed to be all around him, in his front, on his right in a dense growth of underbrush, and on his left extending nearly across the wheatfield. From front to flank, direct and cross, came this terrible fire upon the Twenty-seventh Indiana.” From: Brook Farm to Cedar Mountain.

The three companies of the Third regiment, one of which the writer commanded, had gone into this action, as before stated, between the Twenty-seventh Indiana and the Second Massachusetts. General Gordon’s narrative is in error in assigning it to the right. General Ruger’s report indicates that in the second advance he did not go to the right. Captain Julian W. Hinkley, who has since visited the battlefield and made this battle a special study, says that “Company K and most of F went back through the lines of the Twenty-seventh Indiana and rallied behind them. Companies D and I followed down an old wood road to a point very near where we were before assembled. I think the colonel joined us here in a few minutes and led us back to the fence at the edge of the wheatfield, and it is pretty certain that we were in between the Second Massachusetts and the Twenty-seventh Indiana.”

During the few minutes that we were here, Gen. Crawford came along with a staff officer, as the writer remembers, in rear of the Twenty-seventh Indiana and the Third Wisconsin, commanding us to charge across the field. His own command was then entirely killed, wounded, captured or gone to the rear. The companies of the Third were conforming to the movements of the larger regiments on their flanks, and as they did not recognize his authority, we did not, especially as at that moment Colonel Ruger appeared immediately in rear of the left of the Twenty-seventh Indiana. At about the same time, Major Perkins of Banks’ staff came with an order to Col. Andrews83 to charge across the field. This order amazed Andrews. He was a brave, cool, intrepid officer, with all his faculties in good use, and he saw that to obey such an

83 Ed. Note: Colonel George L. Andrews commanding the Second Massachusetts.
order was simply to needlessly slaughter his command. He replied to this command, “Why, it will be the destruction of the regiment and will do no good.” He at once sought out Gordon, who told him not to execute the order.84

It was ascertained afterwards that an order had been signalled [sic] for Andrews to advance, in the supposition that the Second Massachusetts was far to the rear and at the place where Banks’ unexecuted order had directed it to be sent.

The Twenty-seventh Indiana was as brave a regiment as ever stood in line. Colonel Colgrove, its commander, was an officer of distinguished gallantry, moving about on his horse apparently oblivious to the storm of bullets that hissed about him. But no regiment could stand the fierce fire that poured in from front and flank. It gave way. But Col. Colgrove soon rallied it and brought it back to the edge of the field. But it remained only for a moment.

Then Col. Colgrove observed the enemy advancing within twenty paces of his right (it was Pender’s brigade), and gave the command to retreat. With him went the three companies, A, B, and E of the Third, and also the men who had gone in the second time. They rallied in the woods and tried to make a stand and fight, but again were forced back. They did not leave a moment too soon. A number were captured in their endeavors to get from the clutch of the enemy — among them Lieut. Theodore J. Widvey, who had led the three companies into action, being the senior officer present.

Gordon says, “When the Twenty-seventh fell back, I could not complain, because the Third Wisconsin did not stand. I know of no other regiment in Banks’ entire corps that twice on that day, in different brigades and in different parts of the field, stood so unflinchingly before numbers and fire so overwhelming.” [From: Brook Farm to Cedar Mountain, p. 309.]

The Second Massachusetts remained a minute or two longer. It had got into position where its fire was directly in front and quite destructive to its assailants. But as the troops on its right vanished, it became exposed to a withering flank fire, which laid low the captain of its right company and half his men. After suffering for a short space this cruel carnage, it fell back also in good order through the woods.

In the gathering dusk, the few of us who could be got together rallied at the little ridge from which we had started an hour before to participate in the

84 Gordon relates that on that evening, in the presence of Gen. Pope, he said to Banks, while himself full of indignation at the crime and blunder of the battle, “General Banks, I disobeyed your order received during the fight.” “What was it, sir?” asked Banks. “An order brought by an officer purporting to come from you, to charge across the field where my troops were then fighting.” “I never sent you such an order,” retorted Banks. “I am glad to know it,” replied Gordon, “it would have resulted in our total destruction.” From: Brook Farm to Cedar Mountain.
fight, directed thither by Gen. Gordon.

On our left, on the other side of the turnpike, the Union forces had fared equally hard. At first they met with slight success, in the heroic advance of the Eighth and Twelfth regulars as skirmishers. But when the brigades advanced, they were met by as fierce a fire as had welcomed the assault on the right. In the center brigade, Gen. Geary’s, nearly every field officer on the ground and about half the company officers and men were killed or wounded. Geary had charged simultaneously with Crawford, and had aided in crushing the enemy’s line, but was soon overpowered by the reserves. Prince and Greene had also shared in the battle and suffered heavily. But no attempt is here made to give details of their movements or engagement. General Prince had been captured while searching around in the dark for Gen. Geary’s command. His losses had also been heavy, both in killed, wounded and prisoners.

In the dusk that fast deepened into darkness, we of Gordon’s brigade got together our few fragments of companies. We only knew in part the extent of our losses. When those of the brigade came to be consolidated, it was found that the totals were as given below.
LOSSES IN GORDON’S BRIGADE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>KILLED</th>
<th>WOUNDED</th>
<th>CAPTURED OR MISSING</th>
<th>AGGREGATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Officers</td>
<td>Enl Men</td>
<td>Officers</td>
<td>Enl Men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Massachusetts</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zouaves Company</td>
<td>......</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>......</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twenty-Seventh Indiana</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Wisconsin</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>183</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

LIST OF KILLED AND WOUNDED AT THE BATTLE OF CEDAR MOUNTAIN
AUGUST 9, 1862

KILLED OR DIED OF WOUNDS — Field and Staff: Lieutenant-Colonel Louis H. D. Crane; Company A: Private David Buckterkirchen; Company B: Privates Fred Eddy, Abram Finton, James C. Larrimore and George T. Maxwell; Company C: Corporal David Rourke, Privates Anson W. Lovelace, Fred Reager, Isaac W. Winans; Company D: Corporal Curtis Rourke, Private Wesley J. Butts; Company F: Privates Ethan W. Butler, Andrew Craig and Frank Darling; Company H: Private William Mason; Company I: Captain Moses O’Brien, Privates Nicholas Wallace, W. I. Leach and M. Sweat; Company K: Privates William H. Hubbell, Peter Jenson, Edwin E. Polley, John Q. Lyman, Charles S. Curtis, Charles C. Brown and Thomas Elliott — 27. Of those reported killed, Abram Finton of Co B, C. B. Brown and Thomas Elliott of Co. K, afterward returned, rejoining regiment. [Editor’s note, the same was true of Lawrence Post, who was reported killed in action, it even having appeared in the Wisconsin State Journal. Later, it was found that he was injured and taken prisoner to Richmond, VA.]


The fragments of Gordon’s brigade now rallied, near the Brown cottage, whence he had started on the charge. Many of our dead were brought in by comrades. Many wounded of both brigades lay there. It was fast growing dark. Gordon sent out some pickets; for nothing hindered the enemy from advancing. At this moment Williams ordered Gordon to fall back. The latter was loth to leave the sufferers, and sought a change in the orders. He sought
for Banks and found him with Pope, who had come upon the field. Pope left Culpepper at half-past four, galloped up, when the continuous roar of artillery convinced him that a battle was on. He ordered up Rickett’s division, as he galloped by. As he neared the field, he knew by the long procession of wounded men and the dripping ambulances, as well as the musketry, that a furioir [sic] battle was raging. But before he reached the field silence reigned. He met Banks, and while they conversed, Gordon rode up. Pope, on learning the situation, ordered Gordon to be relieved and to move to the right of the pike, to form the center of a new line. “I shall have 20,000 fresh troops here to-morrow morning,” he said. Gordon, indignant at the useless slaughter of his brigade, said, “This battle ought not to have been fought, sir.” “I never ordered it fought,” said Pope. Endnote

It is not the purpose of this narrative to tell the full story of the battle on all parts of the field. Suffice it to say, that when Jackson had made his dispositions on his left to close in on Gordon’s right, he directed Taliaferro’s brigade to charge, bearing to its right, through the cornfield, where Geary had been. This advancing line came upon Gen. Prince, who was riding towards his right, to find what had become of the troops there, and made him prisoner. The enemy then crept on, enveloped Prince’s troops, capturing some 400, as they fell back.

And at dusk, the enemy’s victory was complete. Prince a prisoner. Geary and Augur wounded; only one general officer left on that part of the line, and all three of the brigades as badly cut to pieces as were Crawford’s and Gordon’s on the right. Out of Geary’s brigade of 1,467 men nearly every field officer on the ground, and about one-third of the company officers and men, were killed or wounded.85

On receiving Pope’s orders, Gordon retired his little remnant of a command to the rear. He was relieved by Gen. Tower,86 with the second brigade of Rickett’s division. In moving to the rear, the regiments did not pursue exactly the route indicated by Gordon. The place where Pope had ordered him to form a new line was already in the possession of the enemy. The regiments dropped still farther back toward Culpepper, the enemy following up and sending in their shells. The Third bivouacked near the pike in rear of its first position; and the next morning our position was assigned in a clump of low, scrubby pine trees in a dry swamp on the left of the road, some two miles in rear of the battlefield.

Sigel’s command having had their suppers the night of the battle, left

85 Loss reported at 465.

86 ED. NOTE: Brigadier General Zealous Bates Tower, 1819 - 1900.
Culpepper and moved out toward Cedar Mountain. They were quite officious in halting some of our regimental commanders, who were moving to the rear under orders. Pope, in his report, intimates that had Sigel moved when ordered, instead of sending back to ask about the route, when there was but one; and, had he come supplied with rations, as ordered, there might have been a different history of this battle.

On the 11th, a flag of truce was sent to the enemy, and permission asked and given to go upon the battlefield and bury our dead. Burial parties were sent out. Chaplain Quint,87 of the Second Massachusetts, was among the first to go upon the field. He found there, as he writes, our wounded. They were on the field, had sufferably terribly, and wept for joy, when assured that our people were soon coming. The Confederates had sheltered some of them with blankets or with boughs; had brought them water, and sometimes biscuits or apples. But the dead had been stripped of everything valuable, even to outer clothing.

There was the body of Col. Crane. It was taken and sent to his home in Beloit, Wisconsin, and there buried. Poor Capt. O’Brien, a brave, noble officer, was shot a second time in the second advance of the regiment, as it went in with Gordon’s brigade. His first wound, a severe one in the thigh, he had bandaged with a handkerchief, and gone in again with his shoe full of blood. He refused to remain at the rear. His second wound was through the body and mortal. His men found him, on the 11th, still alive; for he was a man of powerful frame and great vitality. They tenderly carried him to Culpepper on a stretcher, in the head of that terrible August sun; and a few hours after his arrival there he died lying on his stretcher, on the porch of a hotel then used as a hospital.

Major Scott and Capt. Hawley, also Sergt.-Maj. Dering, who in the charge of Gordon’s brigade had had his leg shattered below the knee, had been taken off the field the night of the battle, and were soon sent to Alexandria and the hospitals about Washington. Dabney says that while the dead were being buried, under flag of truce, the Union men and Confederates mingled freely unarmed, talked over the political situation, traded horses; and that not a few of the Union men expressed their admiration for Jackson and their wish that they had such a general.

The regiment lay in position, until August 12th, when it marched with Gordon’s brigade back to Culpepper, and there went into camp. Jackson withdrew on the 11th from his position on Cedar Run and fell back to Gordonsville. Convinced that Pope had been largely reinforced, he dared not

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87 ED. NOTE: Alonzo Hall Quint, b. Barnstead, NH (22 Mar 1828); s. of George Quint and Sally Hall; Dartmouth (1846); Andover Theological Seminary (1852); Dartmouth (D.D., 1866); m. Rebecca P. Putnam (31 Jan 1854) Chaplain (20 Jun 61); mustered out 21 Jul 64

-80-
hazard another battle. He was a great and able general, bold, intrepid, and full of resources; but he invariably managed to have the most guns at any point where he chose to give or take battle.

On his part this battle has been severely criticised. [sic] The best military judgment condemns it. He brought ten of his twelve brigades into action against a force of not much more than one-third their number. He suffered a loss of 1,276 in killed and wounded and a considerable number of prisoners (reported by him at 31). He gained nothing by the movement; and on the night of the 11th, he stole away in such haste as to leave many of his wounded and stragglers by the way, nor stopped in his flight until he had crossed the Rapidan. The Comte de Paris in his excellent history of our civil war severely criticises Jackson for fighting this battle, and says Jackson was humiliated by its results. To quote:

“The battle of Cedar Mountain had cost him (Jackson) too dear, and the check he had received was the more keenly felt, because he had engaged all his troops against an army far inferior in numbers. ⋆ ⋆ The Federals, who had fought with great stubborness, [sic] could therefore, notwithstanding the ground lost at the close of the day, consider the result of the battle of Cedar Mountain as an advantage on their side. Their loss amounted to about 1,800 — one-third their entire force. ⋆ ⋆ Although their forces did not amount to more than one-half the number of their adversaries, they had held him in check, compelled him to retire, leaving 232 killed and 1,000 wounded, a success which was the more creditable, in view of the fact that the adversary was the redoubtable Jackson, whose troops had already passed the ordeal of so many battles.” (History of the Civil War in America, Vol. 2, p. 260.)

Greely, in his “American Conflict,” well says we “were not so much beaten as fairly crowded off the field.” The comments on this battle were all in high praise of the fighting of the men. Some of the generals, through their favorite correspondents, attempted to exalt themselves by throwing blame on others. Crawford complained that Gordon did not come soon enough to his support. But it is in proof and beyond controversy that he went in at the instant he was ordered, and went at the utmost speed his men could run. This we, who were participants, well know. Crawford also complained of the Third Wisconsin, at the time, because it did not sustain his right. But his complaint only proves that he did not fully understand the movements that had been made, nor what the Third Wisconsin had encountered. It would have needed six brigades, instead of six companies, to successfully sustain his right. Then, again, it was impossible for those companies to advance as fast

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88 Ed. Note: Louis-Philippe-Albert d’Orleans, Comte de Paris, 24 Aug 1838 - 8 Sep 1894, heir to the throne and the candidate of the Orleanists. The title of Comte de Paris was created for him. Full title of work mentioned: History of the Civil War in America: 188.

89 Ed. Note: Horace Greeley, editor, 3 Feb 1811 - 29 Nov 1872. The American conflict: a history of the great rebellion in the United States of America, 1860-64 it’s causes, incidents, and results intended to exhibit especially its moral and political phases with the drift and progress of American opinion respecting human slavery from 1776 to the close of the war for the union.

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as his men did, as they were compelled to move through difficult ground, tangled bushes and briars. General Banks, too, allowed some expressions to escape him as to Gordon’s not coming in soon enough. But these complaints were made in ignorance of the facts, and in efforts to escape from the censure which the outcome of the battle brought upon those who were responsible for it. The battle ought not to have been brought on. Had we merely acted on the defensive, and resisted Jackson’s advance, according to Pope’s plan, held him in check, while our reinforcements came up, had we fallen back a few miles toward Culpepper, steadily but slowly retiring before his advance, until Rickett’s and King’s divisions and Sigel’s corps could have been brought up. There is strong probability that Jackson would have lost the battle had he risked it, or would have retired from our front not daring to engage with Pope’s entire command.

We lay in camp at Culpepper for several days. While there, the officers of the two regiments, the Third Wisconsin and Second Massachusetts, gave an elegant dinner in our great mess tent to staff, and Gen. Williams, and various other prominent officials. This event took place on the 18th of August; and on that day we received orders to fall back behind the Rappahannock. Great events were to transpire, putting Gen. Pope’s strategic skill and ability to the severest test; and these will be the subject of the next chapter.

90 ED. NOTE: Rufus King, USA, 26 Jan 1816 - 13 Oct 1876. An epileptic with a reputation as a drinker.
CHAPTER XV.
POPE’S RETREAT.

FOR several days after the battle, the army of Virginia remained in the vicinity of Culpepper. General Pope established his headquarters at Cedar Mountain, and his line extended along the Rapidan from Racoon Ford westward toward the Blue Ridge. From the 12th to the 18th of August reports came in from various quarters that large forces of Confederates were advancing on many roads from Richmond in long, dusty columns towards our little army.

Meanwhile McClellan was accomplishing the gigantic task of moving his army from the peninsula down the James and up the Potomac to Washington. The magnitude of this movement one can hardly imagine, who has not seen the immense wagon trains — extending for seventy miles along a road, and when parked covering large plantations — which are necessary to carry the munitions, material, baggage and supplies of an army of 100,000 men.

On the 18th it became evident to Pope that the enemy were massing upon him in such force that he would soon be crushed. He was too far out, and his left could easily be turned before the troops from the peninsula could reach him; and he must fall back across the Rappahannock.

The historic river which bears this name takes its rise on the eastern watersheds of the Blue Ridge some fifty miles south of Harper’s Ferry in the valleys between the Blue Ridge and the Bull Run mountains. A number of creeks — or, as they are called in the South, “runs” — combine to form this stream. Its general course is southeast through an open country. Passing east of Culpepper some twenty miles, with many windings it reaches tidewater at Fredericksburg, below which it is navigable. About ten miles above the place last names, it receives from the west the waters of the Rapidan. Above the confluence the north branch, or Rappahannock, is fordable at nearly all points during summer, except when swollen, as it often and suddenly is, by rains. Some twelve miles above the mouth of the Rapidan is Kelly’s Ford. Six miles further up, the Orange and Alexandria railroad crosses the river at Rappahannock station. Two miles up stream at Sulphur Springs is Thompson’s Ford. Three miles upward the Luray and Warrenton turnpike crosses the river at Waterloo Bridge.

The Bull Run mountains are the most eastern of the Allegheny ridges. They run from the Potomac near Leesburg, some twelve miles east of Harper’s Ferry, southwest parallel with the Blue Ridge, some forty miles, and then as they approach the upper waters of the Rappahannock, the range dwindles into a succession of steep, thickly wooded hills. The country east of the Bull Run mountains and the Rappahannock is a triangle with one vertex
on the Potomac as the Point of Rocks, the other at Aquia Creek and
Fredericksburg on the south and the third and western angle is at Waterloo
bridge. The eastern side is the Potomac.

The Bull Run mountains are crossed by three roads, one at Leesburg
another at Aldie northwest of Fairfax Court House, the third and most
southerly at Thoroughfare Gap, a long, narrow ravine, between two rocky
walls.

From Alexandria on the Potomac, the Orange and Alexandria railroad
runs southwest to Culpepper and further on, crossing the Rappahannock as
above indicated. The principal stations within the triangle described are
Fairfax Court House, another northwest to Centerville. Seven miles further
southwest is Manassas Junction, and here the Manassas Gap railroad
branches off running northwest, through Thoroughfare Gap, to Front Royal
and beyond, some four or five miles further to Gainesville. Eight miles
southwest is Catlett’s station; three miles beyond is Warrenton Junction,
where a spur of the railroad runs up to the considerable village of Warrenton,
which lies at the southern base of the Bull Run mountains about ten miles,
miles as the crow flies, southwest of Thoroughfare Gap. Next comes
Bealeton, then Rappahannock station, at the crossing of that river, then
Brandy station and next Culpepper.

This region of country thus crudely outlined was to become the scene
of the last and the disastrous struggle of Pope’s army of Virginia.

Jackson and Longstreet were pressing on with an army of 63,500
fighting men to assail our force which numbered — including Reno’s division
of Burnside’s corps, then just arrived — only 42,000, all told.

On the 18th, Pope’s orders were given to move at once. Instantly all was
activity. Our brigade — the Third — started at about midnight, moved out two
miles; but the road was blocked with the long train of wagons, that we must
needs march in the fields, a difficult thing to do in the dark, so we bivouacked
till day break, then pushed on to the Rappahannock and crossed on the
railroad bridge. General Reno’s division bore to the right and crossed at
Kelly’s Ford. McDowell followed us. Sigel moved to the left, struck the river
and crossed at Sulphur Springs.

We did not move a moment too early. Lee’s plans were carefully laid to
cut off our retreat before we could reach the river. The Confederates were
bitterly disappointed at our escape, and Longstreet was roundly blamed for
being too slow. The cavalry of Lee’s army dogged our heels, often checked
and kept at respectful distance by the bold stands of Bayard’s little body of
well-fagged cavalry. The Confederate infantry soon swarmed on the
southwestern bank of the river. It is not a good line of defense at best, being
fordable, and its right, or southwest bank is usually the best position, and the
water was now at low stage. But here Pope made his stand, under orders
The brigades of Bohlen and Milroy had crossed the river and attacked Jackson’s rear guard, which was moving up the bank, with a view to delay his march. From Halleck, the general-in-chief in Washington, “to hold the line,” “not to give an inch,” “fight like the devil;” and the assurance was given that reinforcements should soon back him up, from Washington and from the Army of the Potomac.

On the 21st, Jackson appeared on the opposite bank at Beverly Ford, threatening to cross. King’s division of McDowell’s corps was sent there to dispute his passage. At the same time, Longstreet was menacing Kelly’s Ford, down the river. It was soon observed that Jackson was moving up the right bank of the river, and this meant the turning of our right. Sigel was shoveled up on the northeastern side to resist him. Gordon’s brigade was ordered to Beverly Ford on the 22d, to post batteries in position to command the ford and support them with infantry. This was done, and the brigade was concealed in a large timber, the Second Massachusetts on the right, Third Wisconsin in the center, and Twenty-seventh Indiana on the left. Longstreet was then confronting us, though this we did not know at the time. Jackson was creeping slyly further up the river, feeling for a chance to strike in flank. While here we saw a sunset fight across the river, between Col. Bohlen’s brigade of Sigel’s corps, which was boldly crossed over, and attacked the enemy. It was a small and bloody little battle. Soon after sunset a violent thunder storm arose, and drenched the wounded where they lay.

The next day was quite exciting. General Gordon and Col. Ruger suspecting movements on the enemy’s part did not retire at night but remained vigilantly on watch. Before dawn they heard the well-known sound of artillery wheels and knew the enemy were planting batteries. Captain Cothran, whose battery went with us, was at once notified and had his guns ready for instant use at the earliest light. As the morning breeze blew away the mist, seven Parrott guns were seen frowning upon us from the high grounds across the river. McDowell’s troops were on our right, and while they were at breakfast, with a vapor still brooding over the camp, the enemy began a brisk dropping of shells in their midst. There was a rush, a hustling of wagons to the rear, and a call to arms. McDowell’s guns replied, and directly Cothran’s battery from our brigade began to speak. The enemy’s shells were flying about our heads and knocking the rail fence in front of our brigade quite lively, and their aim was too accurate for comfort, when Cothran with right range and fine gunnery opened on them. One of the Confederate batteries was soon knocked out of shape and fled back into the forest. Another battery on the right of the road was giving us much annoyance with spherical case. Cothran let them play a little while on McDowell’s batteries, then he opened again. This battery of the enemy also sought the shelter of the woods — what

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91 The brigades of Bohlen and Milroy had crossed the river and attacked Jackson’s rear guard, which was moving up the bank, with a view to delay his march.
was left of it. The enemy then seemed to fear that we were about to cross, for they displayed a regiment of infantry. It was a needless sacrifice. Our batteries all opened on it, and soon sent it a scattering, scampering flock into the cover of the woods, leaving many mangled victims behind.

But during the past night, in the deepest darkness, Stuart, the dashing cavalryman and bold raider of the rebels, had slipped across the river at Waterloo bridge, which he found unguarded, swooped down past our right with 1,500 horse and some flying artillery, to Warrenton, thence to Catlett’s Station, where our supply trains were parked. He did some mischief and captured Pope’s headquarters wagons and papers, from which he learned much that Pope did not wish the rebels to know.

The enemy were still working up the river. Pope was under orders to keep his line closed down toward Fredericksburg, from which flank his reinforcements from McClellan’s army were expected to come. This hampered him, and he could not conform his movements to those of the enemy as fully as strategy required.

On the 23rd, Sigel was ordered to march up to Sulphur Springs and “attack and beat the enemy.” Banks was to follow and “keep close up.” This he did, hugging Sigel’s rear so closely that the two corps were often jumbled. In this march the rebels shelled the column from various points. Approaching the Springs it was found that one division (that of Early) of Jackson’s command had come over on our side of the river. The water had raised so they could not return and were in peril. But as a precaution they had checked Sigel’s advance by destroying all the bridges across Great Run, an eastern branch of the river, between them and our column. By the 24th Jackson had bridged the river behind Early and let him out of his trap; and that day Sigel moved up to Waterloo. Our corps halted between the Springs and Waterloo, Reno followed Sigel, and Rickett’s [sic] division of McDowell’s corps was four miles east of Waterloo bridge. King’s division was between Sulphur Springs and Warrenton.

Pope and his command were turning anxious eyes eastward for the promised reinforcements, which were moving in slowly to join us. Porter with his corps was coming up from Aquia Creek, supposing he would find Pope at or near Kelly’s Ford. Heintzleman’s [sic] corps, which had landed at Alexandria, was moving westward toward us, and Kearny’s division of that corps had been sent by rail to Manasses [sic] and moved thence down toward Warrenton Junction.

Stuart’s raid had scared the railroad service. Confusion began to reign. Between Pope in the field and Halleck in the War Department, the marching

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92 The battery was the Washington artillery, and it lost there, according to the commander's report, 21 horses and 13 men.
to and fro, the irregularity of arrival of McClellan’s forces, the subordinate commanders seemed to lose confidence. On the night of the 24th Heintzelman’s [sic] corps and Sturges’ [sic] first brigade — which had been organized at Washington — reached Warrenton Junction. Pope was mystified by Lee’s strategy, and anticipated and was preparing for an attack in his front, or at least an effort to turn Lee’s right along the river. He seems to have forgotten or neglected Thoroughfare Gap. But all was plain and simple on the Confederate side. Their strategy was controlled by one man, and he in the field with all his forces in hand. Lee had conceived the daring movement, which none could execute better than Jackson, such as made Napoleon so successful in his campaigns — such as made Grant’s Vicksburg campaign so brilliant in strategy. It was no less than sending Jackson by a wide detour and forced marches over by-ways and secluded paths to strike Pope in his rear.

On the 25th, at day break, Jackson’s forces were in motion. He withdrew from the river, out of observation, passing west through the little village of Amissville he hurried his columns westward, while Longstreet masked the fords, then turning north he pushed his way up a secluded country across Hedgeman’s Creek, an upper tributary of the Rappahannock, under the western shadow of the Bull Run mountains to the little hamlet of Orleans, thence northwest of Thoroughfare Gap. This point he reached at midnight, after a most tiresome march, and by day’s dawn his column again was moving southeast into the narrow defiles of Thoroughfare Gap. Strange oversight on the part of Pope, this side-door to his right and rear had not been closed! Jackson pressed on and found the pass undefended. At the same time Stuart’s cavalry had moved on his right through fields and paths, crossed the Bull Run mountains by a winding, rocky road south of Thoroughfare Gap and debouched upon the eastern plains just as Jackson’s column emerged from the mouth of the gap; and a cordon of cavalry was thrown about the infantry to hide and protect it against approach from any quarter. Subsisting on a few biscuits, green corn and unripe apples the Confederates hurried on and by the afternoon of the 26th approached the region of Manassas. When Gainesville was reached, with Stuart’s cavalry on his right flank, Jackson turned down southeast to the nearest station of the railroad, Bristoe. There a small guard was captured or driven away after sunset. A train passed going toward Alexandria, was fired into, and ordered to stop, but it escaped. General Ewell, who let the column, then placed obstructions on the track, and wrecked the next train, capturing those upon it.

Jackson was now completely in our rear and had severed our line of railroad communication. Our reinforcements from McClellan’s army had only in part arrived. The Confederate leader set about doing all the mischief he could. Though his men had marched fifty miles in thirty-six hours a force was at once sent up to Manassas Junction, seven miles northeast, where an
immense supply depot, but slightly guarded, contained the subsistence and stores collected for the troops of Pope. Marching there, Gen. Trimble with infantry and Stuart with cavalry soon drove off, in a night attack, the raw troops which guarded this prize. The rebels had rich booty there for starving men. Flour, forage, 50,000 pounds of bacon, 1,000 barrels of salt beef, hundreds of sutler’s wagons laden with dainties so tempting to the soldier were soon the pillage of these ravenous men. The rest of Jackson’s command, save a division, moved up there next morning to fill themselves with the valuable supplies. What could not be eaten or taken was destroyed in a huge bonfire; and Pope’s army was doomed to emptiness during the stirring times to follow.

Turn now to Pope. While this shrewd move of Jackson to his rear was in progress, the Union General, blissfully ignorant of it, was making dispositions to a battle somewhere along the Rappahannock or in that neighborhood, and even had in view the crossing of the river at Rappahannock Station to strike the enemy. McDowell had been moved to Warrenton. Banks’ corps, in support, was sent to near Fayetteville, about half way between Warrenton and Rappahannock Station. These movements were made on the 26th. Sigel also had been ordered to Warrenton. Reno had been sent to a point three miles east of Warrenton, and Porter, who had reached Bealeton Station, was ordered to join Reno. Heintzleman’s [sic] corps had come up and was at Warrenton Junction, and Pope’s plan was to sent it to Greenwich, on the turnpike running from Warrenton to Manassas and some three or four miles southeast of Gainesville.

But on the night of the 26th he heard with amazement that his rear was gained and communication interrupted. Still more amazed was he when he learned during the night that this enemy in his rear was something more than a raiding party of cavalry. He saw at once that his course was to turn upon Jackson, to get in between him and Washington or to surround him and overwhelm him. As he said, he meant “to bag the whole crowd.”

On the morning of the 27th he issued orders to meet the new emergency. McDowell, with Sigel and Reynolds’ division, were to move from Warrenton to Gainesville, Heintzleman [sic] and Reno were to march to Greenwich that night, Porter was to stay at Warrenton Junction, and Pope’s plan was to sent it to Greenwich and Gainesville to assist the operations.

General Banks was to move at once to Warrenton Junction. The order was as follows:

“Major General Banks, as soon as he arrives at Warrenton Junction will assume the charge of the trains and cover their movement toward Manassas Junction. The train of his own corps, under escort of two regiments of infantry and a battery of artillery will pursue the road south of the railroad which conducts into the rear of Manassas Junction. As soon as all the trains have passed
Warrenton Junction he will take post behind Cedar Run, covering the fords and bridges of that stream and holding his position as long as possible. He will cause all the railroad trains to be loaded with the public and private stores now there, and run them back toward Manassas Junction as far as the railroad is practicable. Wherever a bridge is burned, so as to prevent the further passage of the railroad trains, he will assemble them all, as near together as possible, and protect them with his command until the bridges are rebuilt. If the enemy is too strong before him before the bridge can be repaired, he will be careful to destroy entirely the trains, locomotives and stores before he falls back in the direction of Manassas Junction. He is, however, to understand that he is to defend his position as long as possible, keeping himself in constant communication with Gen. Porter on his right. If any sick now in hospital at Warrenton Junction are not provided for and able to be transported, he will have them loaded into the wagon trains of his own corps, even should this necessitate the destruction of much baggage and regimental property, and carried to Manassas Junction."

Such was our assignment to duty; and it was ruefully received by the officers of rank, who wished to participate in the field fights which the other corps were to move in quest of. On the 27th, Banks’ column moved upon Warrenton Junction. The Third Wisconsin started on this march at 3 A. M.

Pope, at the head of Hooker’s division, moved from Warrenton up the road to Manassas. In a word, Pope drew his army back from the line of the Rappahannock and turned on Jackson. The latter soon found himself in a position of peril. He was menaced from the east. From the southwest Hooker fell upon Ewell’s division, near Bristoe station, and, after a sharp fight, drove him back upon Manassas Junction, where Jackson then was. This warned the wily Confederate; and he put his command in motion from Manassas northward. Part of it, Hill’s corps, went to Centerville. Jackson moved to a point about a mile west of the old Bull Run battle ground; and there Hill joined him at night. In this position he meant to hold our forces at bay, until Longstreet could come through Thoroughfare Gap and join him; and, if hard pressed, he could retire up the right bank of the Bull Run and dodge through the Gap at Aldie.

McDowell and Sigel had been ordered on the night of the 27th to move next morning early toward Manassas Junction, but although he got the orders at 2 A. M. of the 28th Sigel, who headed the column, had not cleared Gainesville until half past seven. This delay had the effect to bring King’s

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93 This felling is well expressed by Gordon, our brigade commander- He says: “To McDowell we owe it that our command, respectable in numbers, undaunted by defeat at Cedar Mountain, willing and courageous, was diverted from that pathway which would have thrown us with Hooker, Reno, Porter, Sigel, Reynolds, Ricketts and King upon Jackson and Longstreet on the battlefield of Manassas. To repair bridges and mend highways for the safe passage of horse equipments, salt pork and hard bread is undoubtedly military duty. But to send, under the circumstances in which Pope found himself, a whole corps along a road upon which no enemy appeared, and where there was no reason to apprehend that he would appear, to defend wagon trains, instead of using it to oppose the enemy, was, as we now know, an error of judgment arising from McDowell’s over caution.
division, while moving according to orders, into unexpected collisions with Jackson’s right. A fierce contest ensued, known as the battle of Gainesville. It is not within the scope of this narrative to give a detailed account of this fight. The brunt of it on the Union side was borne by Gibbon’s brigade of King’s division, since known as the “Iron Brigade,” in which were the Second, Sixth, and Seventh Wisconsin Regiments. The gallant behavior of this brigade in its first pitched battle extorted admiration from the enemy. General Jackson in his report says:

“The conflict here was fierce and sanguinary. ☆ ☆ ☆ Both lines stood exposed to the discharges of musketry and artillery until about 9 o’clock.” He claims that the Federals yielded the field, but the fact is they did not leave the field until long after the fight. Six regiments — four of Gibbon’s including the three above named, and two of Doubleday’s — sustained for over an hour the fire of two of Ewell’s brigades. Most of the time the lines were not more than seventy-five yards apart. General Pope in his report says: “Gibbon’s brigade consisted of some of the best troops in the service, and the conduct of both men and officers was gallant and distinguished.”

While King’s division was thus in hot encounter at Gainesville, Col. Wyndham was having a sharp engagement with Longstreet in the wild, romantic pass of Thoroughfare Gap. No sooner had Pope withdrawn from the Rappahannock than Lee, with Longstreet’s command, followed on after Jackson by the same route; and by the evening of the 28th was at the eastern mouth of the Gap. Wyndham with Federal cavalry and artillery was there to check them. General Ricketts had been sent there to oppose; but he seems to have got there too late, and to have made but little effort to stop Longstreet. A small force resisted him in the pass and some batteries guarded the mouth of the Gap at the east; but Longstreet soon put them aside by passing part of his command through Hopewell Gap, three miles north, over a rough mountain road, and a part by a nearer mountain path. These turned the right of the force placed to stop up the mouth of the Gap. By this means he

94The Compte de Paris [sic & NB: see earlier footnote] tells the story of this fight with enthusiasm” “Stark’s brigade of Taliaferro’s, supported by the fire of three batteries, advanced first as skirmishers; but the Federal guns soon silenced those of the Confederates. The rest of the divisions, supported on the left by two of Ewell’s brigades, came up to restore the fortunes of the fight. Gallantly led by their chiefs, these six brigades combined their efforts against Gibbon’s Union brigade, which had vigorously taken the offensive, and which, with the help of Doubleday’s brigade, maintained its position in a vast orchard, situated on a commanding height, where it defended itself with great stubbornness. The Confederate division commanders were severely wounded. Ewell lost a leg while charging at the head of his soldiers. The latter, however, despite their efforts and numerical superiority, could not succeed in dislodging their adversaries[.] Night alone put an end to the battle.” The loss in Gibbon’s brigade was 133 killed, 539 wounded, and 79 missing; total 751, more than one-third of his command. The Confederates admit their loss to be heavy, but do not report it separately from that in the battles of the succeeding two days.
brushed away all opposition and sped on to Jackson’s aid. The guarding of Thoroughfare Gap and the by-paths on each side of it would seem an obvious precaution, to hold Longstreet in check and prevent his junction with Jackson on the plains of Manassas. A comparatively small force, rightly disposed, could have done it, at least long enough for the other forces at Pope’s command to turn upon Jackson and crush him or force him to fly to the northern passes of the Aldie. But Pope seems to have disregarded this precaution in his plans, and relied wholly upon his chances of beating Jackson before Longstreet could possibly arrive. The sending of Ricketts to the Gap was the forethought of McDowell and not that of Pope.

With melancholy interest the history is read which was made in the dark and gloomy days of the 29th and 30th of August. There were fiercely fought battles and defeat to the Union arms; but the story does not belong to this regimental biography; and it would require a larger volume than this to faithfully tell it all. We must therefore confine the narrative to the movements in which the Third Wisconsin directly participated.

It may briefly be told here that when Pope learned at 10 o’clock at night, as he did at or near Centerville, of King’s battle at Gainesville, he desired King to remain there and hold his ground, while he disposed his other forces to close in on Jackson; and he felt sure that between his forces on the west of Jackson and those east and south of him he could crush Jackson completely. He sent to King orders to hold his ground at all hazards. He also ordered Sigel “to push forward at one o’clock A.M. from Centerville on the Warrington turnpike and close upon the enemy, and throw his right will to the north, if possible across Little River Turnpike; and at daybreak Hooker and Reno were to be up with him early in the morning to support his attack. His forces were so disposed that he had, as he supposed, McDowell, Sigel and Reynolds with 25,000 men immediately west of Jackson and between him and Thoroughfare Gap, while Kearny, Hooker, Reno and Porter, in all 25,000 strong, were to fall upon Jackson from the east; at daylight. He felt sure that by prompt and vigorous attack he could smash Jackson before Longstreet could reach the scene of action. But King’s withdrawal, he asserts, disappointed him. The sending of Ricketts to Thoroughfare Gap was unknown to him; and he then had to change his plans. He ordered Sigel to attack at Groveton, which was on the southwest of Jackson’s position, throwing his right well forward. Heintzleman [sic] was to send Hooker and Kearny’s divisions to support this attack; and Reno was to follow closely in rear. Fitz-John Porter, with his corps, and King’s division was to move from Manassas upon the Gainesville road with all speed to turn Jackson’s flank at the intersection of the Warrenton turnpike. Sigel, nearest the enemy, advanced at 5 A.M. and was engaged in less than two hours, driving back Jackson’s outer lines for a mile or two, but meeting constantly increasing force; and soon Jackson assumed the offensive
himself; and then took position with his left in the neighborhood of Sudley Springs, and his line covered by an old railroad grade which leads from Gainesville in the direction of Alexandria. His batteries, which were numerous and some of heavy caliber, he posted behind the ridges in open ground on both sides of the Warrenton turnpike while his men were sheltered in dense masses behind the railroad embankment — Jackson’s division under Starke on the right, Ewell’s division under Lawton in the center, and Hill’s division at the left. There was much fighting and desultory skirmishing on this line until about 4 P.M., when Pope ordered Heintzleman [sic] and Reno to assault the left of the enemy. He had ordered Fitz-John Porter to attack at the same time on the right, but Porter was not where Pope supposed him to be; and hence the plan of battle in its general scheme failed. The attack was made with great gallantry. Jackson admits the spirit and determination with which these assaults were made. King’s division came in at about sunset and advanced considerably beyond our general line of battle, but was soon brought to a stand against heavier forces. Jackson was outnumbered, and the fight was desperate. The valor of the Union assaults upon him were persistent and would have probably resulted in victory, had not Hood’s division of Longstreet’s corps come upon the field and attacked our exhausted advanced line, repulsing Kearny’s advanced regiments. Pope held some ground that he had wrenched from the rebels; but he was really worsted, for Longstreet’s corps was now upon the field. The losses of the day on our side had been about 7,000; and the troops were exhausted and hungry. Our horses had been ten days in harness and two days without food.

The 30th dawned on a dismal prospect for our arms. Pope had in hand about 40,000 men. What with marching, unsuccessful fighting and two days of fasting they were not likely to be in sanguine mood. Lee, now in command had over 60,000 fighting men. But as the enemy had considerably drawn in his center, and Pope had been told by prisoners that Jackson was in full retreat, he ordered Porter to attack the enemy’s right. The Confederate force was now massed. Jackson on the right and Longstreet on the left under the cover of low, wooded ridges, with the artillery well posted upon a commanding eminence near the center, their line forming an irregular L. Porter supported by King’s division made a fierce attack upon Jackson’s right, it not then being known by Pope that Longstreet was also on Jackson’s right with a fresh army corps. Jackson was so hard pressed by Porter’s and King’s onset that he sent to Longstreet for aid. The latter saw an opportunity to place his artillery so as to pour its fire upon Porter with terrible effect. This he followed with his infantry closing in on Porter, clasping him as with a vice, between Jackson and Longstreet. The retreat rendered necessary bid fair to become a rout. [?] but Col. Warren (afterwards major general) intrepidly seized a commanding eminence from which another brigade had just retired, and held it, though
enveloped on three sides, until the rest of the troops could be disengaged and fall back. This enabled the army to fall back across Bull Run and thence to Centerville.

General Fitz-John Porter’s conduct in this campaign has been subject of much controversy, as to which there is likely during this generation to be much division of opinion. Military men very generally acquit him of the grave military offenses for which he was tried and cashiered the service.\footnote{Ed. Note: Relieved of command in November of 1862, Porter was then the subject of a court-martial, was found guilty and cashiered from the army effective 21 Jan 1863.}

After giving his elaborate orders to Banks, Pope had further instructed Porter to run the trains all eastward across Cedar Run,\footnote{This must not be confounded with the Cedar Run near Slaughter’s mountain.} and soon after Banks had reached the Junction, and there orders directed him to move to Kettle Run bridge as soon as the railroad trains and public property had been safely run back.\footnote{Kettle Run is a stream about three miles southwest of Bristoe station. Here the enemy had destroyed the railroad bridge which was a very high one, the run passing the road in a deep ravine.} At Kettle Run the railroad bridge had been destroyed, and trains were stopped. There Banks was to execute the duty fully detailed in the instructions of the preceding day. The movement was at once made, following Porter’s corps, which moved on to Bristoe station. On arriving at Kettle Run the corps found here over one hundred loaded cars, which had been cut off by the destruction of the bridge. There were many wagons being loaded from these cars and sent to supply the troops who were at the time we arrived fighting a short distance from this place.\footnote{Pope’s orders were to put a few boxes of ammunition on every wagon that passed.} Many dead lay about here killed in the sharp engagement between Hooker and Ewell’s divisions, on the previous afternoon. Here the corps remained. The work of rebuilding this bridge was pushed forward with amazing rapidity. The cannonading of the battle of Groveton on the 29\textsuperscript{th} was heard all day, and cheerful rumors came that all was going well with the Union cause, that the enemy were surrounded and could not escape. On the 30\textsuperscript{th}, the bridge at Kettle Run was completed and the trains were moved to Bristoe station; and the troops moved, also, and took position to the north of Broad Run, a branch of Cedar Run, which crosses the railroad at this station. Here also a large, high railroad bridge had been destroyed. Here we were only some six or seven miles from the battlefield of the 30\textsuperscript{th}, known as the Second battle of Bull Run. The fact was noticed that the battle seemed further off than the day before. But the report came — one of Pope’s glowing accounts — that we had gained a complete victory.

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Centerville, where Pope had fallen back, dated at 6:30 P.M., on the 30th, directed Banks to “destroy all public property at Bristoe and fall back upon Centerville at once.” “destroy all railroad property. Your troops at Bristoe will withdraw through Brentsville.” This order was received by Banks at daylight on the 31st. Its purport was ominous, indeed. It meant that Pope had been worsted and that we were now in rear of a victorious enemy, were to destroy the property in charge — worth millions — and then by a wide detour to the south to escape, if we were able.

It is now easy to see that he these stores been left in charge of a regiment, or had they been destroyed on the 30th, or left unguarded, and Gen. Banks’ corps ordered to the field, whither it would have cheerfully hastened, it might have turned the fortunes of the day. It then had about 8,000 men. A five-mile march be a direct road would have brought the corps upon Longstreet’s left. A force of that strength and as resolute in assault as it had proved to be, would have been a powerful aid to Pope in the strain and struggle of the doubtful battle of the 30th of August.

Banks obeyed his orders. The engines were destroyed, the cars were soon a mass of flames. They were loaded with all kinds of clothing and all sorts of stores. It was a waste of millions of property. During the destruction a few things were taken by the men; and overcoats were on sale for twenty-five cents for a day or two afterwards.

The saddles, the clothing, the rich stores of sugar and coffee that went into the flames were a valuable sacrifice. The orders, as given, were to destroy baggage and ambulances, but this was so far modified in execution that they might be taken along until it was found that they delayed the march. The column moved at a rapid gait. All knew that we were moving from a dangerous place. Without halt or refreshment, we hurried on. At Brentsville,99 we found the stream rising rapidly, and no bridge was there. The column forded, in deep water, climbed the eastern bank, pressed on through a narrow cut, men, artillery and animals in closely-crowded confusion. Men dropped from exhaustion. Famished horses fell, were unharnessed and left to die. By noon the corps had made a circuit of twenty miles to make a direct distance by railroad track of scarcely five. Here Blackburn’s Ford,100 on the Bull Run, was crossed, and here the corps found a breathing spell, after we had formed in order of battle to await events. The story of the disasters which had befallen our cause in the two preceding days, made our bivouac here rather

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99Brentsville is a hamlet some three or four miles southeast of Bristoe, on the road to Dumfries. Near here Broad Run empties into Cedar Run.

100This ford is about three miles south of Centerville; and about five miles southeast of Manassas Junction.
dismal; for a future full of danger to the country could be foreseen. The next morning we moved up nearer Centerville; and there made a short halt, which enabled us to see in the fields to the westward several divisions of our troops massed, as if ready for some movement. We were soon ordered to move eastward by the road known as the “old Braddock road,” said to have been finished in the time of the “old French war.”

The great mass of Pope’s command was at or near Centerville during the 31st, but the indefatigable Jackson was not resting. Lee had ordered him to throw himself again upon Pope’s line of communication, thus to compel Pope to fall back under the guns of the forts on the Potomac. Jackson crossed the Bull Run at Sudley Springs, made a wide detour to his left, a long march to the north until he reached the Little River turnpike, which leads down to Fairfax Court House from Aldie, then turning to his right he came down near Chantilly and there bivouacked; ready for action on the morrow.

Anticipating some move of this character, Pope had sent to his right and rear Grover’s brigade, Kearny’s division and Reno’s division to watch for the enemy on the Little River turnpike. Hooker was sent farther east to Germantown, about a mile west of Fairfax Court House. At about 5:50 P.M. Jackson’s advance on the Little River turnpike having been discovered, these troops attacked him a little southeast of Chantilly. The Confederates were quickly in line of battle — Hill’s division on the right, Ewell’s division, commanded by Lawton, in the center, and Jackson’s old division on their left. Branch and Field with their brigades, were sent forward to feel out forces. Branch’s brigade was soon driven back in disorder; and Hill’s division, with the brigades of Gregg, Thomas and Pender were thrown into the fight. On our side the battle was maintained chiefly by Kearny’s and Reno’s divisions. The struggle was brought to a close by the coming on of a fearful thunderstorm. The troops were drenched, and it was impossible to load and fire. It is said that at this time one of Jackson’s brigadiers sent him word that at he must fall back, as his men could not use their muskets. “Tell him to hold his ground,” said Jackson; “if his guns will not go off, neither will the enemy’s.” The battle was not decisive, but fairly a Union victory. It was fought with but little artillery, and while the Confederates had the advantage in numbers in action, two or three of their best brigades gave way; and after the battle all retired from the field.

In this engagement we lost that brave and chivalrous soldier, Gen. Phil

\[101\] Chantilly is a little cluster of houses on the Little River turnpike about five miles to the northwest of Fairfax Court House, and three miles northeast of Centerville.

\[102\] These troops were from the corps of Sumner and Heintzeleman [sic].
Kearny, and also Gen. Stevens.\textsuperscript{103} The latter fell leading his division into battle. Kearny, brave and reckless to a fault, dashed ahead of his line in the midst of the blinding storm and gathering dusk, and ran into or so near the enemy’s line that he was shot from his horse by a Confederate to whom he had spoken, supposing he spoke to a Union soldier.

Banks’ corps, at the time this action was about to begin, was on the march from Centerville east on the old Braddock road. It was summoned to support our forces in the battle. The sound of Reno’s musketry brought it to the front. We moved northward from our road across fields to the battleground, and Williams’ division was drawn up in line of battle in Reno’s rear. There we stood, bullets whistling over our heads and through the forests; and there that terrific storm burst upon us. The thunder claps were deafening. The roaring storm “lashed the woods into a fury which drowned the noise of the guns.” The rain fell in bodies, not drops, it seemed. Darkness came prematurely on. The violent shower was followed by a cold, drenching rain. We stood under arms — for none could sit or lie in that soaking storm — during a long, miserable night. After the rain had subsided it became cold. We were drenched and benumbed, supperless, hungry, and our bivouac was one of the most cheerless and comfortless that falls to the lot of soldiers in the field. We thanked God when the dawn came; and never warmth of sunshine felt more grateful.

With early sunshine came our orders to march. It was Pope’s last general order. He directed the several corps to fall back into the intrenchments about Washington. The line of march for Banks’ corps was by the Braddock road to Annandale, where we were to follow the Little River turnpike and take post at or near Fort Worth, on the Potomac near Alexandria. We were soon on the march toward the Potomac. Banks’ corps brought up the rear on that road.

It was a wearisome march as we were frequently stopped by the column in front — stoppages that did not admit of breaking ranks or rest. Late in the afternoon we had passed Annandale, and the march seemed to be nearing its end. The troops were weary, and the animals of the artillery and baggage wagons were well-nigh exhausted. It was with blank dismay that we received Banks’ order at this time that Gordon’s brigade should withdraw from the

\textsuperscript{103}ED. NOTE: These are Philip Kearny and Isaac Ingalls Stevens. Kearny, born in New York on 2 June 1815, accidentally rode into enemy lines at the battle of Chantilly, was shot, and killed instantly. He was originally buried in New York, but his remains later removed to the National Cemetery in Arlington. A New Jersey town where he had resided was renamed “Kearny” in his honor, and the Kearny Medal and Kearny Cross were authorized in his honor. Stevens, born in Andover, Massachusetts on 25 March 1818, was actively involved in repulsing the enemy at Chantilly when hit in the head by a rifle ball; he, too, was killed instantly. He was posthumously promoted to Major General.
column with a battery and return to Fairfax and load government stores into wagons for conveyance to Alexandria. Major Perkins, who brought the order, did not know whether it was intended that we should return to Fairfax Court House or Fairfax station; and as they were then both occupied by the enemy and five miles apart, it seemed to Gordon a most amazing order. He sought out the ambulance in which Banks was reclining, and asked explanation. He got but little. Banks only knew that Pope had given such an order, did not know when it was issued, nor which Fairfax we were ordered to. He would not relieve Gordon from executing it, nor direct as to which place he should go. Gordon showed him that they were five miles apart. Finally Banks advised that he go to Fairfax Court House, and if he found no provisions there, then to go to Fairfax station.

This command we set about obeying. It was hard enough to be ordered out on a long, night-march, weary and hungry as we were; and it was not a cheerful prospect opened, that we should move back into the face of Lee’s army, with all the rest of ours drawn into Washington. The colonels shrugged their shoulders, Gordon says, and held their tongues. The men looked dejected; and he felt a contempt for both pope and Banks, that, as a soldier, he knew how to repress. We had gone some distance on this backward march, when the light began to wane. We were not far from Fairfax Court House. Then, in the gloaming, we met the commander of the rear guard of some corps, or detached command hurrying to the rear. He asked where we were going. Gordon told him, “to Fairfax.” “Can you whip the whole rebel army”? he satirically asked. Pointing in the direction of the place he informed Gordon that the enemy were in bivouac all about Fairfax Court House and to the eastward of it. At the same time Stuart’s horse artillery was far to the east of the court house, cannonading our rear guard on a road leading out from Fairfax and parallel to the one we were on. Gordon, thereupon, resolved to seek out Banks and get further instructions. He left Ruger in command of the brigade and sought out Banks. It cost him some miles travel. Banks would not relieve him from the order. It is very likely that if we had proceeded to execute this order, we should have been utterly destroyed, for at least 30,000 Confederates were within less than an hour’s march of Fairfax Court House.

Colonel Ruger, as Gordon records, had followed with the rear guard back to near where the Braddock road comes into the turnpike. Gordon decided that it was his military duty not to attempt the execution of the order in the light of the knowledge he then supposed he had, so we moved on in the darkness, and after midnight we were halted, and sunk down to rest in utter exhaustion. The next morning when we rose to our feet, stiffened with marching and sleeping on the ground, and weak with hunger, having been over two days without food, we found ourselves at Fort Worth near Alexandria.
The same day, after a few hours rest and an issue of part rations, the corps moved further north, close to Fort Albany, nearly opposite South Washington, about four miles from Alexandria. There we bivouacked another night and on the 3rd crossed the aqueduct bridge over the Potomac into Georgetown and thence north to Tenallytown, where we found out wagons, camp equipage, and our mail, of which we had had none since leaving Culpepper. The luxury of a tent, a chance for a bath, a change of underclothing we enjoyed to the full. On the 6th we moved to near Rockville.

Whether justly or unjustly, the feeling was strong in the army against Pope and McDowell. Halleck did not come in for his share of censure at the time. But all knew, and all felt, that as soldiers we had not had a fair chance. We had generally had the best of the fighting. But we has been outgeneraled, and whenever battle had been given or taken, the enemy had been careful to bring the most men and guns to the point of collision. So far as we had been defeated it had been in detail. The temper of the army as well as the country was not then cool enough to be dispassionate; and it is not unlikely that these two generals were unjustly condemned. But the more the story of that eventful campaign is studied the stronger becomes the conviction that on our side nearly everything that was done was done wrong. Every battle that we lost could have been won if the troops which ought to have been and could have been on the field had been present.

It was with joy and enthusiasm that the troops heard promulgated the order104 of the president assigning Gen. McClellan to the defenses of

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104 The order read: “Major-General McClellan will have command of the fortifications of Washington and of all the troops for the defense of the capitol.”

The Confederate losses from August 23d to September 2d, their ports place at nearly 20,000 men killed and wounded. It is morally certain that they were much larger. And it is well-known that there severe marches and disregard of the needs of the men, requiring of them more than was in the power of human endurance, which mark Jackson’s campaigns, broke down many thousands of his soldiers. It is said that his path on his swift marches was dotted with broken-down men, who were left to die or to shift for themselves as best they could. Contempt for the lives and comfort of the common soldiery seemed to be a characteristic of the Confederate leaders. The Union losses do not appear to be accurately reported. They were probably fully 15,000 killed and wounded, and the stragglers, especially from the army that came from the Peninsula, were to be counted by thousands.
Washington. This order was made, as we now know, with an ill grace by the authorities. But in the state of things then existing, it was manifesting the only thing to be done.
CHAPTER XVI.
UNDER M’CLELLAN — ANTIETAM.

THE corps to which the Third Wisconsin belonged remained in camp near Rockville some two days. Changes indicative of reorganization were making on all sides. Gen. Banks was assigned to the troops for the immediate defense of Washington. On September 5th, Gen. Pope was relieved from command and sent to the Department of the Northwest soon after. Our corps was assigned temporarily to Gen. Sumner. New regiments were added to the old brigades; and we received the Thirteenth New Jersey, Col. E. A. Carman, and the One Hundred and Seventh New York, Col. Van Valkenburgh — two full and excellent regiments, destined to serve with us to the close of the war.

The excitement in Washington and throughout the country was intense. Gen. Lee’s plans were not unfolded and the worst was feared. McClellan was busy with the work of reorganization. The armies of Virginia and the Potomac were consolidated; and a few days’ rest began to restore the tone of the men.

On the 3rd, Stonewall Jackson left his camp on Ox Hill, near Fairfax Court House, and started his column northward. The Confederates had resolved on the invasion of the Northern States. “On to Maryland,” was the clamor of the rebel ranks. Passing through Dranesville and Leesburg, his command waded the Potomac at White’s Ford. When they reached the middle of the river, Jackson pulled off his hat, the band struck up the air of “Maryland, My Maryland,” and the soldiers sang that popular rebel song.

Halleck thought this was a feint of the enemy to draw our troops after him, while Lee assaulted Washington. The authorities at the Capital found fault with McClellan, because he was disposed to move north and drive out the invaders. But he put his columns in motion, Burnside on the right, Sumner, to whom we were temporarily attached, in the center, and Franklin with his left on the Potomac formed the left wing. In echelon, with right thrown forward, we began to forge northward. The men marched in the fields while the roads were given up to the artillery and trains. On the 9th, the Third with its brigade moved near Middlebrook; near Damascus the 10th; on the 11th and 12th to near Gainesville, where we learned that the Confederate army were evacuating Frederick, and moving west over the South Mountain. Other rumors — and the camps were full of them — were that we must fight at the crossing of the Monocacy. On the 13th we marched to Frederick fording the Monocacy and going into camp in the suburbs of the city. We heard the cannon, as Burnside’s advance was pushing the Confederate rear guard over the Catoctin mountain, some five miles out from Frederick on the road to
Middletown.\textsuperscript{105}

Here we pleasantly greeted our old friends at Frederick; and though the Confederates had taxed their larders, they all had something toothsome for the “Third Wisconsin boys,” who did not outstay their welcome, for four o’clock in the morning found them on the march, on the broad turnpike leading northwesterly. Our ammunition trains were moving three abreast, while two dense columns of troops moved through the fields on either side.

On reaching the top of the Catoctin; our men could hear the cannon and rattle of musketry and see by glimpses the lines of our troops moving bravely up to the attack on the mountain westward. These were our troops engaged at Fox’s Gap and Turner’s Gap of South Mountain. Our divisions hurried on to their help; and when it had passed Middletown it was directed off to the right, by a circuitous route, to turn the left flank of the enemy’s position. Before the left could be reached our troops had gallantry carried the position by direct assault. At the same time our troops had wrested Crampton Gap some six miles nearer the Potomac, from McLaw’s [sic] division after a spirited battle.

Our command had a weary, hurrying time of it on that side march. It moved across lots, through tall corn, through brooks, climbed rocks, groped and stumbled; and finally when near midnight the guns had ceased at the gap, moved back to the turnpike and sunk down to bivouac at one o’clock in the morning after a twenty-one hours’ march, the night hours of which were spent in groping in the dark up the mountain side. It was dinnerless, supperless and in the chill night. It wished the war was over. The next morning it was up early and pushing over the mountain. The enemy had withdrawn from the passes during the night. The road was strewn with muskets and accoutrements — sure signs of a recent battle — and vast amounts of plunder of all sorts which the fleeing enemy had gathered in Maryland, and now in their haste had thrown away. Their dead lay thickly about, piled on each other in places, where Reno’s and Gibbon’s men pushing up the heights had slain them. Here the gallant Reno on our side had met the soldier’s end. This morning the old veteran Gen. Mansfield\textsuperscript{106} arrived and took command of our corps. He was a soldierly, brave, gray-haired old man; but he rode his horse with proud, martial air and was full of military ardor. As the command pushed along, it noted that all the houses were filled with wounded men; and squads of prisoners, from twenty to a hundred or more were constantly passing to the rear. It was a grand sight to see, as out troops in high spirits and at a gait

\textsuperscript{105}Middletown is 12 miles northwest of Frederick in the valley between Catoctin and South Mountain.

\textsuperscript{106}ED. NOTE: Joseph King Fenno Mansfield (22 Dec 1803 - 18 Sep 1862}
almost double-quick moved down the mountain side. Suddenly McClellan appeared, passing with his staff to the front. As he pushed through the column he was cheered lustily by the men; when he came to the Second Massachusetts and Third Wisconsin there was no cheering or throwing of hats. The men closed up in ranks, marched in step, at carry arms, in true military style, and in that way paid him honors like bred soldiers. The column corps after corps, poured down the mountain road into the Antietam valley.

The occasional booming of cannon in front quickened the pace; and in the late afternoon the brigade was near Keedysville, where it camped. Next morning (Tuesday) at 10 o’clock, the brigade, under Gen. Mansfield, took position on a range of low hills near Antietam creek. “We are going directly into battle,” said Gen. Mansfield, as he passed Col. Ruger. But he was mistaken as to the time. The troops were merely taking their places in the line. The enemy’s batteries from the hills opposite were shelling our lines. The troops on our side were pouring down from the pass at Turner’s Gap, and taking position. By night, as it was reported, the whole army was up, except Franklin, who was supposed to have marched to the relief of Harper’s Ferry.

The story also came, and there was more truth in it than in camp rumors generally, that Harper’s Ferry had disgracefully surrendered without a struggle.

At about 9 o’clock at night, orders in undertone were given to be ready to move. Soon Gen. Mansfield — the old veteran was full of energy — came to the Third brigade and asked. [sic] “When will you be ready?” “Ready now, sir,” was the reply of the commander. “That’s right,” said he, “but you are the only brigade ready.” Soon the corps was in motion, moved to the northwest, in the darkness and through a field, across Antietam creek, and lay down in a low piece of ground, on the borders of the field of Antietam.

The position taken was near Hoffman’s house, which is about three and one-half miles northeast of Sharpsburg. It was a little less than a mile in rear of Hooker’s corps, which was then well up against the enemy. The rebel line was at this point about one mile from the bivouac of the Twelfth corps.

The men had hardly lain down when a sharp musketry in the front startled them. It proved later to be two parties of rebels who, in moving in the dark, had mistaken each other for Federals.

The tired soldiers slept. Neither the light showers which drenched the bivouac nor the sure prospect of the morrow’s fight disturbed the slumbers that exhausted nature claimed.

At daybreak the fire of skirmishers was the reveille that wakened so many thousands to their last day on earth. Soon the artillery joined its roar. Gen. Hooker had opened the fight. Soon the crash of his muskets and those of the enemy told that the lines were engaged.

Gordon’s brigade, in fact the corps, formed in close column of
companies, moved forward a short distance to the right, and sat down under orders to await events. Then came an order to move. Forward toward the battle the corps went, bearing a little to the right. Then it was halted and some of the hungry men began preparations for coffee. Presently orders came. Hooker had pushed the enemy back, but he was meeting stronger opposition. His corps was thinning. Gibbons’ brigade had been in and suffered terribly, [sic] Others has been decimated on our side. The wounded streamed back — some but slightly wounded, others limping along using their guns for crutches. They stopped to tell the men of Gordon how they were driving the “Johnnies” in front. Stretcher-bearers were carrying the severely wounded to the field hospitals at the rear, down in a valley behind the line. Ammunition wagons dashed to the rear. Then a dismounted cannon was dragged back for repairs. Then a lull in the musketry, a renewed roar of cannon, loud cheers from Hooker’s men; and this told that our side had the best of the opening. Presently a new uproar. The enemy had been reinforced on their left and were strengthening the line that Hooker had forced back in his spirited attack.

And here let us glance briefly at the positions, ground, and general features of the battlefield. While nothing like a general or full description of this great battle can here be given, enough must be explained to show the part borne by our command, which is all that can here be told.

The little village of Sharpsburg, Maryland, lies 15 miles north of Harper’s Ferry, and about one mile east of the Potomac. Two and a half miles north of the village, the Potomac makes a large bend to the east for a mile, then turning sharply flows to the west and then south in a zigzag course until it has passed a mile south of Sharpsburg. Then it bears to the east. The Antietam creek, a deep, sluggish stream, flows south, passing Sharpsburg on the east side about half a mile and empties into the Potomac about three miles south of Sharpsburg. The depth of this stream, the nature of its banks, and the high grounds which commanded it on the Sharpsburg side, made the passage of the stream on the east and southern sides of the village very difficult. In fact, fording was not practicable. The position was an excellent one for defense. Lee, finding that he must take battle on Maryland soil, selected this position to receive the assault. He rested his right on the high grounds south of Sharpsburg, facing to the east. His left extended up the western bank of the Antietam, thence northerly on the west side along the Hagerstown turnpike, which runs due north from Sharpsburg, and his extreme left rested on the Potomac at the eastern bend north of the village. Thus he was protected from direct assault on his right and center. His left center, running north, found good defensive positions in a sunken road and in outcropping ledges of rock, behind which his men could stand unexposed while sweeping their front with a deadly fire. He had placed his troops, Longstreet on the right with his
artillery planted so as to command the bridges which crossed the Antietam on the roads leading in from the east and southeast, Hill in the center, and Jackson on his left. In approaching the enemy McClellan had been obliged to attack on the left. Hooker had crossed the Antietam at one of the northern bridges, which had been left undefended, and formed his line in front of Jackson, and Mansfield had followed, as has been told above.

About a mile and a half north of Sharpsburg on the west side of the Hagerstown pike is the Dunker (or Dunkard) church. To the west and a few rods behind it is a piece of open woods which extend north to the westward of the turnpike and out-cropping ledges of rock in these woods form most excellent breastworks. North of the Dunker church was a large open field, east of the turnpike about 200 roads [sic] north and south, and 150 rods wide, though oval shaped. ‘In this clearing, a part of which was a large cornfield, the battle was to rage most fiercely. On the east of this field were other woods, called in most descriptions of this battle “the East Woods.” The Confederates in their first position had run their line through the East woods, taking advantage of a zigzag sunken road to shelter a part of their lines from fire. They were eastward and southeast of the Dunker church.

Returning now to Hooker on the right of our line: He had forced the enemy on their left out of the north end of the east woods and back into the west woods northward of the Dunker church. He followed up his success too closely. Jackson threw in Lawton’s division to resist him; and from their safe position behind the ledges they poured in a murderous fire. Hooker’s advance already much weakened by its terrible losses began to waver. Lawton, seeing this, advanced his division and that of Starke, and assuming the offensive, pushed his men out into the cornfield to retake the places from which they had been crowded by Hooker’s onset. The Federals began to give away.

“Tell Mansfield to send up a division,” was Hooker’s order to an aid. The old hero hastened to obey. Williams’ division immediately moved forward at double-quick. The old man rode from regiment to regiment cheering the men by his brave words and example. “Boys,” said he, “we are going to lick them to-day.” The nearing sounds of musketry told that the Confederates were advancing. Crawford’s brigade was put in on the right, Williams’ division reached high ground and deployed. Gordon’s brigade was thrown into line, after passing through the northerly part of the east woods. The Third Wisconsin deployed as calmly as in battalion drill at the edge of the field, and to the northeast of the Dunker Church. The formation of the brigade line was: on the right the Second Massachusetts, in the center the Third Wisconsin, on

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107 ED. NOTE: A rod is a linear measurement equal to 5.5 yards, 16.5 feet, or 5.03 meters. 200 rods is 3,300 feet or five-eighths of a mile; 150 rods is 2,475 feet or just under one-half mile. The original text has an error of using “roads” when “rods” was meant, hence the [sic] following.
the left the Twenty-seventh Indiana, down towards some burned buildings. The One Hundred and Seventh New York Gordon put in reserve at the edge of the woods on the left, which Hooker said must be held at all hazards. The Thirteenth New Jersey were at first held in reserve a little in rear of the front line.

As the Third Wisconsin formed its line the field of battle was opened before it. Far to the left our lines could be seen. The right view was obstructed by the buildings of Miller’s house and the orchard trees. In front, about one hundred yards and on the right of the regiment, was Battery B, Fourth United States artillery, with twelve-pounder brass guns, which had evidently been in action for some time. Their horses were killed or crippled and many of their men had been killed or wounded; and the Confederate sharpshooters were making serious havoc with them. In front of the Third on the left of the battery were the remnants of a brigade, still stubbornly contesting the advance of Lawton’s and Starke’s Confederate divisions. As soon as Gordon’s brigade completed its deployment it moved forward as far as the battery. The gunners, thus supported, opened with a will upon the advancing Confederates.

While this deployment was going on the brave old Mansfield, as full of ardor as any young man, rode forward to reconnoiter the position, and fair mark as he sat his horse in open view, he fell mortally wounded. General Williams at once assumed command of the corps. The Third Wisconsin had to wait a minute or two before it could open fire to let the front be cleared of the little parties that still fought the rebel advance through the cornfield. When they had fallen back and passed to Gordon’s left, the fire opened with a will. The enemy were moving diagonally across the front and the fire of Gordon’s brigade told terribly. The rebel line broke and fled to the west woods; but before they broke another line advanced squarely to the front of Gordon. And now the battle raged. The Third Wisconsin was in a very exposed position and its lines thinned rapidly. It stood on higher ground than the Confederate, “the sky behind it,” in good musket range and close line — a good target. But its fire was delivered rapidly and with good effect. A winrow of cartridge papers for months afterwards indicated plainly its position and the steadiness with which it stood in line. It drew the fire of the enemy from its conspicuous position more completely than did the Second

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108ED. NOTE: Hit in the stomach by rifle fire, Mansfield was taken to a field hospital, where he died 18 September 1862. He was promoted posthumously to Major General on 12 March 1863, with a date of rank of 18 July 1862.

109These were the troops of Hood’s division. Lee, perceiving that his left was hard pressed, and that if that ground was lost all was lost, had stripped his center to reinforce this part of the line. Hood came in against Williams and Hill was sent against part of Green’s division on Williams’ left.
Sumner, “the old bull of the woods,” as his boys called him, was in front of his line, bare-headed his gray locks streaming, eyes flashing, and as brave an old soldier as ever felt the ardor of battle.

Massachusetts. About seventy-five yards in front was a rail fence, and beyond that the memorable cornfield, that day harvested with bullets and canister, and drenched with blood. On the Confederates came, their line overlapping Gordon’s brigade on its left. The batteries poured in canister, infantry rained bullets upon them, and their line melted rapidly, but was determined not to flinch. A part of this line reached the fence, and began firing. From the higher ground where the Third stood could be seen a steady stream of their wounded, limping, crawling or being helped to the rear. But the Third was suffering severely too; and the other regiments of our brigade -- the whole division and corps as well — were hotly engaged. Here, as Gen. Hood says in his report, was “a most terribly clash of arms.” The regiments of Confederates in front of the Third and Twenty-seventh Indiana were now lying down and pouring a destructive fire into them. Colonel Ruger suggested to Col. Andrews, of the Second Massachusetts, that he enfilade them. The Second had moved forward into an orchard about seventy-five yards in advance of the other regiments, and formed his line so that his left was perpendicular and his right was parallel to our regiment. The left of his regiment, by a slight change of position, was enabled to give a cross fire across the front of the Third and Twenty-Seventh. These volleys, added to the front fire, were so deadly that the enemy broke and fled to the “west woods,” north of the Dunker church.

As they disappeared in the woods Gen. Hooker rode up, the blood dripping from his foot, and ordered the regiments of our brigade to fix bayonets and pursue. With a hurrah the remnants that were left of the Third Wisconsin and the Twenty-seventh Indiana started on this charge.

About this time Sumner’s corps came in from the east. The Second Massachusetts laid down for it to pass. The little fragments of Ruger’s and Colgrove’s regiments were pushing on through the cornfields nearly to the west woods. Just as the little band was pluckily getting into shape to charge into the deeper woods, and [sic] officer of Sumner’s staff galloped up and told them to get out of the way, so as to let Sumner put in a division at that point. These two fragments of regiments moved back through the cornfield gathering up several rebel regimental flags as trophies, and Sedgwick’s fresh

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106 How long the regiment stood in this exposed placed under fire, cannot be accurately stated. Colonel Colgrove thinks it must have been two hours. From Col. Van Valkenburgh’s report it would appear to be about an hour. The regiment fired away all its ammunition, that from the boxes of the killed and wounded bring used; and this the men must have fired 50 or 60 rounds per man.

111 Sumner, “the old bull of the woods,” as his boys called him, was in front of his line, bare-headed his gray locks streaming, eyes flashing, and as brave an old soldier as ever felt the ardor of battle.
division went in. The Second Massachusetts and Thirteenth New Jersey were thrown forward on the left to support and strengthen Sumner's assault. They reached the little dirt road fenced on both sides that run northwest from the turnpike at the Dunker church. The corps of Sumner which had gone in met a hot reception. The enemy had been re-enforced and securely posted behind a natural breastwork of ledges. He received Sedgwick’s division with such murderous fire that it soon retired, minus half its men.

From the position the regiment occupied in the stubble field, where it stood after it had withdrawn to make room for Sedgwick, it witnessed the repulse of that division. It saw other assaults farther to the left, which were partly successful. 112 When Sedgwick’s division fell back, the enemy rashly resolved to advance. To meet this counter-attack, the Third regiment was placed in support of Battery M, First New York Artillery (Capt. Cothran). This attack was repulsed by the batteries. The hard fighting on this part of the field was practically over for the day. Soon after noon the ground was occupied by fresh troops and the brigade of Gordon was withdrawn a little to the rear. a [sic] rail fence gave fuel, and soon the men were making coffee and preparing a breakfast.

And then came the sad duty of taking an account of the losses of the regiment. Col. Ruger reports the total number taken into action at 340, and the losses in killed were 35; in wounded, as reported, 163. In the official record it is 166. The list reported to the adjutant General of Wisconsin is given below.

LIST OF LOSSES IN THIRD REGIMENT AT THE BATTLE OF ANTIETAM
SEPT. 17, 1862.


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112Soon after Sedgwick’s bold assault, which came near deciding the battle, the divisions of French and Richardson, of Sumner’s corps, came on to the field further to the left, and they charged the rebel line nearer its center, to the east and south of the Dunker Church, between the Roulette farm and the house of Dr. Piper, south of the filed in which Hooker, Williams and Sedgwick had fought. The battle here was very sanguinary. One of the events of it was Col. Barlow’s brigade enfilading them, almost filling the road with their dead bodies.

The brave and soldierly Lieut. Joseph P. Shepard of Co. G was mortally wounded. Lieut. Alexander N. Reed, of Co. I was mortally wounded and died the next day. Captain Geo. W. Whitman, Lieut. W. B. Dick, of Co. B and Lieut. Chauncey Field, Co. H (then acting adjutant), were so severely wounded that they were honorably discharged for wounds in the following April. Captain George W. Stevenson and Lieut. Warham Parks each received so severe a wound that they were for some weeks disabled for service. Colonel Ruger received a wound in the head; but he regarded it so slight that he would not report it.

The loss in non-commissioned officers and men had been severe. First Sergeant Fred Glaser, of Co. A, and Sergeant Colburn Blake, of Co. B, were valuable officers, sure of early promotion. The men who were killed, whose names are below [Ed. Note: In this edition, above] were of the best class of soldiers, and good citizens as well, and each deserves a more extended eulogium than space will here permit.\footnote{Ed. Note: More information about these individuals may be found at the back of this volume in the “Roster of the Third Regiment, Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry.”} There were eight officers killed and
wounded out of the twelve who went into action. Several were absent sick, wounded, broken-down, or on detached service. When the battle [sic] was over Lieuts. J. T. Marvin and Julian W. Hinkley were in command of the little handful that remained. Each of these officers was very efficient, and remarkably brave and cool in action.

Our brigade and division had suffered heavy losses. The new regiments of our brigade, the Thirteenth New Jersey and One Hundred and Seventh New York, had their baptism in battle this day, and they behaved with the gallantry and steadiness of veterans. It took soldierly conduct to wring words of praise from the stern and exacting Gordon. Exposed to fire during the day, suffering considerable losses, they vied with those who had seen more service. Gordon says of them: “The One Hundred and Seventh New York, Col. Van Valkenburg, [sic] and the Thirteenth New Jersey, Col. Carman, being new troops. [sic] might well stand appalled at such exposure, but they did not flinch in the discharge of their duties. I have no words but those of praise for their conduct. They fought like veteran soldiers, and stood shoulder to shoulder with those who had borne the brunt of war on the Peninsula, in the Shenandoah Valley, and from Front Royal to the Rapidan. They were led by those who inspired them with courage, and they followed with a determination to conquer or die.” The One Hundred and Seventh New York maintained the position to which Gordon assigned them, and when the enemy gave way they charged across the field in splendid style under a perfect hailstorm of bullets and shell.

The Thirteenth New Jersey was, as has been stated, sent in with Sumner’s corps into the west woods, where it fought bravely. After retiring from this position with the Second Massachusetts it was again ordered into the woods near the school-house to support Greene’s brigade, and here it fought under fire for one hour. The losses in our command, and all losses in the battle, are given [below].

It need not be told here how bravely the Twenty-seventh Indiana stood to its work. Its fearful list of casualties shows the severe exposure under which it had stood. When such a regiment was on the flank the men of the

114 Gordon specially commends the Thirteenth New Jersey. At one time he sent it to the relief of Gen. Greene, who was holding the woods on the left. The bravery with which they stood to the work elicited high commendations from Gen. Greene.

115 Col. Van Valkenburgh and Lieut.-Col. Diven of the One Hundred and Seventh New York, were at the time members of Congress. They raised this splendid regiment and led it into the field.

116 EDITOR’S BIBLIOGRAPHIC NOTE: For more about the 27th Indiana see — Brown, Edmund Randolph. *The Twenty-Seventh Indiana Volunteer Infantry in the War of the Rebellion, 1861 to 1865: First Division, 12th and 20th corps / by a member of Company C*. Monticello, Indiana: 1899.
Third felt safe. The Second Massachusetts was here, as at Winchester and Cedar Mountain, superb in its bearing. Fortunately less openly exposed than the two other old regiments of the brigade, it did not suffer quite as severely; but its fighting was gallant, its steadiness and perfect discipline every moment apparent. It lost its gallant Lieut.-Col. Wilder Dwight, as true a gentleman and manly a soldier as any in the annals of chivalry. As a ball crashed through his thigh he said calmly: “They have done it for me.” He lived a day or two, cheerfully bearing his pain, facing death with a sweetness, a kind of consideration for those about him and a serene pride that he was to die for his country, that illustrate the true nobility of those gallant boys of the Union army who fell by thousands that the nation might live.

**FEDERAL LOSSES IN THE BATTLE OF ANTIETAM**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Command</th>
<th>KILLED</th>
<th>WOUNDED</th>
<th>CAPTURED OR MISSING</th>
<th>AGGREGATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Officers</td>
<td>Enl Men</td>
<td>Officers</td>
<td>Enl Men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twenty-Seventh Indiana</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Massachusetts</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thirteenth New Jersey</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>107th New York</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zouaves d’Afrique</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Wisconsin</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Brigade</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>527</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Division</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>827</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Twelfth Corps</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>258</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>1,823</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Army of Potomac</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>1,469</td>
<td>473</td>
<td>9,075</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During the later hours of the day the brigade remained supporting batteries. The Twenty-seventh Indiana was at one time sent to Gen. Greene, who had his hands full in holding his ground on the left.

Late in the afternoon Gordon’s brigade was again called into action by Gen. McClellan’s personal direction, and put in further to the right. This was to support Gen. Franklin’s corps, which had been brought up and was intending to make one grand assault; but it was not made. Sumner, the veteran commander, deemed it injudicious. If it had been resolutely made it

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170EDITOR’S BIBLIOGRAPHIC NOTE: For more about the 2nd Massachusetts see — Gordon, George Henry. *Brook Farm to Cedar Mountain.* Boston, J. R. Osgood & Co: 1883


would probably have crushed Lee.

The troops rested on the field. The results of the day were a Union victory. The Confederate line had been driven at all points on the right, their left. Every assault they had made had been repulsed in open field. Their losses has been fearful.

The troops slept in bivouac in the field. The fatigue and severe strain of the day made rest grateful; and they forgot the dead and wounded lying thickly about them.

Early in the morning McClellan was astir. He was for again attacking. Sever of his generals were in favor of it; others, especially Sumner, counseled otherwise. They urged that the troops to be used were mostly raw and liable to panics; that now Washington was safe, Pennsylvania protected, the invasion repulsed, and that while the chances of success were great, the results of failure would be disastrous in the extreme to the country. Alas! they did not know the desperate straits of the enemy.

“The sun of September 18th rose upon one of those scenes of suffering and anguish which humble the pride of man by the exhibition of his weakness and cruelty.” Some 4,000 dead men lay upon the field, and on or near it some 20,000 more lay suffering of wounds. Shrunken battalions, but little larger than companies, stood here and there about their colors. Batteries, environed by dead or dying horses, were planted to begin the work of death. The troops expected to begin the battle. Refreshed with coffee and their rest their morale was excellent. Early the troops of Gordon’s brigade were put further to the right a little distance, and were ready and willing to fight, and eager to make the day decisive. During the day the arrangement was made to allow burial parties to go between the lines and bury the dead. This gave opportunity to see the fearful havoc that has been wrought. Numerous as our casualties had been the Confederate dead were everywhere more abundant than ours. The bloody cornfield was a tragic sight. It has been fought over several times. The dead lay as they fell. More than three fourths of them were Confederates, and so thickly strewn that for rods one could have walked on dead bodies.119

The men of the Third improved the opportunity to exchange arms, throwing away their old rifle muskets, and picked up on the field new Springfield rifles of a later, better pattern. Every preparation was made for an attack in the morning. The divisions of Couch and Humphreys were coming up; and hopes were high that the people accompanying Gen. Lee would be finished up on the morrow.

General McClellan issued orders on the night of the 18th for a general attack in the morning. The troops were glad to begin the fray; and on the 19th

119 ED. NOTE: The Battle of Antietam, fought 17 Sep 1862, was the bloodiest single day of the entire Civil War.
promptly advanced. The picket line of the enemy at once surrendered; and Gen. Lee and his army had forded the river during the night and were now on Virginia soil.

New dispositions were hastily made. Williams’ division was at once ordered to Maryland Heights, and was started out early that morning, passing over the battlefield, where many dead lay yet unburied. The stench from the swollen bodies, shapeless, bloated, bursting their clothing as they lay in the sun, was unendurable. The division marched south through Sharpsburg, thence southeast by way of Burkittsville, down the valley through which we had made our first march the year before, then turning sharply to the right, Gordon’s brigade, then commanded by Col. Ruger, climbed Maryland Heights, some two miles north of the southern terminus and moved down the spine of this rocky height, and in the afternoon stood looking over Harper’s Ferry; and off in the hazy distance in Shenandoah Valley the tents of Lee’s army could be seen.
CHAPTER XXVII.
ON TO ATLANTA — KULP’S FARM.

MOVEMENTS of the armies for the last week had brought them in front of the fortified lines along the Kenesaw\textsuperscript{120} mountain. Schofield’s corps (the 23\textsuperscript{rd}) was on the extreme right on the Sandtown road, Hooker on his left covered the Marietta road, Howard came next, then Palmer. McPherson was farther to the left in front of Big Shanty. In front of the center, and to the northeast of where the Third was in line, frowned Old Kenesaw. The right of the Union line had worked southward, and Hooker was not facing eastward against the strong lines there were an extension from Kenesaw to the southwest. His advance had brought his troops with Schofield’s on his right upon “Kulp’s Farm.” This is on a road leading to the southwest from Marietta and some three miles out. With its church, school house and slave quarters it seemed quite a village. From these houses running north is a valley in which is Greer’s plantation. The land is rising on both sides. In the ravine is a small rivulet fringed with trees, with a few thickly wooded knolls scattered over the valley and on its western sides. Hooker, knowing that a heavy force was in his front, sent out a heavy line of skirmishers on the morn-[sic] of the 22\textsuperscript{d}. Ruger was moved to the right and gained ground forward, on the south of Kulp’s farm. There were indications of an attack; and Hooker prepared to meet it, with which view he had Williams throw out along his front a heavy line of skirmishers to keep the enemy engaged while he formed line. The One Hundred and Twenty-third New York supported by the Forty-sixth Pennsylvania, One Hundred and Forty-first New York and Fifth Connecticut, advanced across the fields toward the Greer house. Ruger’s brigade was further to the right; on the side of that was Schofield’s Twenty-third corps. Geary’s division was on the left of Williams, whose line was well-chosen and in convex form.

Hood, who seems to have planned the attack on his own motion, formed his corps at 4 o’clock, evidently in the belief that he could strike Hooker unawares, while in march. He placed Stevenson in the center, Steward on his right, and Hindman considerable to the left — all in line of divisions front. Throwing out a cloud of skirmishers the Confederates came on in grand array, cheering and yelling rebel style. The Union skirmishers fell back slowly, while our lines braced up to receive them. Winegar’s\textsuperscript{121} battery of 3-inch rifled guns and Woodbury’s light 12-pounders joined in a converging fire of canister and

\textsuperscript{120} ED. NOTE. At some point after the publication of the original text of this work, the spelling of “Kenesaw” changed, and it is presently found on maps as “Kennesaw Mountain.”

\textsuperscript{121} ED. NOTE. Lieutenant Charles E. Winegar of New York
case-shot, and with the guns of the Twenty-third corps, which played obliquely across the front of Ruger’s brigade, made fearful havoc with the now exposed enemy. The main force of his attack fell on Knipe’s brigade to the left. The Third Wisconsin, not itself directly confronted, as Hindman’s division had advanced further to the Union right and struck Hascall’s division of the Twenty-third corps, fired obliquely down the ravine that extended northward from where the regiment stood. The rebels, when checked by the terrible fire of Knipe’s brigade and the batteries had sought this ravine for shelter; and they were here exposed to the enfilading volleys of Ruger’s brigade, which added to the storm of bullets, shell and other missiles from the batteries soon changed their cheers into groans, shrieks and cries of terror. It is doubtful whether the regiment ever poured its fire into a more helpless and compact mass of victims. It was an episode of most murderous war. As the advancing rebels came under the deadly fire, Stewart’s line wavered. Stevenson came forward. Officers could be seen frantically waving sabers and trying to rally men. Hotter and hotter poured the fire. Soon the rebel line gave way. A panic-stricken mob, it fell back with riderless horses and dragging banners. Our regiment was at this time well sheltered on one of the thickly-wooded knolls; and did not suffer in this action. Meantime, Hood had sent two regiments down the Powder Spring road to march past the Union right, as he supposed. They struck Hascall’s division of Schofield’s corps (Twenty-third), having passed to the right of Ruger, and were soon sent back broken, thinned and dismayed, after a stubborn fight. In this assault the Confederate loss in front of Williams and Geary was over 800; and in front of Hascall it was also great; 300 of their dead were buried by Williams’ details, and 1,100 muskets were picked up.

This mad blow of Hood’s was given in the evident belief that Hooker was unprepared and moving carelessly in column. Among his many mistakes this was a sad one for his people. A correspondent of the New York Herald who was over the field after the repulse thus writes: “Along the little stream ran a rail fence. The rebels had crowded behind this for protection, but were literally mowed down. The torn, bloody knapsacks, haversacks, and frequent pools of blood were ghastly evidences of how they suffered. The stream was choked up with bodies and discolored with blood. In the ravine and around the house where they had crowded for shelter, their bodies lay piled on one another,” this was the place into which the volleys of Ruger had poured.

An amusing episode happened while in bivouac under the guns of Kenesaw, which rather took the conceit out of the veterans, showing that they were not panic-proof, old and hardened as they were. The brigade one night had stacked arms in close order, regiment behind regiment, in a little copse of woods to be out of sight of Kenesaw. In the dead of night, when the brigade was in deepest sleep, one of the company mules got loose, ran into
the woods and into the bivouac of the brigade. He knocked over a stack of
guns, exploding several in an adjoining regiment. The men were awakened
by the shots, and accustomed to expect night attacks, their first, waking
thought was that the rebels had caught them napping. There was a moment
when the regiments were on the point of a general Bull Run stampede, and
the Third came near catching the infection. Colonel Hawley’s voice, “Steady,
men, steady, there,” restored order. The next morning there was not a man
in any regiment of the brigades, who knew anything about the occurrence.
Every one insisted that he had slept soundly all night.

The work up to this time had been most arduous. Rain, mud, gloomy
woods, dense thickets — a scene of dismal and nasty discomfort. Broken
sleep, night marches, the constant vigilance of the picket and skirmish line,
the hard labor of building breastworks — only men of skin, bone and gristle
could endure such a service; and that was all that was left in the frames of
these sturdy men. But they were confident, cheerful, even jolly; and when
tired of shooting on the picket line, would go back a little out of range, pull out
a greasy pack of cards, squat down around a rubber blanket and enjoy with
zest a game of euchre or “old sledge,” and then filling the cartridge boxes
return by darting from tree to tree to the skirmish lines each taking a stink to
knock over a “Johnnie” before dark. During these days Col. Hawley was
constantly at the front line; and Lieut.-Col. Stevenson and Major Parks were
among the best commanders of a skirmish line to be found in the army.

The 23rd and 24th were spent in crowding forward a little, strengthening
works, and working up toward the right of the Kenesaw position. The activity
was on this day and the 26th chiefly in front of McPherson. The 25th was a
skirmish day; and on the morning of the 26th the brigade forged to the right,
and built a new line of works.

The 27th was the day Sherman had selected for an assault on Kenesaw.
In this bloody, unsuccessful assault the Third and Williams’ division took no
part. But Ruger’s brigade was extended along Geary’s front, while he massed
his division to support Howard’s corps which bore the brunt of that desperate
charge and suffered the heaviest losses. McPherson had at the same time
advances; and Logan’s corps had gained some ground at the base of the
mountain, driving the enemy from two successive lines of works. The
Sixteenth corps had also made an attack upon the enemy’s lines, but had
 gained no advantage.

Early in the morning of this bloody day Baird and Davis’ division moved
on the right of Howard. Geary’s division (Twentieth corps), closed up on the
enemy, so as to engage him on its front. Williams and Butterfield came next
with Scofield [sic] (Twenty-third corps), southward on the right. In the assault
on Kenesaw — no attempt to describe which is here made — Geary’s division
of our corps was engaged. Williams’ division witnessed the gallant but vain
struggle, ready and expecting to be sent forward. Some 3,000 men of our side fell on that bloody hillside. Next day, under the flag of truce they were gathered up, the dead buried, the wounded taken out of their little coverts and cared for as well as they could be, while Confederates and Union men, generals and privates, mingled together, talked over the situation, drank together and exchanged compliments and cigars with much courtesy and “renewed assurances of distinguished consideration.” The individuals of each army always had a curiosity to see what manner of men were at the other end of their guns, and mingled freely whenever a truce permitted.

A heavy cannonade, kept up during the day on the left toward Kenesaw took place next day, 28th, and later, after the burial of the dead under truce was over, the firing was general along the whole line. On the 29th the same pastime did not prevent the usual muster. The regiment made out rolls for six-months pay. The last day of June was the last day of service of the non-veterans. They were mustered out July 1st; and unspeakably glad to leave, as the service for the last two months had been of the most wearing kind. The skirmishing, along the lines, showed that all was still tight and snug on the rebel front.

It is impossible to give a description accurately of the movements of the regiment between Pine and Lost Mountain and thence to the front before the southern extremity of the Kenesaw ridge. The country is very hilly, almost mountainous, heavily wooded, with dense under-growth; here and there quagmires and swamps in which some of our artillery was mired and had to be taken out piece-meal. The enemy slashed timber in their front; and in probing for their lines a volley from their heavy skirmish lines was usually the first intimation our troops had of the proximity of the adversary. Frequently our pickets and advance guards received a volley in their faces from unexpected quarters.

In the operations about Kenesaw mountain, the regiment lost in killed and died of wounds 3, in wounded 16, as was officially reported to the Adjutant General of the State.

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**KILLED OR DIED OF WOUNDS ABOUT KENESAW**


CHAPTER XXVIII.
ON TO ATLANTA — PEACH TREE CREEK.

WITH the opening of July 2nd, the enemy did not speak up, when our cannon in front of Kenesaw gave him the compliments of the morning. The pickets then crept up the sides of the mountain; and soon their blue coats could be seen on the great works. All knew that orders to march would soon come. McPherson had quietly left his front on the left, slipped around our right down toward Chattahoochee; and this move put the enemy in motion backward as soon as he discovered it. “Old Sherman has given us orders to march,” said the rebels, as they trudged away. With part of our forces across the river between him and Atlanta, Johnston’s position would be indeed perilous. So he at once fell back; and at night the Twentieth corps received orders to march. At dawn the pickets advanced, followed by the main line, passed over empty fortifications, and swept on in fine spirits, Williams’ division passing to the right of Marietta. The day was delightful, the enemy on the run, and our division picking up prisoners at every step. The enemy covered the retreat with a battery of rifle guns which were served with wonderful skill and precision, much to the annoyance of the regiment. One of its shells unexploded, that fell in the ranks of the Third, was of English make. Later, in the trenches before Atlanta, similar shells fell in the works of the regiment, presumably from the same battery; and it bore the name with the Third men of the “English battery.”

The regiment camped that night on Nickajack Creek, four miles south of Marietta. The day’s march had been through a level country heavily timbered. The whole of Sherman’s command had advanced. Thomas’ army demonstrated vigorously in the front, to allow McPherson to work to the right. The Third regiment moved to the right one and one-half miles; and heavy captures of prisoners on our right, with several guns made July 4th more glorious. Indeed, the rebels seemed eager to be captured after the fall of Kenesaw. The prosperous campaign and a mail received from home put the troops in the highest spirits.

The next day the advance for six miles was over a succession of breastworks thrown up by the enemy along the line near Smyrna Church. Thousands of slaves had been employed to give the rebels a defense at every place where a stand was practicable. The division was now about two miles from the river. The Fourteenth corps were to the left, Twenty-third in the rear, the others on the right, when the regiment at 7 P. M. formed line on high ground in sight of Atlanta. The movements of the next day shoved the Twentieth corps somewhat to the left. The day was fiercely hot, and the mosquitoes [sic] of the Chattahoochee were as bad as the rebels in their thirst
for Yankee Gore. A heavy firing told that the Seventeenth corps on the right was pounding at something. The enemy had formed a line with his flanks on the river, around the railroad bridge.

A skirmish line was put out; but they agreed with the rebel line to keep peace, until an advance was ordered and notice given, which truce was faithfully kept on both sides.

Sherman’s strategy soon hoisted Johnston out of this stronghold. McPherson had switched from our right to our left, moved up the river some miles, boldly crossed and was moving down toward Atlanta; and other corps were also over. On the 9th, Johnston withdrew across the river and burned the railroad bridge. A grateful rest was now given to the Twentieth corps. With pickets advanced to the river, the men ate blackberries and slept for a week. One of the “boys” thus writes of the experience during this brief respite:

“The men had little time during the past two months to devote to efforts of personal attention or cleanliness, and during the brief season of rest on the Chattahoochee river, nearly all the troops made the much needed repairs to clothing and general equipment. The troops were peopled with ‘gray backs,’ and in this camp on the river everything in the nature of a kettle was used in which to boil clothes and thus rid themselves of this disagreeable pest. To see fully 500 naked men scattered along the river bank attending to boiling clothes, while about 500 more naked men were scattered in groups or playing cards in the shade of the trees, and all vigorously applying a brush of bushes to ward off the attacks of the winged insects of a southern forest, while above their heads, flaunting and drying in the summer breeze, were garments of varied hue and shape — altogether it was a sight to provoke a smile from even the gods of war.”

During this delay on the river, the pickets became very friendly, and picket firing was by mutual agreement suspended. It is recorded that one day while the men on picket on both sides were standing on the banks of the river, under one of these private truces, a rebel officer rode up and ordered his men to fire on the “Yanks” standing on the opposite bank. The men refused, insisting that they had agreed to a truce and they were not going to break it. The understanding usually was that when the orders required these truces to be called off, the first volley should be harmless.

The corps then moved past the Fourteenth corps on the left, July 17th, and crossed the Chattahoochee at Pace’s Ferry, four or five miles above the railroad bridge, on a pontoon laid where the stream was about 150 yards in width, and then marched southeast toward Buckhead, though a hilly, heavily wooded region abounding in blackberries. The regiment encamped in the forest.

The enemy began to interpose objections very soon. Skirmishing began in good earnest when the corps started south at 7 in the morning. At 3 P. M. the column halted and put up a line of breastworks. Hunger began to gnaw, and there were no rations. At 7 P. M. of the 17th the division, following the
Second, moved south one mile, and bivouacked near the north bank of Peach Tree Creek.

The next morning the whole army of the Cumberland was across the creek, and taking position in line of battle. At about 3 P. M. while adjustments of position were being made, and before any considerable breastworks had been thrown up, Hood came out of his entrenchments and attacked with fury. The force of his assault fell upon the Twentieth corps, which was somewhat in advance of the Fourteenth corps on the right, and more directly in front of Hood’s advance. The Third Wisconsin was on the right of the Twentieth corps, somewhat refused and its line ran through a ravine; and the overlapping of the Fourteenth corps threw the left regiments — the Tenth and Twenty-first Wisconsin — in front of the Third regiment and part of Ruger’s brigade.

The story of this battle is briefly told by Van Horne¹²², in his “Army of the Cumberland”: “The enemy first attacked the right of Geary’s division, then passed around to attack him in front and rear. Williams’ division not being fully abreast, this advantage was possible. Geary was therefore compelled to change front to the right with almost all of his division, and extend his line to connect with Williams, leaving only five regiments, with his artillery, on his first line. When the noise of sincere battle was first heard by Gen. Williams, he was in the act of moving artillery to his skirmish line to dislodge the enemy from his fortified outpost; but warned by the heavy volleys of musketry on his left he deployed his division at double-quick — Knipe’s brigade on the right, Robinson’s on the left and Ruger’s in reserve — to await the developments of the attack. He placed his batteries by sections, to command his front and flanks, and held three sections in reserve. Hardly had these dispositions been made before the enemy advanced on Williams in great force, and having driven in his skirmishers, with his line of battle under cover of the thickets and undergrowth, approached very near without being seen. His attack, as in other cases, was direct in part, but heavy masses swept down the ravines to the right and left. Hearing heavy firing on his right, Gen. Williams sent the Twenty-seventh Indiana (of Ruger’s brigade) to reinforce Knipe’s right. This regiment and the Forty-sixth Pennsylvania speedily checked and drove back the enemy, and held the ground until the close of the action. On the left the attack was more threatening, because made with stronger columns; but Robinson’s brigade, the artillery and Geary’s line upon the other hill, poured

a destructive fire upon the enemy, and here, too, he was completely repulsed. This first attack swept from Newton’s position to Col. Anson McCook’s brigade of Johnson’s division of the Fourteenth corps; but though signally repulsed, Gen. Hood did not desist, and soon again from Newton to Johnson the battle raged furiously.

“The second, general action was commenced upon Newton’s left in an effort to double up the line by taking it in reverse as well as in flank. This time Gen. Thomas sent for the artillery of Ward’s division, and in person urged the artillery horses to the greatest speed possible, and then directed their action. These guns and all of Newton’s, with all kinds of metal most destructive at short range, opened upon the heavy, assaulting columns and they were again repulsed. Again the battle raged to the right; but as the National line was now compact, the enemy exhausted himself in direct attacks. His infantry assaults, as at first, extended from Newton to Johnson, and further to the right his fortified artillery was most active, but charge after charge from left to right was repulsed, until 6 P. M., when he abandoned his effort to break or turn the line. In this action artillery was used with fearful effect, and so skillfully was it posted and so bravely defended that the enemy did not touch a single gun.

“When it is considered that four divisions and one brigade in open field, repulsed an attack of the army which was intended to initiate such offense as should destroy Sherman’s armies, the grandeur of this victory becomes apparent. Not Gen. Hood alone, but Gen. Johnston, also, was defeated at the battle of ‘Peach Tree Creek.’

The Twenty-seventh Indiana fired 100 rounds per man in this battle; and the gallant Col. Colgrove had his side turned black and blue by a cannon shot that grazed him and was supposed to be mortally wounded. He was disabled for the rest of the campaign. He is now an examiner in the pension bureau at Washington.

Our regiment did not as a whole become actively engaged; nor did the other regiments of Ruger’s brigade, though several of the regiments of Ruger’s brigade, though several of the regiments suffered losses. Some of the right companies of the Third opened a fire on the enemy, which assisted a regiment of the Fourteenth corps, that was the moment overborne. The Third lost two killed and five wounded.

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KILLED — Company D: Cornelius Cornell and Andrew Oliver. — 2.

The loss in this battle in the Twentieth corps was: Williams’ division, 580; Geary’s, 476; Ward’s, 500. Sherman puts the enemy’s loss at 4,400.
General Cox estimates it at 6,000. Speaking of Williams’ division, Cox says: “The reputation of that division gives assurance that it gave quite as good an account of itself, in the punishment of those who attacked it.
CHAPTER XIX.
THE BATTLE OF BEVERLY FORD.

After the return from Chancellorsville, the army remained inactive for several weeks in its camps north of the Rappahannock. The Third Wisconsin changed its grounds from the hillside where we had wintered to a level, open field near by, better located for summer quarters, quietly resumed the routine of camp life, and reorganized mess with the officers of the Second Massachusetts under the hospitable tent of Charley Johnson. Battalion and brigade drill, under the command of Gen. Ruger, and a liberal detail for picket duty and a grand guard mount each morning made the time wear away. The army preferred to be up and doing; and it was not our fault that the month of May passed with no strokes on our part toward bringing the war to a close.

Early in June, Lee took the initiative. His army had been reinforced since Chancellorsville, and his men had come to regard themselves as invincible. A great Norther invasion was planned. The Confederate cavalry reinforced, remounted and numbering some twelve thousand, was reported to be near Culpepper. Hooker determined to make a strong reconnoissance in that direction to feel for the infantry, for he had divined that Lee’s infantry was moving in the same direction. He ordered the commander of his cavalry corps, Gen. Pleasanton, to cross the Rappahannock and feel the enemy. To make up for the numerical inferiority of our cavalry, supposed to be about 7,500 effectives, he directed that Pleasanton’s force be “stiffened,” as he expressed it, by two picked brigades of infantry numbering about 3,000 men. Accordingly, orders were issued, June 6th, to the commanders of the Third, Eleventh and Twelfth corps, to each send a command of 500 men, one or two regiments, to march that night to Spotted Church, to report to Brig.-Gen. Adelbert Ames, prepared to be absent five days from camp, with 130 rounds of ammunition, by pack mules and on the person, without wagons, and knapsacks light. The command was to be one well disciplined and drilled, capable of marching rapidly and of endurance, with officers noted for energy and efficiency. Destination was confidential. A similar detail from other corps to report to Brig.-Gen. Russell was made. The troops selected from the

123 Alfred Pleasonton, 7 Jul 1824 - 17 Feb 1897, 7/? West Point class of 1844.

124 Adelbert Ames, 31 Oct 1835 - 13 Apr 1933, 5/? West Point class of 1861; recipient of 6 brevet ranks, Ames was awarded the Medal of Honor in 1893.

125 David Allen Russell, 10 Dec 1820 - 19 Sep 1864, 38/45 West Point class of 1845; was a veteran of the Mexican War; killed by shrapnel at Battle of Winchester and posthumously brevetted to MajGen in the Regular Army effective that date.
Twelfth corps were picked men from the Second Massachusetts and Third Wisconsin. Colonel Hawley was ill then; and the ranking officer was Lieut.-Col. Flood. Ames was to report to Pleasanton, keep his column concealed from the enemy, his own command ignorant of the destination, etc., etc.

The cavalry was to be divided in two columns, one under Buford supported by Ames, to cross at Beverly Ford; one under Gregg supported by Russell, to cross lower down the river at Kelly’s Ford. The Second Massachusetts received their order to join this detachment first; and, it is related that they were quite urgent to have the Third Wisconsin included in the detail; for the two regiments had grown to feel that their careers were inseparable. Each was proud of the other, and neither coveted any glory that the other could not share, and each desired the support of the other in close work. As the Second moved off, they urgently solicited Gen. Ruger to have the Third also sent along. We were soon ordered out and on the road. When we came up where the detachments had assembled the Second Massachusetts greeted us with cheers, which ran through the column, as our regiment with lithe step and honest pride in the compliment paid it, took place as part of the special brigade. A summer shower laid the dust, and we started out at a brisk pace, under our new brigadier, a very affable, handsome, young gentleman, who was deeply interested at all our halts in reading a novel which he carried in his pistol holster. We pushed on at a quick step. This was adventure. In fine health, excellent spirits, with fresh, cool air, we stepped off sixteen miles and went into bivouac at eleven. On the way we passed the cavalry which, at about eight o’clock in the evening, were drawn up by the roadside to give us the front. A merry bandying of jokes, as we passed this seemingly vast array of horsemen, showed the light-hearted humor of brave soldiers. The boys chaffed the cavalry because they could not keep up with us and had to turn cut and let us pass. The next morning we rested, while the troopers clattered by. There were some 5,000, perhaps, but there appeared to be ten times that number, as the long column passed in procession. Following on after them we reached Bealeton on the railroad about sunset, and carefully concealed ourselves in the woods. We were forbidden to light fires, and the yearning for hot coffee, that comforting refreshment of the tired soldier, was very strong.

The next night, the 8th, we stealthily moved down near to Beverly Ford and into the woods again. “No fires” were the orders and “no noise.” These injunctions were strictly enforced, and staff and company officers were on constant watch to keep the men still. Buford’s whole body ov cavalry was hidden in the woods near by.

126 Ed. Note: 8 June 1863.
At 3 o’clock on the morning of the 9th a detail was made from the Second Massachusetts to move down to the ford and reconnoiter. The Captain of this party soon came back and reported a large force of cavalry on the other side of the river, apparently unconscious of the presence of Buford’s command.127

At early dawn we were up, ate our cold breakfasts, and without bugle call or other noise the road soon swarmed with cavalry. The whole was hidden from the view of the opposite shore by a dense, morning mist.

We will not leave the force of Buford forming to cross the river, and visit the other side.

General Stuart, a young, dashing, handsome, somewhat vain, yet able officer, had then in the region of Culpepper the best cavalry force the Confederates had ever got together. Very proud of it, he had invited Gen. Lee to come with some of his friends and review it. When Gen. Lee arrived at Culpepper with Longstreet’s corps on the 7th, he met Gen. Stuart and said, “Here I am, General, with my friends,” — pointing to the bivouacs of the First corps — “to review your cavalry.” It was arranged that the next day the review should be held. On a great plain between Culpepper and Brandy Station the grand pageant passed before Lee, who sat upon his horse motionless, wearing a broad brimmed hat, his grave face and simple attire in striking contrast with the gay deportment and brilliant uniform of Stuart. Then there were cavalry charges, and many of the features of a sham fight, such as headlong charges suddenly checked, the waste of some powder, as the flying artillery galloped into position and opened cannonade upon an imaginary foe. The little dreamed of the events of the morrow.

This gala day was preliminary to a movement of Stuart toward Warrenton to threaten Washington, and this cover the movement of Lee’s infantry as he moved northward under the screen of the Bull Run mountains into the Shenandoah. After the review the various brigades were moved toward the Rappahannock to begin the serious work of the campaign.

The Confederates were not expecting visitors at that time. Intent on their own movements, and regarding our cavalry with contempt, they had withdrawn their pickets from the lower fords of the river. Jones’ brigade was in bivouac some 1,200 yards from the river, at the edge of a wood on the western slope of the hills along the shore. The horses were picketed, the men at fatigue duty or lying about camp, no one suspecting the presence of an enemy.

Under cover of the fog Buford’s head of column rushed across the river.

127 General Jones’ brigade of Virginia cavalry were in bivouac near the ford with wagons and artillery parked not far from the river, and a little further out Fitz Lee, Robertson and W. H. Lee each had a brigade. Wade Hampton was in reserve at Fleetwood Hill.
The brigade was led by Col. Davis of the Eighth New York cavalry, nicknamed in the service “Grimes” Davis. It brushed away Jones’ outpost dashed up the hill through the woods, and came near capturing the whole of Stuart’s artillery. But a few of Jones’ cavalry jumped into the saddle and began to oppose the head of the column. Colonel Davis fell mortally wounded early in the fight, and was carried upon a blanket to the rear. Thus was lost a valuable officer, and the confusion arising caused a momentary delay. Meanwhile Ames’ infantry, eager to be in action, plunged into the stream without interrupting the advance of the horsemen.¹²⁸ As we dashed into the water, in fine spirits, Gen. Pleasanton, on the river’s bank, watched the movement. Indeed, his staff on that morning formed a party who came out of the war with high distinction. His handsome adjutant-general, A. J. Alexander, was afterwards a brigadier-general with Thomas in the west. One of his aides was the gallant Farnsworth,¹²⁹ who fell in the famous cavalry charge a few weeks later at Gettysburg, three days after he received his promotion as a general. Another was the model chevalier, Custer, whose later career in the war was as glorious as his end come years later in the Big Horn mountains was tragic.¹³⁰ Another was young McKenzie [sic],¹³¹ of the engineers, now with well-won fame a colonel in the regular army. There, too, was Ulric Dahlgren,¹³² a boy in years, but with all the dash and fire of the cavalryman. These young and gallant hard-riders were full of the enthusiasm of the true bred soldiers they were.

Our little column of “foot cavalry” soon cleared the stream and briskly

¹²⁸“The Second Massachusetts and Third Wisconsin were the first to cross.” — [Colonel Underwood’s History of the Thirty-third Massachusetts Regiment.]

¹²⁹ Ed. Note. Elon John Farnsworth, 30 Jul 1837 - 3 Jul 1863, Brigadier General, cavalry commander. Ordered by H. Judson Kilpatrick to lead a Union regiment in action against Confederate infantry on the third day of Gettysburg, although Farnsworth protested that the mission was suicidal, he nonetheless led it when his courage was questioned, and was either killed by Confederate infantry or took his own life.

¹³⁰ Ed. NOTE. I feel compelled to mention that Custer’s death was by no means tragic to the people he had gone to butcher. He boldly went forth on a search and murder mission into a village filled with far more Lakota and Cheyenne warriors than he had bargained for, and his entire command was lost. Custer graduated last in his class at West Point, in 1861.

¹³¹ Ranald Slidell Mackenzie, 27 Jul 1840 - 19 Jan 1889, First in West Point class of 1862.

¹³² Ulric Dahlgren, 3 Apr 1842 - 2 Mar 1864, killed in action near Richmond, Virginia.
hurried up the hill to the outer edge of the wood. There before us was a large open country, excellent ground for a cavalry battle; and thousands of Confederate horsemen were hurrying to and fro on the farther side of the opening. Our cavalry were coming up, squadron after squadron, forming on the edge of the woods, and a galling fire was dismounted skirmishers was making considerable havoc with the animals. General Ames’ infantrymen were all expert skirmishers, and their services were at once tendered to return the attentions of the dismounted rebels who were picking off the horses. A line of battle was at once formed. One company of the Second Massachusetts and one of the Third Wisconsin were at once thrown forward as skirmishers. The command was soon after divided into detachments, two companies of the Second Massachusetts, under command of Maj. Hubbard, of ours, in one place, and others elsewhere. The remainder of the Third was moved further to the north to cover an intercal between Buford on the right and Devin on the left. The remainder of the Second Massachusetts were under the immediate command of Gen. Ames. Soon it was apparent that the Third could be more servicable [sic] on the left in front of Col. Devin’s cavalry, and Ames send Lieut.-Col. Flood with a part of the Third to Devin. He ordered Flood to move forward on his line of cavalry and drive out a force of dismounted Confederates who were mowing down his horses with a merciless fire. Soon the infantry were at business, and it was much relief to the cavalry. The woods were full of wounded horses, limping about on three legs, with that look of pleading in their great, expressive eyes, that appealed as strongly to sympathy as did the sufferings of the wounded men. As soon as Stuart’s men found that the Federal cavalry was “stiffened” with infantry, they became quite circumspect in exposing themselves along our front.

Soon the roar of a general engagement was on. Artillery was got in place and began to thunder. Several charges of cavalry squadrons were witnessed during this spirited fight. It is one of the most exciting scenes in war to see, as we saw on that soft, June morning, some of the squadrons of Buford and those of Stuart come together, at topmost speed, with a rush, a thunder of advancing squadrons, the loud shouts, the sabers flashing and swinging in the air, then the clash, the hewing strokes, the indescribable jumble and melee, the rearing of horses, the snapping of pistol shots, the huddling together, horses overthrown, riders unhorsed and trodden under foot of the wrestling squadrons; and constantly dropping out of the crush the riderless horse, quivering with excitement, galloping a little to the rear and then turning instinctively to rejoin the troop; and from both sides the wounded

133 Thomas Casimer Devin, 10 Dec 1822 - 4 Apr 1878, it was Union cavalry under the command of Devin that kept the Confederates out of Gettysburg long enough for the Union army to arrive and force a showdown with Lee’s army.
men limp in the saddle with drooping head, reeling in faintness, their sabres [sic] hanging to the wrist and dangling from a sword-arm palsied with the weakness of wounds of the languor of death.

In one of these, which we saw in full view, the enemy finally gave way and were hotly followed by our men. But Stuart sends in fresh squadrons; a recall is sounded and our men wheel and gallop to their places reforming in grand style, while Ames’ skirmishers boldly rush out, each by himself, eager to get better shots at the close squadrons that advance.

The infantry did good service that day. The Wisconsin companies were led by tried soldiers, Stevenson, Parks, Hinkley, Giddings, Gardner, Barrager, Slagg, Kleven, Balcom, captains and lieutenants remarkably cool and steady in action, quick and clear-headed on the skirmish line.134 The rebels made strenous [sic] endeavors to turn our right. Captain Stevenson was there with his company (B), and the brave Capt. Daniel Oakey had his company of the Second Massachusetts. They were supporting a battery for Buford. The Confederates collected and formed for a fierce charge on our right. It seemed at one moment as if they would crush Buford in; but as they came on the artillery opened upon them and Stevenson and Okey’s men and others of the Ames brigade plied their rifles at close range with telling effect. The rebels quailed and wavered before the galling fire. Then the Second United States Dragoons of Merritt’s135 reserve brigade drew their sabers and bore gallantly out upon them, putting them in flight.

A rebel battery had got into position in front of our right and was disputing with our guns planted on a knoll in the open field on the right of the ford. Stevenson of the Third, with his own and Barrager’s men, Oakey of the Second Massachusetts, and Lieut. Parker of Company F, of the Second, were called upon to support the guns upon the knoll. They took position in the rear of the guns, the men lying down with the enemy’s shells screaming over them. General Buford with part of his staff stood near the guns. The general was smoking imperturbably, while his staff officers galloped up on horses soaking with foam to report and take orders to other parts of the field. Custer was there, his long hair waving in the breeze and his manner full of animation.

The Tenth Virginia cavalry had dismounted part of its men, and sent them down behind a stone wall near our right front, and from this secure

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135 Wesley Merritt, 16 Jun 1834 - 3 Dec 1910, 22/? West Point class of 1860. Cavalry officer. This clean shaven young man went from captain to brigadier general after gallant service at Brandy Station, the largest mounted battle fought in North America. Also served at Todd’s Tavern, the largest dismounted cavalry battle of the Civil War.
shelter they were annoying the artillery and had checked a charge of cavalry. Buford wished to get rid of them and summoned the commander of the infantry. Stevenson ranked, but he asked Okey to go with him to confer with Buford.

“Do you see those people down there?” quietly asked Buford, “They’ve gopt to be driven out.”

Stevenson replied, “It’s about double our force.”

“Well,” said the general. “I don’t order you, mind; but if you think you can flank them, go in, and drive them off.”

Stevenson and Oakey thought they could. The staff of Buford gathered around them during the conversation; and the two captains were bound not to flinch in such a presence. They took a careful look, quickly laid their plans and then withdrew their men and quietly disappeared. To skulk along behind a slight elevation of ground, and through woods and brush was the work of a few minutes. Soon they gained the flank of the Confederates behind the wall, and poured in upon the unsuspecting rebel troopers a sharp, enfilading fire. The poor wretches were taken by surprise. Some crawled off on their hands and knees; others fell dead or writhed in wounds; and a number surrendered. The killed, wounded and captured outnumbered the force that executed this movement.136

Stuart brought up other brigades, intending to throw his whole force upon Buford, for he saw that the Federal cavalry were gaining ground and pressing toward Fleetwood Hill. His resistance grew more stubborn. Charges with the saber became more frequent. But still the Federals pressed on.

Gregg had crossed in the morning at Kelly’s Ford, and pushed on toward Brandy Station, accompanied by Russell’s infantry. He, too, had confronted the rebel cavalry, and made a gallant fight against heavy odds. But the junction of the two columns was effected. Stuart had sent to Lee for help. Just as Gregg left Brandy Station he saw long trains of cars swarming with infantry arriving. He therefore turned steps to the right and came upon the field where Buford, Devin and Merritt’s reserve brigade were in hot work with Stuart’s troopers. He had fought desperately. Pleasanton had accomplished the object of his mission. He had captured Stuart’s headquarters; had learned Lee’s whereabouts, and in good part his intentions. He could not hope to crush a cavalry force nearly double his own; although, as Confederate historians admit, he had “roughly handled Stuart.” He had certainly taken a good deal of the conceit out of Stuart’s cavalry and damaged his prestige. So he withdrew in good order across the Rapidan at about sundown, not pressed or followed.

136 The Tenth Virginia reported a loss of 8 killed and 69 wounded in this engagement, which the Confederates call the battle of Fleetwood.
The fact that our forces retired gave Stuart — who was a lusty blower of his own horn — the chance to claim a victory. He did this in the grandiloquent style peculiar to himself. But his contemplated raid was broken up. He contented himself with simply covering Lee's right flank in his northern movement; and sought no more pitched battles with our cavalry.

The infantry force suffered considerable loss for a skirmish. Our regiment lost two killed — Private David Collender, company I, killed outright, and Private Ernst Bergaman, mortally wounded — and fourteen wounded.


**LOSSES OF INFANTRY AT BEVERLY FORD, VA., JUNE 9, 1863, IN AMES’ COMMAND.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Command</th>
<th>KILLED Officers</th>
<th>Enl Men</th>
<th>WOUNDED Officers</th>
<th>Enl Men</th>
<th>CAPTURED OR MISSING Officers</th>
<th>Enl Men</th>
<th>AGGREGATE Officers</th>
<th>Enl Men</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Second Massachusetts</td>
<td>. . . .</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>. . . .</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>. . . .</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>. . . . .</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thirty-Third Mass</td>
<td>. . . .</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>. . . .</td>
<td>. . . .</td>
<td>. . . . .</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86th New York</td>
<td>. . . .</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>. . . .</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>. . . .</td>
<td>. . . .</td>
<td>. . . . .</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>124th New York</td>
<td>. . . .</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>. . . .</td>
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<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Wisconsin</td>
<td>. . . .</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>. . . .</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>. . . .</td>
<td>. . . .</td>
<td>. . . . .</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total in Ames' Command</td>
<td>. . . .</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>. . . .</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>. . . . .</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total in whole Command</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>308</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>309</td>
<td>863</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This was a cavalry battle in which the infantry figured conspicuously, though our work was chiefly skirmishing. There were many brave actions noted; and much skill and ingenuity was shown by our men in skirmishing. Lieutenant-Colonel Flood in his report makes special mention of Private David Agnew of Company H. “While skirmishing in front of cavalry,” says the report, “he advanced beyond our lines, saved the life of a comrade, and captured a

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137  Stuart claimed that if it had not been for the infantry mixed in Pleasanton's command, he would have captured the Union cavalry. There were heavy battles between the cavalry of the two armies after that, but the prestige of Stuart's cavalry was broken. Our troopers ever after were more than a match for the Confederates. This was true at Aldie, at Upperville and at Gettysburg, where a hot cavalry battle raged on the 3d of July, a few miles southeast of the great battlefield at the same hour the latter was at its height.
rebel who was in the act of firing.” Brave actions on the part of the men of the regiment were so common as to make mention of one almost invidious. Others were equally gallant in all the companies, and the eagerness of the men to “draw their heads” on the rebels made them almost reckless in exposing themselves.

The discouraging effect of this cavalry battle upon the Confederates found expression in much serious criticism of Stuart at Richmond. The diary of the rebel war clerk notes the feeling thus:

JUNE 12. — The surprise of Stuart on the Rappahannock has chilled every heart, notwithstanding it does not appear that we lost more than the enemy in the encounter. The question is on every tongue “have our generals relaxed in vigilance?” If so, sad is the prospect.

From this battle the prestige of Stuart’s cavalry began to wane, and that of our troopers as steadily rose.
HAVING crossed Beverly Ford, withdrawing from the battle field, we
bivouacked in the woods, where we had spent the previous night.
Camp fires were permitted and in great tin cups of black coffee,
steaming hot, we found the refreshment so grateful to the soldier after a day
of exertion. The command had been so scattered during the day’s fight, that
each detachment, and each man, for that matter, had a special narrative of
adventure; and the telling of the stories of various, thrilling incidents of the
battle in the quaint and forcible, though perhaps, inelegant slang of the army,
kept us long from repose. Puffing away at our pipes, which the soldiers had
carved with many a queer device from the gnarled laurel roots so abundant
in the Blue Ridge region, we reclined around our camp-fires, the very picture
of content.

The morning of the 10th we took easy march toward Bealeton station,
resting there in bivouac until the 14th, when we learned that the whole army
was in motion. Resuming march northeastward, up the line of the Orange and
Alexandria railroad, we passed the scenes of our dismal retreat of the
preceding year. We were now under command of Gen. Russell, as Gen.
Ames had left us to hasten to his own proper command. We rejoined the
corps at Centerville on the 16th, finding there Col. Hawley and the portion of
the regiment which we had left at Stafford. The report that Lee’s army was
threatening another invasion was soon confirmed; and Hooker’s columns
were moving up the Potomac, and the Virginia side, keeping between Lee and
Washington, while our cavalry and that of the enemy were in constant
skirmish in all the passes of the Bull Run mountains. We moved up by way
of Dranesville to near Leesburg, and there encamped.

The sad incident of this camp was that our corps was paraded to
witness the shooting for desertion of three men from New York and New
Jersey regiments. Desertion from the army had assumed such alarming
proportions that the commanders insisted that President Lincoln’s mercy
should not interfere, but that some stern examples be set; and the shooting
of a few men under sentence of courts martial in each corps produced a deep
sensation. The doomed men were conducted to the place of execution, their
hands and arms bound, and the division in serried lines surrounded the place.
They were seated on their coffins; the chaplains ministered to them in their
last moments, the proceedings and the sentence of the court martial and the

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138 EDITOR’S NOTE — There is no chapter twenty in the original text.

139 ED. NOTE. 14 June 1863.
approval of the same and order for execution were read. The provost marshal then conducted the awful ceremony. The men were blind-folded; and a file of soldiers brought forward, part of whose muskets were loaded with blank cartridges and part with ball, so that no one of the soldiers who fired would ever know whether he had shot the ball that caused the death. At the signal the volley was fired; and the victims fell dead. The soldiers would have preferred to face a hostile army in the carnage of battle rather than to witness such ignoble deaths. But it was necessary to stay the desertions that were so fast depleting that unhappy army; and for a little time appeals to the great and tender heart of Lincoln were of no avail.

The Twelfth corps sojourned about Leesburg until the 26th, waiting, as history now tells us, for Hooker to fully understand Lee’s plans. During the movements since Lee had left his entrenchments at and near Fredericksburg his command had been strung along from that place to the Potomac at Williamsport. The president, in his quaint way, said: “If the head of Lee’s army is at Martinsburg, and the tail of it on the plank road between Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville, the animal must be very slim somewhere.” And he was in favor of cutting the “animal” in two.

On the 26th, our column headed for Edward’s Ferry, and crossed on a pontoon [sic] bridge into Maryland. We learned here that we were well in the rear of the whole army, all of which was moving northward. The Twelfth Corps moved up to the mouth of the Monocacy at Spink’s Ferry, crossed that stream on the aqueduct of the canal, and moved on up the Potomac toward Harper’s Ferry.

The news was at this time very exciting. Lee’s columns had crossed the Potomac, after driving Milroy from Winchester, who, taken by surprise, lost a large amount of ordnance and the greater part of his command. The Confederates were swarming into Pennsylvania, and there seizing vast quantities of horses, cattle, forage, provisions, footwear, clothing and medical stores, plundering farms, and levying enormous demands upon the villages and cities. Harrisburg was threatened, Philadelphia in danger — both places at work day and night throwing up earthworks. The militia were arming, and frantic appeals were made to the President to send the Army of the Potomac, in which were so many Pennsylvania regiments, to defend the loyal state from the rapacious invaders. Thousands of people were fleeing to the north of the Susquehanna, driving their horses, mules, and cattle before them; and these immense caravans were pouring through Harrisburg, seeking safety in

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140 Robert Huston Milroy, 11 Jun 1816 - 29 Mar 1890, Mexican War veteran, Indiana native. The Confederacy put a price on his head for his energetic suppression of guerillas in West Virginia.

141 ED. NOTE. 1,000 men killed or wounded, 3,400 men captured, 23 cannon taken.
Our corps on the 27th was at Knoxville, some three or four miles east from Harper’s Ferry. General Slocum had been ordered to be ready to march to the ferry on the 28th. The plan formulated was for him, with a regiment of cavalry and a reinforcement of two brigades of infantry, to march the Twelfth corps up the Potomac, strike Lee’s communications, destroy his bridges, cut his supply trains, and follow him, doing as much havoc as possible upon his rear. This plan of Hooker was abandoned about the time he was relieved, for the order for the movement was countermanded on the same day.142

A new surprise here came to us. General Hooker was relieved. He asked for the 10,000 men at Harper’s Ferry to be added to his mobile army. Halleck refused, still persisting in his policy of keeping small commands scattered about to be attacked and captured. He also seemed to think Harper’s Ferry a place of importance, when in reality it was in a military point of view a “blind alley.” Finding that Halleck was disposed to hamper him, and refuse him men and liberty of action, to clog his movements and interfere with his strategy, Hooker asked to be relieved of the command. His request was granted with an alacrity that indicated no reluctance; and on the 28th the order of President Lincoln assigning Maj.-Gen. George G. Meade to the command was promulgated. Meade was but little known a this time in the army; but since Chancellorsville there was small faith in Hooker’s infallibility; and we could only hope the best of Meade, and trust that he would be supported by the generals of corps and divisions as faithfully as the men of the ranks were sure to do all that was required of them.

The order changing Slocum’s course directed him to Frederick; and on the 28th we moved through Pentonville and Jefferson to our old winter home of 1861 and 1862. Encamping near the city, we saw the trains and stragglers of some of the other corps pour through the city, a rough, disorderly element.

The next day found us on the march, the entire corps headed toward Pennsylvania on the road leading north-northeast by way of Woodsborough and Middleburg — to Taneytown, about 25 miles from Frederick.

On the 30th we moved up across the state line to Littlestown, in Pennsylvania, about eight or nine miles southeast of Gettysburg and beyond. As we approached Littlestown a body of Confederate cavalry were in our front. The Third brigade was at the rear of the division, when it was halted; the three old regiments of the brigade were ordered to the front at double quick. The division broke ranks and cleared the road for us, as the three well-tried regiments quickly and proudly advanced, and deploying a few companies of skirmishers brushed away the detachment of Stuart’s cavalry, while the

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142 ED. NOTE. Hooker was relieved by MajGen George G. Meade on 28 Jun 1863.
affrighted inhabitants, men, women and screaming children fled from their farm houses across the fields in pitiable terror. Here Gen. Williams received a report that the enemy’s cavalry with artillery was approaching the place. We were well prepared to receive them; but it was soon learned that our brave troopers were driving them.

This movement was in accordance with Meade’s general plan to concentrate his entire army, move against the invaders, and compel Lee to accept or give battle, or retire. Meade had moved his army in three columns northward from the Monocacy valley, where it was when he assumed command, following out in the main Hooker’s plan. His left wing composed of the First, Third and Eleventh corps had reached Emmitsburg on the evening of the 29th, and there encamped about ten miles southwest of Gettysburg. The Fifth and Sixth corps moved into Pennsylvania, as the right wing by roads farther east than the route of the Twelfth corps, which formed the center. On June 30th, the position of the several corps was as follows: The headquarters of the army were at Marsh Run near Emmitsburg. The First corps extended from Marsh Run to Emmitsburg; the Second was at Uniontown, some twenty miles southeast of Gettysburg; the Third corps was at Taneytown; the Fifth corps was at Liberty, ten miles northeast of Frederick; the Sixth corps was at Manchester ten or twelve miles east of Taneytown; and the Twelfth corps at Littlestown. The cavalry was mainly at Hanover, east southeast of Gettysburg, pursuing Gen. Stuart, the commander of Lee’s cavalry, who had made a raid crossing the Potomac near Dranesville, swept on to Rockville, near Washington and there captured a supply train of 170 wagons or more, and thence pushed northward east of our advancing columns. His raid was a miserable blunder and cost Lee dear. He men were dogged and driven, and so weary that they slept and fell out of their saddles; but he finally joined Lee on the second day of the battle of Gettysburg.

General Lee was meanwhile having his own way in Pennsylvania. His corps were much scattered, covering a wide and rich field for plunder. On the 28th of June he was much startled to learn that the army of the Potomac had crossed into Maryland and was advancing upon him. The absence of Stuart on his senseless raid around our army was a great embarrassment to Lee at a time when he most needed that his own army should be enveloped with a cloud of cavalry, and most needed to know all the movements of his enemy. He at once ordered a concentration of his several corps, upon Gettysburg. His scattered forces were called in — Early’s division of Ewell’s corps, from York, Ewell himself from Carlisle, another part of his command from Kingston, thirteen miles from Harrisburg, Longstreet from Chambersburg, and Hill from the rear; and all were on June 30th in motion by various roads to the little village, now one of the most historic battlefields of the world.

Gettysburg, the county seat of Adams county, was then a quiet village
of three thousand inhabitants, the center of a rich, well cultivated region of upland. Some ten miles west of it the ridges of the South Mountain range trend northward, shutting out the western horizon. This town is the center of an excellent system of roads and turnpikes. From the south the Taneytown roads enters the village; from the southeast the Baltimore turnpike come in, joining just south of the village with the Emmitsburg road that approaches from the northwest; the Hanover road comes in from the east; the Hunterstown road from the northeast. About a mile west of that the Harrisburg road approaches from the same direction. Directly from the north the Carlisle road enters the village. From the northwest the Mummasburg road come in, joining the Carlisle road just north of the suburbs. From the west-northwest the Chambersburg pike leads into the western side and joins with the principal east and west street; while from the southwest the Hagerstown road joins with the pike on the western suburb. Thus the roads run out of it at all points like spokes from a wheel.

Two little streams, tributaries of the Monocacy River, flow southward, one-half a mile eastward of the village, called Rock Creek; the other a mile or more west, called Willoughby Run. Midway between them a little streamlet called Plum Run — and often mentioned in the history of the fighting on our left — takes its rise in the fields some two miles north of the village proper, and flows south, emptying into Rock Creek.

Northward of the village one-third of a mile, and between the Mummasburg road and Chambersburg turnpike, is the Pennsylvania college. West of the village, midway between the converging Chambersburg pike and Hagerstown road, is the Lutheran Seminary on a slight elevation called Seminary Ridge. This ridge well defined runs south, [sic] trending a little westward, about half way between Willoughby Run on the west and Emmitsburg road on the east.

About two miles south of the center of the village two cone shaped hills rise up and dominate the surrounding country. The one nearest Gettysburg is Little Round Top, about 150 feet high, its bold surface covered with rocks of fantastic shape, and from a distance seemingly inaccessibly. About 550 yards from the summit, and a little west of south, Round Top looms up some 210 feet above the level of the village. On the western side of these knobs a

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143 Ed. Note. On 21 Jul 1999, the Gettysburg borough manager's office said that the population of Gettysburg is about 7,100 people.

144 Ed. Note. The center of Gettysburg is about 500 feet above sea level. Culp's Hill is 620+ feet above sea level; Little Round Top is 650+ feet above sea level, and Round Top is 785 feet above sea level.
vegetation, fed by the decomposition of syenitic\textsuperscript{145} rocks, sends up a scant herbage and hardly hides the raggedness of the huge, shapeless blocks of stone, by the foliage of a few, gnarled and knotty oaks of scrubby growth. The two hills are separated by a narrow defile. At the western foot of the two hills a little thread of the eastern branch of Plum Run creeps along through a ravine, and its western shore is a wild, weird spot, full of caverns and labyrinths, amid huge, ill-shaped rocks, which is fitly called “the Devil’s Den.”

From Little Round Top northward runs a distinct ridge, toward the ancient burial place of the neighborhood. This cemetery lies just south of the suburbs of the village and overlooks it. The ridge runs, as has been said, northerly from Little Round Top, to the southern suburb of the village, then bends to the east toward Rock Creek, then turns southerly to Culp’s Hill, forming a line in shape very like a fish hook, with Culp’s hill for the barb and the Round Top for the top of the hook. Indeed, Gettysburg may be said to be on the northern slope of this ridge at the bend, at the northern foot of which a little stream called Stevens’ Run flows easterly, past the north of the village into Rock Creek.

This line, the fish-hook shaped ridge, was destined to become the position of the Union army. Its front northward and eastward is admirable for defense. From Cemetery Ridge southward, it is little more than a perceptible elevation, along which artillery could be planted and the infantry in its front be sheltered by the stone walls that extended along the sides of the Taneytown road and the slight ridge described. The country, aside from these ridges, is gently undulating. A slight ridge to the north of the seminary, trending to the northeast, is noticeable, which is called Oak Ridge\textsuperscript{146} in most descriptions of the great battle. The scenery is suggestive only of rural repose, heightened in the summer season by the soft haze and glimmering heat that give an appearance of warmth, distance and tranquility to the prospect.

Neither of the commanders intended to bring on the battle at this place. But Gen. Buford, commanding one of the divisions of cavalry which had been drawn in, and was moving northward from headquarters feeling for the enemy, reached Gettysburg on the noon of June 30\textsuperscript{th}. There he saw signs and gained information in bits and fragments, which to a well-trained soldier indicated that Lee’s forces were moving toward that place.

Experienced in war, as he was, Buford with a quick eye saw the military advantage of holding Gettysburg, the center of so many roads. He boldly determined to make a stout resistance, in order to check the enemy and

\textsuperscript{145} ED. NOTE. Granular igneous rock consisting chiefly of orthoclase and oligoclase with hornblende, biotite, or augite.

\textsuperscript{146} ED. NOTE. A high point atop Oak Ridge rises 647 feet above sea level.
enable Reynolds, whom he knew to be near and coming, to reach the place in advance of the Confederates. Driving out the small squadron of the enemy’s scouting party which he found there, he took position on the north and west sides of the town along the Oak Ridge. He said to Devin, in the evening, “Rest assured the enemy will attack us in the morning. Their skirmishers will come thundering along three lines deep, and we shall have to fight like devils to maintain ourselves until the arrival of the infantry.” He spent a busy night. His little force of 4,200 men were disposed so as to look as formidable as possible; and scouting parties were out all night; for the scared citizens of the region dare give no information. They whimpered, “The rebels say they will burn our houses, if we tell anything.” The next morning, Gen. Heth, of Hill’s corps, which had bivouacked the night before within six miles of Gettysburg, came on. Buford’s scouts on the Cashtown road (the Chambersburg pike) reported that a rebel column was advancing.

By eight o’clock, on July 1st, Heth is at the western slopes of Willoughby Run, where he forms two brigades in line, and sends out a cloud of skirmishers. Buford’s men well ambushed dispute on the rebel advance so stoutly that Heth supposes he is confronted with infantry. With carbines and artillery the stout-hearted troopers make stand, while in the distance, the long columns of Confederates can be seen hurrying on. It is a critical moment. Buford’s last reserves are ordered to the front. He serves the guns himself, and looks anxiously for Reynolds. A full hour the battle raged. Buford yields ground slowly. Climbing to the belfry of the Lutheran seminary he looks towards the Union camps for succor. Looking along the Emmitsburg road he saw a division of Reynolds’ corps close at hand; and in a moment Reynolds who had ridden ahead joins him in the belfry. Glancing over the situation, Reynolds sends an aide to Gen. Howard to bring his corps forward with all speed and post it as a reserve on Cemetery ridge. General Howard later received the thanks of congress for selecting this position; but the evidence all tends to show that Reynolds was the first to perceive it and suggest its occupancy.

At the same time Ewell’s Confederate corps was approaching Gettysburg from Heidlersburg, on a road that leads from the northeast into the Carlisle road, which, as we have seen, enters Gettysburg from the north. So Buford faces one of his brigades, Devin’s, to the north to resist the advance of this hard-fighting corps.

Wadsworth’s First division of Reynolds’ First corps came up at about

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147 James Samuel Wadsworth, 30 Oct 1807 - 8 May 1864, took part in the heaviest fighting on the first day of Gettysburg, where his command was destroyed. He was wounded at the Battle of the Wilderness, taken prisoner, and died in a Confederate hospital.
10 o’clock upon the field of action. Cutler’s brigade leading the column and Meredith’s “Iron Brigade,” — the First of the division — next. They were at once deployed to face Hill’s corps, and were sharply engaged within fifteen minutes from their arrival.

It would require more than this volume to tell in detail the full story of this three days’ battle. All that space here permits will be the most general account of the principal movements and engagements and a more detailed narrative of that part of the battle in which our own brigade had a share. The battle was not opened. The gallant Reynolds soon fell, shot through the head by a sharpshooter. The “Iron Brigade” fought with great gallantry, among its other achievements capturing the Confederate General Archer, with a good part of his brigade — the same that gave us such harsh treatment at Cedar Mountain — and in the gallant fight here Col. Lucius Fairchild of the Second Wisconsin Infantry lost an arm, while bravely leading his regiment of famous hard fighters. Howard soon came up on our right; Ewell came up on the Confederate left, giving the enemy for the day the advantage in numbers; and our forces, after much hard fighting, were compelled to fall back upon Cemetery Ridge, south and east of the village. But the object of this struggle was gained. The Union side secured the better position. How Gen. Hancock was sent to the field, how he saw the advantages the fish-hook ridge afforded, how the several corps were hurried forward and took position — all these things are general history.

General Howard at once sent to Generals Stickles and Slocum for reinforcements. Sickles started at once. General Slocum sent his two divisions forward; but as he was informed that the general commanding did not wish to bring on a general battle, he did not himself go upon the field at the first intimation of the impending engagement. This hesitation on his part about taking the responsibility of a battle, which he understood his commander did not wish to have fought, has furnished pretext for some unjust criticisms of Gen. Slocum from that class, who prefer to hunt for faults rather than excellencies in a soldier’s conduct.

Returning now to the Twelfth corps. It moved out from camp near Littlestown, on the morning of July 1st, to a place on the Baltimore and Gettysburg turnpike called Two Taverns. Here we halted for dinner.

The cannonade to the northwest was distinctly heard; and at first we supposed it was the work of the cavalry, for the pounding of artillery in front or on the flanks was a familiar, almost a constant sound. But as it grew more furious, we knew that something more than a rubbing together of the ragged,
outer edges of the two armies was taking place.

At 1 P.M., Gen. Howard, then on the field, sent a message to Gen. Slocum, informing him that the left wing of our army was engaged with Hill’s corps, and that Ewell was advancing from York. Slocum at once put his columns in motion, at a pace as rapid as infantry could move. In a little over an hour, we marched six miles, deployed and were under fire. The gallant corps hurried along on the turnpike, stimulated by the cannonade and the spiteful musketry which we could now distinctly hear. As we neared Gettysburg, the First division turned off to the right and moved toward the field of battle on the east of Rock Creek; and at about half-past four o’clock, the First division confronted Wolf’s Hill, which is east of Culp’s Hill and on the opposite side of Rock Creek. Slocum ordered Williams to charge with his First division and take it. We were deploying and forming a compact line to carry the hill, when Slocum sent Williams word that, as the enemy were in Gettysburg, the position was of no importance. We waited for further orders, under a peppering fire of Ewell’s sharpshooters, with whom Wolf’s Hill was alive. Geary’s division (the Second of our corps) followed us from Two Taverns, and on reaching Gettysburg, Gen. Hancock, who was then on the field, sent it to the left of our army, where it was placed between Graham’s brigade and Round Top. The First division was soon drawn back to a position nearer the Baltimore pike and bivouacked for the night. General Geary was soon relieved on the left, and returned to the right, where he placed his division on the west side of the Rock Creek.

By forced night marches the rest of our army were pushing towards Gettysburg. The Sixth corps, thirty miles distant, was coming from Manchester; and all our army, except this corps, were on the ground on the morning of the 2d. The concentration so speedily accomplished was a credit to Meade and to his soldiers. General Lockwood came up that morning with two regiments, the First Maryland Home Guards and One Hundred and Fiftieth New York, and reported to Gen. Williams; and soon the Fifth corps arrived and took position on our right.

Eight o’clock came and orders were received to unite the two divisions of our corps, and we moved over to and up the turnpike towards

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149 **ED. NOTE.** Wolf’s Hill rises 680+ feet above sea level.

150 Henry Hayes Lockwood, 17 Aug 1814 - 7 Dec 1899, 22/49 in West Point class of 1836. Taught artillery and infantry tactics, mathematics, and astronomy. Veteran of war against the Seminoles in Florida. His first field service during the Civil War was as a brigade commander at Gettysburg.
Gettysburg,\textsuperscript{151} turned to the right and took position on the slope of Culp’s Hill, facing eastward toward Rock Creek, the First division on the right, the Second, Geary’s, on the left. Here Gen. Ruger — now in command of the division, for Slocum commanded the right wing, Williams the corps and Colgrove our brigade — ordered breastworks to be thrown up. As first posted, our brigade was put down to the banks of Rock Creek, across a swale\textsuperscript{152} from the summit of Culp’s Hill, south of it. Here the regiments faced the creek, the Twenty seventh Indiana on the right, the Third Wisconsin next and then the Second Massachusetts. This piece of ground was such that the Twenty-seventh Indiana faced the south, the Third Wisconsin the east, the Second Massachusetts the northeast. The One Hundred and Seventh New York was farther to the left across the swale or meadow; and in its rear the Thirteenth New Jersey, in double column, closed in mass. Soon after the One Hundred and Seventh New York was, by Gen. Ruger’s orders, put in reserve, the Thirteenth New Jersey put in place of the Third Wisconsin, and the latter regiment sent across the swale to the left, to the place first occupied by the One Hundred and Seventh New York.\textsuperscript{153}

The deployment of Ewell around the base of Culp’s Hill led our generals to expect that an attack would be made upon us. General Meade proposed that we assume the offensive there, three corps to assault the rebel left; but a careful examination satisfied the General that the ground was too unfavorable. General Warren,\textsuperscript{154} chief engineer, so advised. So we remained

\begin{footnotes}
\item[151] As we were moving up the pike at double-quick an old woman stood on the side of the road, her arms akimbo, resting on her broad hips, and she spoke words of cheer to us, such as these: “Dot ish right, poys, go and drive dose fellows off. De has shtole enough around here.” She was the same old crone of whom Col. Morse records that when the Second Massachusetts was moving across the turnpike to the left on the night of the 2d, while the rebels were yelling like devils incarnate, she said to their men, “Never mind, poys, they’re nothing but MEN.” She was a woman of superb nerve, and her words amused and encouraged the men in that hour of high excitement. EDITOR’S NOTE: Charles Fessenden Morse was born 22 Sep 1839, son of Robert M. Morse & Sarah Clarke. He was appointed 1stLt 18 May 1861, promoted to Cpt 11 Jul 1862, Major 6 Jun 1863, LtCol 4 Jul 1863 and Brevet Colonel in July 1865. He was also a relative of the editor.

\item[152] ED. NOTE. A low tract of land, especially moist or marshy ground. Also “swail.”

\item[153] These are the positions as Col. Colgrove reports them. The writer’s recollection is somewhat different. He is quite certain that the Second Massachusetts on the morning of the 2d fortified a portion of the line north and to the left of the swale or meadow. Colonel Morse, of the Second Massachusetts, in a late paper read before the association of that regiment, says: “If I recollect rightly, the first position of the Second was to the left of the little meadow in the woods beyond, and that there we threw up a slight breastwork.” This accords with the writer’s memory. The Third was also put in to the left of the swale.

\item[154] ED. NOTE. Gouverneur Kemble Warren, 8 Jan 1830 - 8 Aug 1882, 2/44 in West Point class of 1850. Taught Topographical Engineering and Mathematics. He grasped the seriousness
\end{footnotes}
in and strengthened our position.

On the 2nd there was but little fighting on our front save a brisk skirmishing, while we held it. Colonel Colgrove, by General Ruger’s order, threw his regiment forward, and had a sharp skirmish on the east side of Rock Creek early in the morning, before we took our position in the line of battle finally formed. A house and stone barn in our front, across the creek, were infested with sharpshooters, who kept picking off our men during the day. These Colgrove tried, but failed to dislodge. In the early afternoon the enemy tried to plant a battery on an eminence opposite our front to the left on a place called Benner’s Hill. But Knapp’s battery opened upon them with three 10-pounder Parrots. Van Reed’s battery K, Fifth New York Artillery, joined in with a section of 12 pounder Napoleons, and after a brisk cannonade of thirty minutes over our heads blew up one of the enemy’s caissons. The fourteen guns placed here by the enemy were driven off with great slaughter of horses and men. Two guns were disabled and several valuable officers killed, among them Maj. Latimer, who had pounded us so hard with his guns from the heights of Cedar Mountain the year before.

On the afternoon of July 2d, the position of the Union army was as follows: Slocum was on the right, facing Rock Creek, his left extending up the southern slope of Culp’s Hill; next a division of the First corps on the summit of this hill; then the Eleventh corps on Cemetery Hill; then next the Second corps, then the Third and Fifth corps on the extreme left, the Sixth corps being posted in the rear of Round Top as a reserve to the whole army. But Gen. Sickles, in taking position, had thrown his lines out towards the Emmitsburg road, and not along the Cemetery Ridge, from the cemetery directly south to Little Round Top. His left projected off toward the southwest, and gave the Confederates, whose line was on Cemetery Ridge, a little to the west, a temptation to strike this illy-sheltered wing in front and flank. Sickles deemed it the best position, but having his misgivings requested Meade to examine it. This was not done until too late. The center of Sickles’ line was at the Peach Orchard, a mile northwest from Little Round Top. His right, under Humphrey, lay along the Emmitsburg road; his left, under Birney, made a right angle at

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of a threat that Confederate forces under MajGen John Bell Hood might capture the unoccupied heights of the Round Tops, and in persuading forces of MajGen George Sykes’ Fifth Army Corps to form a defensive line, he is credited with having prevented a disaster in the second day at Gettysburg.

155 ED. NOTE. Less than one half mile outside of modern Gettysburg, to the east southeast, and now known simply as Benner Hill, it rises to 560+ feet above sea level.

156 ED. NOTE. Less than one half mile outside modern Gettysburg, to the south, Cemetery Hill rises some 560 feet above sea level.
the Peach Orchard, so as to extend southeast toward Little Round Top. It was a bad position; and Longstreet, perceiving its faultiness, resolved to attack it. Making his dispositions carefully, he launched his forces upon it at about four o’clock. His cannon planted so as to pound both fronts of Sickles’ line, he opened a furious artillery fire, just as Meade, having learned the mistake of the position, is ordering in extra force to defend it. The Confederate infantry then came on. Barksdale\textsuperscript{157} assailed Sickles from the west; McLaws and Hood from the south. Sickles is forced back; troops from the Fifth corps are thrown in. The battle rages with terrible severity. From our position we hear it; the rattle of musketry tells that thousands are engaged and becomes more distinct, and this augurs ill. The Union lines are forced back; the Confederates, at the same time, attempt to seize Little Round Top. General Warren is a skilled engineer, and he see the important of this point. If the rebels gain it, our whole position is taken in reverse and rendered untenable. He hurries up a brigade of the Fifth corps just in time. A most desperate struggle ensues among the rocks for that eminence. With valor never excelled in war our men retain it. But Sickles’ angular line is forced back, with terrible losses inflicted and received.\textsuperscript{158} The situation is critical. The corner of Sickles’ line at the Peach Orchard is crushed by the assault upon it, and that exposes both of his wings to enfilade. Meade at once commenced to strip other parts of the field to establish a strong line on Cemetery Ridge, from Little Round Top northward, to join with Hancock. When the battle was at its crisis, Williams’ and part of Geary’s divisions from the Twelfth corps were summoned to march toward the left, to reinforce Sickles in his terrible struggle. Leaving our breastworks, we moved out; passing to the south of Culp’s Hill in the rear, we crossed over the pike in close column by division and over to the left.

We soon came under the over-shot fire of the enemy’s artillery. The yelling of the advancing enemy was devilish. We moved into the woods between the Baltimore pike and the Taneytown road, as the enemy under Barksdale had pushed to the farthest point in their eastern advance. Our division arrived in time to aid Lockwood’s brigade, which had gone in with us, in driving the enemy back from his advance position, and relieved

\textsuperscript{157} William Barksdale, 21 Aug 1821 - 3 Jul 1863. Veteran of the Mexican War, former editor of a pro-slavery newspaper, mortally wounded at Gettysburg on 2 Jul 1863, taken prisoner, and died the next day. Had a reputation as an aggressive officer, an obstinate defender of his line, and a man eager to accept a challenge in spite of the odds.

\textsuperscript{158} The losses in this fight of the second day were greater than those of the first and third days put together. Longstreet put in 30,000 men, intending to make that assault decisive of the whole battle on that field.
McGilvery’s artillery from a very dangerous situation. The division and Lockwood’s brigade pushed to the front; and the latter recaptured three pieces of artillery from the enemy’s hand. This brilliant charge of Lockwood’s brigade was well executed; and their first work under fire was worthy of veterans. The One Hundred and Fiftieth New York and First Potomac Home Brigade, Maryland, were especially conspicuous in this charge. General Geary with part of his division was ordered by Gen. Slocum to follow our division, but he made a singular blunder. Losing sight of us, as we disappeared over to the left, he marched his men off to the rear toward Littleston, turning his back on the battlefield. He got back, however, in time for glorious work the next day.

It was quite dark when all firing had ceased on the left. Our division was then ordered back to its position on the right, and we groped our way thither. Wild things had happened there in our absence. General Greene had been left there with one brigade of the Second division of our corps. As it happened, we were moved out to go to the left just as Ewell was preparing to assault our part of the line. After we had moved away he came on. Jones’ brigade in front on his right, with Nichols just behind; Steuart on the left followed by Walker. General Greene is left alone on that part of the line to maintain our position. As the enemy came on while the battle was raging on the left, Jones’ brigade struck Greene’s front and received a bloody repulse.

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159 ED. NOTE. LtCol Freeman McGilvery commanded the First Volunteer Brigade of reserve artillery under BGen Robert O. Tyler.

160 General Williams in his report says in respect to our movement to the left: “Between 5 and 6 P. M. orders were received from Maj.-Gen. Slocum to detach the Frst [sic] division (Ruger’s) and Lockwood’s brigade to support the left wing, then heavily attacked. Geary’s division was at the same time ordered to cover and defend the entrenched line of the whole corps. I marched with the supporting detachment with all possible dispatch under a severe artillery fire, following as nearly as possible the direction of the heavy firing. When near the position occupied originally by the Second corps, as I was informed Maj. McGilvery of the Maine artillery attached to the artillery reserve reported to me that his battery was without support, and threatened by the enemy’s infantry in the woods in front, to which it had just retired carrying several pieces of our guns. I ordered Gen. Lockwood, whose brigade was in advance, to deploy his line and occupy the woods, which he did in gallant style, pushing a considerable distance to the front, and recapturing three pieces of artillery abandoned by the enemy in his retreat. Ruger with the first division, in the meantime occupied the woods on the left of Lockwood, and pushed forward in two lines, the enemy retiring with but little resistance. It was now quite dark.”

161 ED. NOTE. Brigadier General George S. Greene commanded the third brigade of the second division of the Twelfth Army Corps at Gettysburg.

162 ED. NOTE. This describes Major General Edward Johnson’s Division: Jones’ Brigade led by Brigadier General John R. Jones, Steuart’s Brigade led by Brigadier General George Hume Steuart, The Stonewall Brigade led by Brigadier General James A. Walker, and Nicholls’ Brigade led by Colonel J. M. Williams.
The Union men were well posted and mowed down the advancing enemy with
the merciless fire, from their breastworks on the crest of the ridge, up whose
sides the charging line advanced. Jones is wounded. Steuart pushes on and
finds the unoccupied works which Ruger’s division had left, and he takes them
and pushes toward the Baltimore pike to a stone wall. Steuart then undertook
to turn Greene’s right. But luckily the natural situation favored Greene. A
rocky crest gave him a good position, and he was enabled to hold off the
Confederate assault, until darkness compelled both sides to suspend action.

On the left of Greene the assault had been made at Wadsworth’s front. He
was strongly entrenched and suffered but small loss, while he inflicted
much upon the advancing enemy. At about the same time that Johnson’s
division made this attack on Greene, Early’s division of Ewell’s corps moved
to the assault of Cemetery Hill; but he got into action a little later. He broke
in a small part of the line of the Eleventh corps and got among our cannon;
but Hancock sent Carroll’s brigade of the Second corps very opportunely, and
they repulsed the attack and saved the day at that point. After the fierce
struggle lasting late into the darkness the enemy was pushed back from this
position.

Soon after, in the darkness, Ruger’s division was wending its way back
to the breastworks it had made. After crossing the turnpike, the suspicions of
Gen. Ruger were aroused, although he had received no clear intimation of
what had been going on in our absence. He threw out skirmishers. Colonel
Colgrove sent forward a company (F) of the Second Massachusetts. They
returned soon with twenty-three prisoners, who told that Steuart’s brigade and
Jones’ were in there. At once new dispositions were made, Col. Mudge, in
command of the Second Massachusetts sent forward, another company (K)
in the belief that there were but a handful of rebels in the woods. Captain Fox,
commanding this company, advanced. As his line moved into the woods —
for the southern slopes of Culp’s Hill were covered with rocks and woods --
some one cried, “Who goes there?” The answer of Fox was, “Surrender or we
fire.” The response came in a louder, “Battalion, ready — fire.” A line of fire
blazed in the faces of the Massachusetts men, but luckily the aim was too
high; and small harm was done. The company drew back. A new line was
then formed. The Third Wisconsin lay down in the damp swale; and the tired
men on either side were only too glad to sleep. The generals of our corps
spent a busy night; and plans were laid for the morning’s work.

General Meade called a council of his corps commanders to consider
whether they should withdraw or remain in the position then occupied. The
generals met. General Williams — our “Old Pap,” as the boys called him —
was called, as he was temporarily in command of our corps, but Meade did
not know it, and inwardly wondered why that division general was there. The
brave soldiers of that council were as calm, as mild-mannered and free from
flurry or excitement as a board of commissioners met to discuss a street
improvement. General Meade asked each a few questions as to the propriety
of receiving or giving further battle on that field.

When it came Slocum’s turn to answer he spoke with laconic frugality
of words, but he spoke the sentiment of his corps, “Stay and fight it out.” All
were agreed that the wisest course was not to yield; and Gen. Meade
concluded the deliberation with the simple words, “Such is the decision.”

When we were awakened it was before the gray of dawn. We were
within pistol shot of the enemy, and as soon as the dense mist should rise we
should be a fair target to his volleys. So we moved a little to our right and
faced north towards Culp’s Hill. To our right was the Second Massachusetts,
then the Twenty-seventh Indiana. The Thirteenth New Jersey came next,
facings its left wing towards Culp’s Hill, its right towards Rock Creek. Between
our front and the enemy was the little swampy swale or meadow. Throwing
out a few skirmishers a few yards to the edge of the swale, they from behind
rocks opened fire. The regiments rolled stones together, piled them in little
heaps, and thus constructed a slight breastwork; and from this line opened a
fire on the Confederates as they showed themselves among the huge rocks
upon that slope of the hill. Our position was exposed to the fire of myriads of
sharpshooters from our front and our right flank across the creek. The enemy
before us were well sheltered by the huge boulders that lie like hundreds of
sleeping elephants along the slopes of Culp’s Hill just above Spangler’s
Spring;163 and as the lines were less than 125 yards apart one was almost
certain to be hit whose person was exposed.

Thus we spent an hour or so of the early morning. The enemy had
become aware as soon as daylight of the importance of this position. Fresh
troops had been thrust in to strengthen Steuart — Smith’s brigade of Early’s
division, Rhodes’ [sic] brigade, and Daniels’.164 These, with the rest of
Johnson’s division, made seven brigades of closely packed rebels to hold
Culp’s Hill and push our lines inward toward the Baltimore pike. But they are
in a hot place. Our artillery on Power’s Hill165 is dropping shell among them
with fearful rapidity. Ruger’s division is on their left flank, compelling them to
keep close hidden in the rocks. In their front is Geary and Lockwood. On

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163 ED. NOTE. “Spanglers Spring” lies some 1,000 yards south southeast of Culp’s Hill and
is about 460 feet above sea level.

164 ED. NOTE. Brigadier General Robert Emmett Rodes was born 29 Mar 1829 and killed
at Winchester on 19 Sep 1864. Brigadier General Junius Daniel was born 27 Jun 1828 and died
of wounds on 13 May 1864. Note that both of these men’s names are spelt wrong by the writer.

165 ED. NOTE. “Powers Hill” lies about 1.75 miles south southeast of modern Gettysburg,
its summit rising 573 feet above sea level.
their right Greene has his breastworks, with his right refused so as to face them; and his position is the best. In his support are good men and true of the Second corps. Shaler is in rear of Geary with good men, who relieve the front line at the proper moment. Thus environed by the Twelfth corps and those sent to its aid, the seven brigades under Johnson are held in their lodgment among the rocks. The troops that pass to them get a bloody raking from our brigade as they pass across Rock Creek and up the hill. The Twenty-seventh Indiana and Thirteenth New Jersey deal severely with them.

A steady fire was pouring from our line. Every attempt on their part to advance is met by Geary in front, Greene on their right and our brigade, Lockwood’s and McDougall’s on their left, with a withering direct and cross-fire. The musketry is sharp and incessant. A rain of bullets is concentrated on the ground they occupy.

The rebels swarm there, but they are many of them sheltered. Every tree is riddled with bullets and their dead and wounded lie thick among the rocks. Several times they essay to advance, but reel backward with thinned lines to their fastness among the great boulders. Geary is crowing upon them.

General Ruger received orders to try the enemy on the right of the line of breastworks to the left of the swale with two regiments, and, if practicable, to dislodge him. He sent Lieut. Snow to Col. Colgrove with an order to advance skirmishers at that point, and if the enemy was not found in too great force, to advance two regiments and drive him out. This order, as Col. Colgrove reports, was to “advance his line immediately.” He saw that it was useless to send skirmishers. It was only possible to carry the hill by storm. His own brave regiment, the Twenty-seventh Indiana and the Second Massachusetts, were at the point on the line from which this assault must be made. They were ordered to go in. The verbal order was given to Col. Mudge. “Are you sure it is the order?” asked he, looking at the frowning rocks behind which the enemy were packed. “Yes.” “Well,” said this brave gentleman, “it is murder,

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166 **ED. NOTE.** Alexander Shaler, 19 Mar 1827 - 28 Dec 1911, commanded the First Brigade, Third Division, Sixth Army Corps at Gettysburg. Awarded a Medal of Honor many years after the war, Shaler was also at one time the president of the National Rifle Association, of which he was a co-founder.

167 **ED. NOTE.** Colonel Archibald L. McDougall led the First Brigade, First Division, of the Twelfth Army Corps at Gettysburg.

168 General Ruger thinks the order was not given as directed, or was misunderstood. He did not direct an immediate storming of the position.

169 **ED. NOTE.** Lieutenant Colonel Charles Redington Mudge, born 22 Oct 1839, commanded the Second Massachusetts at Gettysburg, where he was killed in action 3 Jul 1863.
but it is the order. Up, men, over the works; forward, double-quick!"¹⁷⁰

In an instant the two regiments rose and with a cheer sprang over their breastworks, ran down the declivity to the swale, and moved at double-quick across the narrow meadow. But as soon as they came in view, the gleam of thousands of gun-barrels were seen among the rocks in their front. Regiments lying in the grass across Rock Creek also rose up and fired into their right flank. They advanced under a perfect hall of balls, men and officers falling at every step, but none save sorely wounded turning back. Colonel Mudge, of the Second, a noble gentleman, feel dead in crossing that fatal meadow. Captain Tom Robeson,¹⁷¹ a gallant, chivalrous officer of the Second, also fell mortally wounded. He had but a little while before shown the lofty courage of his nature. One of his men had been wounded on the skirmish line, and lay helpless and exposed under a broiling sun. The heroic captain boldly went out with a storm of bullets whistling about him, took the wounded man in his arms and brought him to a place of shelter. The Twenty-seventh Indiana on the right was terribly exposed, not only from the rocks in front but from the flank, and after losing twenty-three men killed, eight officers and seventy-nine men wounded, the regiment seeing how hopeless was the effort to carry the position fell back under orders.¹⁷² The Second Massachusetts pressed on, but bore a little to the left to find a point to enter between the large rocks in front. As it bore to the left it came in front of the Third Wisconsin, which at the moment the other two regiments advanced, Col. Hawley had moved forward to the edge of the swale to rush in and support the charge. As the Second moved in our front, it prevented the Third regiment firing at the rebels, who were rising up from behind the rocks to rain their fire

¹⁷⁰ ED. NOTE. — Quote from a paper written by Colonel Charles F. Morse of the Second Massachusetts and delivered 10 May 1878 in Whittier, “The Left Attack, Gettysburg,” Campaigns in Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania, 347. John A. Fox, who was Mudge’s adjutant, substantiates this story of Mudge’s amazement and his demand that the messenger repeat the order. Fox to General Carman, 4 Apr 1877, E. A. Carman Papers, New York Public Library.

¹⁷¹ ED. NOTE. Captain Thomas Rodman Robeson, 7 Nov 1840 - 6 Jul 1863. Wounded on the third day of battle at Gettysburg, and died three days later.

¹⁷² An incident that occurred soon after the Twenty-seventh Indiana had fallen back illustrates the heroic quality of its soldiers. Some of its wounded officers and men were lying where they had fallen in the swale. Several of the men volunteered to go out and bring them from the field and were severely wounded in the attempt to succor their comrades; but this did not deter others from continuing the attempt, until it became necessary to forbid this deadly exposure. In such actions, forming no part of general history, never finding place in public records, the knightly courage and chivalric spirit of the American soldier shone out in deeds worthy of Bayard or a Sidney. And such incidents were common in every battle. [Editor’s Note: Pierre Terrail, Seigneur de Bayard, 1473-1524, was a heroic French soldier. His name has come to represent any man of heroic courage and unstained honor.]
into the faces of their assailants. There the Second were, a handful of brave men within pistol shot of the enemy, who from higher ground and shelter in front and right were pouring volleys into their ranks. It was distressing to see and not be able to give them aid. But as they advanced up close to the wall of rocks they became a little less exposed. The rocks and trees gave them shelter, especially from a fire that came from across Rock Creek, on the right. Colonel Morse took command when Mudge fell. Holding the position, though conscious that they were doing but little to effect, he sent to Colgrove for orders and ammunition. Colgrove ordered the Second to fall back. It at once about-faced under a withering fire and passed to the left and rear of our regiment, at double-quick but in as good order as the movement through such swampy ground would permit.\footnote{General Edward Johnson, who commanded the Confederate forces on Culp's Hill, speaks thus of the assault of the two regiments: “In the meantime a demonstration was made in force upon my left and rear. The Second Virginia, Stonewall brigade, and Smith’s brigade of Early’s division were disposed to meet and check it, which was accomplished to our entire satisfaction.” This plainly shows the force against which these two small regiments had to contend in that bloody assault — one brigade and one regiment firing from cover upon two small regiments charging in the open, besides regiments firing on their flank.}

The Second Massachusetts had suffered badly. Twenty-two officers and 294 men went into the fight. Of these 2 officers — Mudge and Stone — were killed outright, 2 more — Robeson and Fox\footnote{ED. NOTE. Thomas Bayley Fox, 1 Feb 1839 - 25 Jul 1863. Captain with date of rank of 6 June 1863. Wounded in right ankle at Gettysburg on 3 Jul 1863.} — were mortally wounded, and 6 others wounded. Of the men 21 were killed or mortally wounded, and 101 were wounded, and 4 were prisoners. Forty-four men in every hundred had fallen. But this brave regiment and the equally brave Twenty-seventh Indiana joined in the charge made a few minutes later, which, with Geary’s, drove the rebels from their fastness in the rocks.

As soon as the Second Massachusetts had cleared the front of the Third Wisconsin we were able to do good execution upon the Confederates who had risen and exposed themselves to fire on the assaulting regiments. The charge of these two regiments gave Geary and his supports their opportunity. The Confederates had thus had their attention drawn to their left, and changed a large part of their front to resist this danger. This gave Geary an excellent opportunity to charge. He did so, supported by other troops. At this instant Gen. Ruger came up on the left of our regiment, and, seeing the situation and opportunity, he ordered Col. Hawley to bear to the left a little, and go in on the right of Geary’s line. We did so, the regiment crossing the swale at double-quick by the left flank, and then facing to the front we moved in on Geary’s right and swept the rebels over our breastworks, made the day
before, and down across Rock Creek. In this charge some 500 prisoners were taken by Geary and Ruger. Some 600 wounded Confederates were left on the field, and about 5,000 muskets. General Geary largely claims the credit for this charge, but he acknowledges much aid from Williams. Ruger's division advanced simultaneously, and the combined attack finally drove the rebels from their hold on Culp's Hill. As the enemy were driven out of the breastworks on this hill and back to Rock Creek, they were, says Hoke, "mercilessly cut down by repeated and tremendous discharges of grape and canister. Nothing during the war exceeded this engagement in carnage. The slain were lying literally in heaps." In the front of Geary's division and of the division commanded by Ruger were more Confederates dead than the entire list of casualties in the whole Twelfth corps. "The slain were literally lying in heaps." "Human beings, mangled and torn in every manner, from a single shot through the head or body to bodies torn to pieces by exploding shells were everywhere."

It was 10:20 o'clock when the enemy was thus driven from the breastworks down the slopes and over Rock Creek. The regiments of our brigade were at once in position in their old breastworks. The men of our regiment picked up hundreds of loaded muskets and had them in the breastworks — each man having about three shots to deliver to a charging enemy before stopping to load. The other regiments of the brigade were similarly furnished; and they all desired the Confederates to come on. The latter had evidently concluded that they were unwelcome visitors on Culp's Hill. They had hundreds of sharpshooters who, from invisible lurking places, fired with dangerous accuracy at every glimpse of a blue coat within our lines.

The mid-day sun now blazed down. Hundreds of poor, wounded Confederates lay about us, panting and groaning. Our stretcher-bearers moved under constant exposure from the sharpshooter, whose firing seemed more the rage of disappointment than sensible warfare. Meanwhile our batteries on Power's Hill, and Kenzie's Sixth United States and Muhlenberg's Fourth United States, well posted in our rear, vigilantly guarded our front and prevented any attempt to plant batteries on the height opposite us on Wolf's Hill and other eminences across the creek.

The silence along the front of our entire line from eleven o'clock till one

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175 In Gen. Meade's report of the battle of Gettysburg he gave all the credit of driving the enemy from Culp's Hill to Geary's division. His attention was afterwards called to the facts by Generals Williams and Slocum, and he changed his report to conform to the facts, with ample apologies. The losses told the story of the fighting. In the corps the losses were 1,082, of which 540 were in Geary's, 533 in Ruger's, and 9 in the artillery. Of Geary's losses 303 were in Greene's brigade, which had so gallantly held the crest of the hill on the night of July 2nd.

176 ED. NOTE. I believe that this is Lieutenant Edward D. Muhlenberg.
bodied mischief. All felt that a blow was to be dealt somewhere. The enemy were massing their artillery. By noon they had one hundred and forty-five guns in position in front of our left center, along Seminary Ridge then held by Longstreet and Hill. A large number of these were so placed that if their shell should fly over the Union position on Cemetery Hill and a little to the southward of it, they would find their bed in Culp’s Hill and the ground occupied by our division.

At one o’clock, Longstreet gives the signal, and one hundred and thirty-eight cannon open upon us. Our artillery under Gen. Hunt replies with eighty guns. the enemy’s fire is largely concentrated upon the point of our line which they intend to assault; but thousands of the overshots of their guns planted farther to their left come shrieking, whirling and howling into the woods where our division is crouching in its breastworks. The cannonade, most terrible ever witnessed in the new world, lasted for over an hour. It seemed to us much longer, and almost to paralyze our senses. The limbs were crashing and falling from the trees above us. Huge shells were striking the great rocks about us, either exploding or breaking; others were bursting in the air; others with spent force went whirling overhead with a screeching sound, terrible of itself. From glimpses through the woods we could see our artillery on Power’s Hill suffering terribly — the poor horses struck by shell leaping high in the air, and falling dead; the cannoneers working their guns with wild energy, while shots fell about them at every second. A glimpse on Baltimore pike, which we could get looking up the vista of the swale, showed the crowds of wounded artillerymen, stragglers and non-combatants scampering to the rear. The hour seems an age. Shells are bursting on all sides, in front, in rear, overhead. General Meade’s headquarters, to the west of our position on the Taneytown road, an old, stone farm house, is riddled with balls. Some of his staff are hit, their horses clustered about the door and shot down. It seems almost impossible to exaggerate the terrific grandeur of that cannonade. The following quotation from the letter of Mr. Wilkinson, who was army correspondent of the New York Tribune, thus describes it in language not overdrawn. He was at Meade’s headquarters: “In the shadow cast by the tiny farm house, sixteen by twenty, which Gen. Meade had made his headquarters, lay wearied staff officers and tired correspondents. There was not wanting to the peacefulness of the scene the singing of a bird, which had a nest in the peach tree within the tiny yard of the white-washed cottage. In the midst of its warbling a shell screamed over the house, instantly followed by another and another; and in a moment the air was full of the most complete

177 Brigadier General Henry Jackson Hunt, 4 Sep 1819 - 11 Feb 1889, 19/? West Point class of 1839. Controlled the 70 guns atop Cemetery Hill that helped to repulse Pickett’s Charge. He was an advocate of making artillery a separate branch of the army.
artillery prelude to an infantry battle that was every exhibited. Every size and form of shell known to British and American gunnery shrieked, whirled, moaned, whistled and wrathfully fluttered over the ground. As many as six in a second, constantly two in a second, bursting and screaming over and around the headquarters, made a very hell of fire that amazed the oldest soldiers. They burst in the yard, burst next to the fence on both sides, garnished as usual with the hitched horses of aids and orderlies. The fastened animals reared and plunged with terror. Then one fell, then another; sixteen lay dead and mangled before the fire ceased, still fastened by their halters, which gave the expression of being wickedly tied up to die painfully. These brute victims of a cruel war touched all hearts. Through the midst of the storm of screaming and exploding shells, an ambulance, driven by its frenzied conductor at full speed, presented to all of us the marvelous spectacle of a horse going rapidly on three legs. A hinder one had been shot off at the hock. A shell tore up the little step at the headquarters cottage and ripped bags of oats as with a knife. Another soon carried off one of its two pillars. Soon a spherical case burst opposite the open door; another ripped through the low garret. ❁ ❁ Soldiers in Federal blue were torn to pieces on the road, and died with the peculiar yells that blend the extorted cry of pain with horror and despair. ❁ ❁ No sound of roaring waters, nor wind, nor thunder, nor these combined, ever equalled [sic] the tremendous uproar; and no command, no order, no sound of voice, could be heard at all above the ceaseless din of thousands of shells bursting on every side.”

As the time wears the shots come thicker. The Confederates improve in range. The breeze favors them, for it blows the smoke from our line and covers with a cloud their own. Both sides suffer severely. Our eighty guns reply to their hundred and thirty-eight. As fast as a gun is disabled or a battery so weakened as to slacken its fire, another canters in at break-neck speed from the artillery reserve to take its place. Our artillery men stand to their work nobly. And our lines of infantry, from Cemetery Ridge southward, whose breastworks and stonewalls or rail-piles are but slight defense to that storm of howling iron, remain motionless in their places. They know that the cannonade is the prelude to another assault. The enemy make the mistake of scattering their fire all along the line. General Hunt notices this, and concentrates his fire more fully on certain points. In one rebel brigade, more than two hundred men were killed or wounded by our artillery.

General Hunt cautions our gunners to slacken fire. He sees the need of saving ammunition for closer work. The enemy, perceiving the silence of our guns, is deceived. His columns of infantry are put in motion for the grand

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178 ED. NOTE. There were actually 118 guns under the control of Hunt, more than the ones on Cemetery Ridge.
charge that is to pierce our left center between Cemetery Ridge and Little Round Top, and thus decide the day.

    Now the Confederate artillery ceases. There are a few moments of ominous silence. Expecting a general assault, we on the Union right are all in position. Every soldier grasps his piece, looks well to the percussion cap. The men are strangely silent.

    The position we occupy does not enable us to witness the grand charge which the enemy is preparing to make. Pickett’s fine division of Virginians, “the flower of Lee’s army,” four thousand five hundred strong, with an esprit de corps equal almost to that of Napoleon’s old Guard, is selected to break the Union line. On the right of it Wilcox is to advance with an equal force; and Pettigrew and Trimble with their brigades are to advance in support on the left. The charging body is about fourteen thousand men.

    Soon from their position on the ridge our soldiers see one of those magnificent sights which brave men admire, even when exhibited by their foes — a strong line marching calmly in perfect order and military precision into the face of danger and death. Pickett’s division advances in alignment that would delight any tactician in the exercises of a review. As it comes on, it makes a half-wheel to the left so as to change its direction to the part of our line where the position is naturally weakest. The division and its supports on its flanks, somewhat in the rear, march on as if on parade. They are not yet in reach of musketry. Passing several fields they come in range of maj. McGilvery’s artillery, posted on Cemetery Ridge. He pours into them the missiles of thirty-eight guns, making terrible havoc, but still undaunted they move on into musket range; but our men withhold fire for closer work. As the enemy comes nearer brave Stannard of Vermont, throws out two regiments — the Thirteenth and Sixteenth Vermont — by a right half-wheel, and pours in upon

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179 Ed. Note. Brigadier General Cadmus Marcellus Wilcox, 29 May 1824 - 2 Dec 1890, 54/59 in West Point class of 1846, graduating with Pickett (59th) and McClellen (2nd). Commanded a brigade in Anderson’s Division of Hill’s Third Army Corps.

180 Ed. Note. Brigadier General James Johnston Pettigrew, born 4 Jul 1828. Led a Heth’s Division into Pickett’s Charge. Mortally wounded in a rearguard action at Falling Waters, Maryland on 14 Jul 1863, he died three days later, Lee remarking that “the Army has lost a brave soldier and the Confederacy an accomplished officer.”

181 Ed. Note. Major General Isaac Ridgeway Trimble, 15 May 1802 - 2 Jan 1888, 17/40 in West Point class of 1822. Led Pender’s division into Pickett’s Charge, and was wounded and captured in the assault, and surgeons later amputated his leg. He was never again an active participant in the war, but worked as an engineer in Baltimore for the remainder of his life.

182 Ed. Note. Brigadier General George J. Stannard, commanding the Third Brigade, Third Division, First Army Corps. The Thirteenth Vermont was commanded by Colonel Francis V. Randall, and the Sixteenth Vermont by Colonel Wheelock G. Veazey.
the right flank of the advancing enemy a terribly destructive, enfilading fire. Shrinking from this, their right brigade, that of Kemper, huddles in towards the center. Unfortunate movements for them, for it only thickens the mass into which Hays’ and Gibbon’s division pour their volleys at a distance of two or three hundred yards. The troops under Pettigrew, on the enemy’s left wing of this charging host, soon gave way. They had been encouraged to enter this charge under the assurance that they were to assault mere militia. But when they saw their lines melting away like snow in a thaw, these North Carolinians turned and fled in terror. Pickett’s men alone remained, buffeting that fierce storm of bullets, grape and canister that crashed the very bones of that brave body of veteran rebels. Pettigrew’s troops left two thousand prisoners and fifteen stands of colors in the hands of Hays’ division.

But the brave Virginians of Pickett’s division tempered in the fire of many battles quailed not. Out of the forty-five hundred less than half remained; the others lay strewn upon the field or had limped or crawled wounded to the rear. With one, mad rush the survivors plunged against Hancock’s line and fairly thrust their front through it. They struck one regiment of Webb’s brigade and pricked through its line. But the yelling host made but a slight advance. A second line of the same brigade received them. Colonels of other regiments near by begged to take their men to the point of collision. They rushes in almost to the loss of regimental organization, and enveloped the shattered division of Pickett. Seeing themselves almost surrounded by a host every minute increasing, the Confederates flung themselves on the ground and threw up hands to signify surrender. Twenty-five hundred prisoners and twelve standards more were captures at this point — in all 4,500 men and 27 colors captured by Hancock’s corps.

As Pettigrew’s command fled, hundreds of its frightened men were shot down in their flight. Wilcox with his brigade of Alabamians advanced on the right of Pickett, but too far in the rear and too late. After Pickett’s division was destroyed, Wilcox came on attacking feebly. His command was terribly mangled by our artillery. Stannard’s Vermonters swung around again, this time by a left wheel, took Wilcox in flank, and captured several hundred prisoners, while the rest fled.

During this attack and its terrific musketry fire on the left center, we held our line on Culp’s hill [sic] in breathless suspense; for we knew that with our center broken the plight of our army was desperate. Soon a wild cheering, so different from the rebel yell, swept along our lines toward us. As regiment after regiment brought the glad Union cheer nearer and nearer, we knew that the issue had been favorable to our side; and a great anxiety was lifted from our minds. Presently an aide from Gen. Meade brought his congratulations, announcing that the Confederate attack in strong force had been repulsed with great slaughter and the capture of thousands of prisoners. What strength
we had left was expended in cheering. The weight of the nation in its suspense and anguish seemed to be lifted from our oppressed hearts. A terrible crisis had been passed, and the cause of the Union had not gone down. In the state of the country, as it then was, defeat in that battle seemed the death-knell of the Union. The Confederacy had gathered its strength, struck its hardest blow and reeled back exhausted and in despair. Well might we and all the friends of the cause we upheld rejoice as we had never rejoiced before. For, above all considerations of personal peril, we realized the momentous consequences hanging upon the issue of that battle.

Soon by glimpses through the opening we saw the butternut and gray uniforms of the captured Pickett men hurrying to the rear on the Baltimore pike. In such a moment of excitement it was difficult for our men to stay in their lines; but our commands were to remain at our posts, as Ewell still menaced our front.

The enemy had been fairly beaten. His great attacks on the 2nd and 3rd had failed. All hope of breaking our lines had died in Lee’s heart. Hancock, lying dangerously wounded, had written a note to Meade urging a counterattack. Meade has been much criticised for not making it; but the mature judgment of military writers is that Meade would probably have suffered as bloody a repulse, as he had given to Lee, that he attempted to follow up the enemy with a counter-assault on the rebel position. General Longstreet has since said that he “would have liked nothing better than to have been attacked,” as he would have returned in kind the treatment which Pickett, and Wilcox had received.

After the excitement of the conflict died away, when the evening began to creep on, we became conscious of the fact, unheeded before, that we were surrounded by dead, wounded and dying men. On and near the field there were between 20,000 and 30,000 wounded men. About 5,500 lay dead, and the number was hourly increasing.

On Culp’s Hill, where we were, hundreds lay moaning and shivering, as the chills of the evening came on. They were mostly Confederates, and could not be cared for earlier, as the enemy’s sharpshooters had interfered with the humane work of relieving their own wounded. The poor, haggard creatures, limp from loss of blood, seemed to be jammed in between the rocks. As the dusk stole on and the stillness of the night, the moans, entreaties and piteous cries of those poor, mangled men and boys — for the Confederate ranks had many boys in their teens — filled the air with most dolorous sounds.

As the nerve tension of this third day of battle relaxed we, who had escaped death and wounds, found ourselves so torpid with fatigue as to be benumbed to active sympathy. The mass of suffering was too great. We lay down to rest in our entrenchments among the rocks — save such luckless ones as were put out on picket — and went to sleep to the lullaby of groans.
and piteous calls for help from many voices of men in agony on every side. We knew that the stretcher-bearers were at work, for their lanterns and glimpses of pallid, bleeding men carried by could be seen amid the shadows of the forest. We slept, waking in the night to notice that we were drenched by a heavy shower, and dozing quietly into unconsciousness as the only means of escaping the discomfort. Aroused at an early hour, our men arose, stiff, weary, and dismal, wet to the skin, having had no regular rations for two days save a few, hasty bites of hard-tack from haversacks — about us was a most depressing scene of misery. Everywhere gory corsés\(^\text{183}\) of soldiers; all the houses, barns, sheds, orchards, and yards far and near filled with wounded, shot or torn in every conceivable manner. Thousands more were still lying in the field, as yet uncared for. The surgical force and attendants were overwhelmed by the demand for aid to such vast numbers of sufferers.

Our division at once set about feeling for the enemy. Capt. Silas E. Gardner\(^\text{184}\) was sent our with his company, and moved down to Rock Creek. A strong picket was in our front, and many sharpshooters; but our line was at once advance to the creek. The brigade was soon led by Gen. Ruger on a reconnaissance \(\text{sic}\) around the right of our army to the Hanover road, thence by that road to Gettysburg, a movement which disclosed that the enemy had drawn in his left, and our right was no longer opposed.

The day was spent partly in burial of the slain. Ghastly sights on every hand! The dead lay thickly on the fields of the second and third day’s fighting, on the ground over which Sickles and Hancock had resisted the enemy’s assaults. The common phrase, “one could walk on dead bodies,” applies here literally. Not less thickly were the Confederate dead lying on the slopes of Culp’s Hill, where they had repeatedly charged on the night of the second and during the afternoon of the third days.

The Third Wisconsin had been unusually fortunate. Though in close engagement, and for hours as near to the enemy as any regiments in the brigade our casualties had been few. Only two men, Thomas Barton and William Wagner, of Company F, were killed and one officer and ten men wounded.\(^\text{185}\) Lieutenant Jasper Woodford was shot while skirmishing. The bullet, taking off part of his ear, sent him whirling around as if swung by strong arms.

\(^{183}\) **ED. NOTE.** Corse is a now archaic term for corpse.

\(^{184}\) **ED. NOTE.** Silas E. Gardner, of Monroe, was a captain in C Company of the Third Wisconsin Infantry Regiment.

\(^{185}\) The list of wounded cannot be found. Among those severely wounded in this battle were the following: Andrew T. Shanks, Co. B.; John McMullen, Co. B.; J. B. Dubois, Co. E.; George Kolb, Co. F.
Our exemption from losses was due to the excellent judgment of Col. Hawley, and to the fact that the men as well as officers, as they became experienced in fighting, learned to take advantage of every cover, and to avoid needless exposure. In part, also, it was due to the accident of position. We were placed where such shelter was possible.

Wisconsin blood flowed freely on that famous field. The losses in the several regiments and commands from our state is given in the tabulated statement below.

“What next?” That was the question as we waited during the Fourth. Lee spend the day in burying dead and sending his wounded off toward the Potomac, loaded on great army wagons, suffering torture as they jolted along. The enemy found that about one-third of his army was killed or wounded. The army of the Potomac had suffered a like loss of one-fourth, and from 12,000 to 15,000 stragglers had dropped out besides.

The story of the great wagon train of wounded, which Gen. Lee took back with him from Gettysburg, is one that illustrates with vividness the horrors of war and the vast sum of misery and suffering, which follow such a battle. When Lee began his preparations to withdraw from Gettysburg his first care was to gather up all the wounded within his reach, and place such as could not walk in wagons. For this he used all his available transportation; and a train, which, when extended upon the road, was seventeen miles long, bore his wounded sufferers back toward the Potomac. Thousands whose wounds were not severe were made to walk; but those great lumbering army wagons, without springs, were loaded with the severely wounded as thickly as they could be laid, without straw on the hard bottoms. This long train was placed in charge of Gen. Imboden, and the head of it left the scene of conflict amidst a terrific rainstorm on the 4th at about 4 o’clock in the afternoon. It recrossed the South Mountain by Cashtown — the road on which most of Lee’s army came in, and then, at Greenwood, cut across by a country road to the Potomac, leaving Chambersburg to the right. These thousands of wagons were thus driven over a rough country road. The horrors of that march are graphically told by Gen. Imboden, in a paper published in the Galaxy of April, 1871, from which extracts are here made. He writes:

“About four o’clock in the afternoon the head of the column was put in motion and began the ascent of the mountain. After dark I set out to gain the advance. The train was seventeen miles long when drawn out on the road. It was moving rapidly, and every wagon issued wails of agony. For four hours I galloped along, passing

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187 ED. NOTE. “The Galaxy” was published in New York, NY, from May 1866 to Jan 1878 by W. C. and F. P. Church.
to the front, and heard more — it was too dark to see — of the horrors of war than I had witnessed from the battle of Bull Run to that day. In the wagons were men wounded and mutilated in every conceivable way. Some had their legs shattered by shell or minie-ball; some where shot through their bodies; others had arms torn to shreds; some had received ball in the face, or a jagged piece of shell had lacerated their heads. Scarcely one in a hundred had received adequate surgical aid. Many of them had been without food for 36 hours. Their ragged, bloody, and dirty clothes, all clotted and hardened with blood, were rasping the tender, inflamed lips of their gaping wounds. Very few of the wagons had even straw in them, and all were without springs. The jolting was enough to have killed sound, strong men. From nearly every wagon as the horses trotted on cries and shrieks greeted the ear. No help could be rendered to any of the sufferers. On, on, we must move. The storm continued, and the darkness was fearful. There was no time to fill a canteen with water for a dying man, for except the drivers and the guards, disposed to compact bodies every half mile, all were wounded and helpless in that vast train of misery. The night was awful, and yet it was our safety, for no enemy would dare attack us when he could not distinguish friend from foe. We knew that when day broke upon us we would be harassed by bands of cavalry upon our flanks. Therefore our aim was to go as far as possible under cover of the night, and so we kept on."

Along the road traveled by this column of human misery, the people tell — and it will long go down in tradition among those simple-minded farmers — how the wretched sufferers were 34 hours in passing, the wounded shrieking, groaning, cursing, praying, begging to be laid down by the roadside to die, how the wounded, who could walk, thronged into their houses and yards and begged for water and for the good housewives to dress their wounds.

On the evening of the 4th, the retreat of Lee began. He crept off through the Fairfield pass in the South mountain range towards Hagerstown. Sedgwick’s Sixth corps was started in pursuit; the cavalry were hastened off to harass the flank of the fleeing column. The retreat is reported to be one of haste, disorder and demoralization; but Lee wisely sent his wounded and his trains on one road, while he marched with his effectives on another. But all the roads on which he moved were strewn with broken-down wagons, arms and plunder thrown away, and other evidences of a hasty retreat. To pursue with the whole army on the direct trail was hardly practicable. Meade determined to move by the flank down the eastern side of South mountain to Middletown. The Sixth corps did not pass through the gap; but the cavalry followed the rear and cut the column in numerous places. On the afternoon of the 5th, our Twelfth corps turned its back on the scene of its heroic struggle and victory, and much to our disappointment moved southward. We could not see why we should not pursue the enemy west of the mountains.
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<td>43</td>
<td>769</td>
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The Confederate loss, as near as can be learned, was 2,665 killed, 12,599 wounded, 7,464 missing; total, 22,728. The rebels lost five generals killed and six wounded. The Union side lost four generals killed and twelve wounded. The Confederates lost also in cavalry, not counted above, some 400, making their losses almost the same as ours, according to their reports. The hospital returns indicate that 3,575 Union corpses were buried. The enemy's loss in killed and those who soon after died was about 4,000.
CHAPTER XXII.
JOURNEYINGS.

LEAVING the gory field of Gettysburg, the Third Wisconsin marched with its corps to near Littlestown, “taking the back track” as the men said. On the 6th\(^{188}\) we were moving southward, and the night of the 7\(^{th}\) found us, after a hard day’s march in the rain, near the good old city of Frederick. But alack! we had no time for visiting, for the next morning we marched through the town, turning to the right on its main street, and took the Middletown road.

An incident happened here illustrates the summary justice of war. In our first campaign up the valley and many times afterwards a weazened, little man, with a sandy face and “crankish” look had appeared in our camps selling patriotic songs, and singing them to teach the soldiers the tunes. He appeared to be one of those enthusiastic patriots of whom there were plenty in those days, who thought they could put down the rebellion by writing and setting to music patriotic songs. Colonel Ruger\(^{189}\) had suspected the man, but his suspicions took no root at headquarters, so the singing old rhymester had free run in all the camps; and his doggerel songs had something of a run, too. But in the Gettysburg campaign something transpired to rouse suspicion; he had been searched and evidence conclusive that he was a spy found upon his person. As we marched out of Frederick that morning his body hung dangling to the limb of a tree, a ghastly object. He had been tried by a drum-head court martial on the march, or even a less formal proceeding, and summarily executed.

The direction our column had taken enabled us to guess the plans of our commander. Soon leaving the Middletown road, we bore southwest and bivouacked on the night of the 8\(^{th}\), at the eastern foot of Crampton’s Gap. The air was still fresh and breezy as we swept through the Gap next morning and marched to Rohresville, which we had passed nearly two years before on our first field march. On the 10\(^{th}\), we moved up through Sharpsburg, over the old battlefield of Antietam, north of which we bivouacked. The 11\(^{th}\) was spent in a slow but tiresome movement northward toward Hagerstown; and at night our bivouac was near Fairplay, a little hamlet some three miles southwest of Williamsport. Here we found our army concentrating and closing up about Lee, who was cooped up on the eastern bank of the Potomac. The rains had

\(^{188}\) Ed. Note. 6 July 1863.

\(^{189}\) Ed. Note. It is interesting that Bryant now refers to him as Colonel Ruger, as in the previous chapter, he calls him General Ruger.
swollen the river so that he could not cross. General French\textsuperscript{190} had moved up from Harper’s Ferry and destroyed his pontoon bridges at Falling Waters; and the Confederate army had turned upon its pursuers to hold them at bay. The Twelfth corps was put in position on the left of our line, which rested on the Potomac at a bend below Falling Waters, and extended thence to the right, northeast toward Hagerstown. Our army had simultaneously poured through the passes of the South Mountain — Turner’s, Fox’s and Crampton’s Gaps -- and gathered about Lee, whose army was massed along the road from Hagerstown to Williamsport, with its flanks on the Potomac. Our cavalry had made it exceedingly uncomfortable for the rebels on their retreat. But Lee, finding that he must wait for the river to subside before he could escape, set diligently to fortifying his position. From our lines we could see the enemy, one behind the other, while from every hillock little lunettes sheltered their well-posted artillery. The position of our brigade was about four miles due east of Falling Waters, and near the point where the Sharpsburg and Hagerstown pike intersects the Boonsboro and Williamsport road. In front of us, across March Creek, a little stream easily fordable, was Longstreet. Not far from our line was the College of St. James, between the two armies. The men on both sides desired to come to blows. The “Johnnies” wanted to wipe out the disgrace of Gettysburg. The “Yanks” were confident that in one more battle they could finish up the rebel army.

Halleck had urged Meade to attack. The latter called a council of his corps commanders. They advised against it; and the commander yielded to their timid advice. He was over-cautious and a little too slow in getting his command close up to the enemy; and, as is now generally believed by military men, he lost a grand opportunity to crush the Confederate army completely. As it was, he prepared for an assault on the morning of the 14\textsuperscript{th}. We were up and ready at the appointed hour, 3 o’clock A. M., but the order to advance did not come. By putting the ear to the ground we could hear the noise of the artillery wheels inside the rebel lines, and we knew they were in retreat. Impatiently we chafed for the order to assault and strike the enemy when he was astride the river. It was long after sunrise when the order to advance came. The line swept forward over abandoned breastworks. Our brigade pushed towards Falling Waters as fast as legs could hustle, across fields and by-lanes. We got there just in time to assist the cavalry general, Kilpatrick, in attacking the rear-guard brigade of the enemy, commanded by Gen. Pettigrew; but the cavalry made a splendid saber charge, and, our

\textsuperscript{190} \textbf{ED. NOTE.} William Henry French, 13 Jan 1815 - 20 May 1881, 22/50 West Point class of 1837. Served in Seminole and Mexican Wars. After sending a force to destroy Lee’s pontoon bridges over the Potomac, French was assigned as commander of the Third Army Corps, due to wounds suffered its prior commander, Daniel E. Sickles.
infantry pouring in at the same moment, the Confederate brigade fled, leaving a number of prisoners in Kilpatrick’s hands. The fact was revealed that had the Twelfth and Second corps on the left moved earlier by two hours we could have struck the Confederate army in a plight unfavorable to defense, and could have made large captures. The feeling of the army was well expressed by President Lincoln: “The fruit was so ripe, so ready for plucking, that it was very hard to lose it.”

As soon as this affair was over, the Twelfth corps started southward, and marched 15 miles. On the 15th we marched to Sandy Hook, and the next day to Pleasant Valley. There we rested until the morning of the 19th, and then crossed over into Virginia, the men singing as they winded their way under the high bluffs of Loudoun Heights, —

“Rappahannock again, Rappahannock again;  
And if ever I live till the sun shines to-morrow,  
I’se gwine to go back to Rappahannock again.”

Our march was an uneventful one down the eastern slopes of the Blue Ridge. As we moved on through the fields and hilly roads, the blackberries and dewberries were in full ripeness; and were most grateful and healthful food, and there were plenty for all. The 20th we halted near Snickersville. On the 23rd we moved by Ashby’s Gap to near Markham Station; the 24th to Piedmont; the 25th from thence via Greenwich and Catlett’s station to Warrenton Junction; the 31st to Kelly’s Ford on the Rappahannock, which three months before we had crossed in our march to Chancellorsville. Since then we had fought three battles and marched over 400 miles; and the rebellion and Lee’s army were still apparently as bold as ever in front and on about the same line.

Here we went into camp. The next day, the Second Massachusetts and Twenty-seventh Indiana moved across the river to support an advance of the cavalry. They came back on the 2d, and the brigade nestled down in the woods and took a two weeks’ rest, but at the same time covering a long picket front on the river. The enemy were quiet and camp life began to be monotonous.

On the 16th we received orders that were mysterious; and next day we moved off to Rappahannock Station. There, with instructions to turn over our transportation and camp equipage, we were ordered into box cars and run up to Alexandria. The mystery of the movement added to its zest. Several other regiments191 were on the road, too, among them the Second Massachusetts

191 General Meade detailed the following regiments to proceed to Alexandria under the command of Gen. Thomas H. Ruger: Second Massachusetts, Third Wisconsin, Twenty-seventh
and Twenty-seventh Indiana, of our brigade. This expedition, wherever it was to go, was placed under the command of Gen. Thomas H. Ruger, whose sterling judgment and capacity were well understood and appreciated at headquarters; and he does not appear to have been apprised [sic] of the destination, as on reaching Alexandria he was to report to the General-in-Chief for further orders. The command reached Alexandria and bivouacked in a miserable field. Two days were passed here, subsisting as best we could. There was general wonderment as to our destination, and we awaited orders with a stolid patience assumed to hide a consuming curiosity.

Toward night of the second day of our sojourn the order to “fall in” brought the regiments into line. Marching through town, down to the wharf, we saw two great ocean steamers, on one of which — the “Merrimac” — the Second Massachusetts, Third Wisconsin, and Twenty-seventh Indiana and one of the Ohio regiments were ordered to embark.

When on board we learned that our destination was New York. The officers were assigned to berths; and the men were stowed away in the bowels of the ship. They complained bitterly of the suffocating heat and closeness. Men, who had been used to bedrooms embracing the space between the four corners of the globe and the great canopy, could hardly endure such close quarters.

The horses of the field and staff were hoisted by derricks on the upper deck, and there put in temporary stalls. The officers had the run of the quarter deck, and were soon at home.

The presence of these veterans was needed in the great city, while the draft of men liable to military duty to fill the call for troops was taking place. An attempt to execute “the draft law” had caused a riot in July, in which the baser elements had risen, destroyed millions of property, burned a colored orphan asylum, murdered helpless blacks, destroyed the office in which the draft was carried on, and inaugurated a reign of terror. Ostensibly a resistance to the draft, it soon degenerated into pillage and wanton destruction of property. The draft was suspended; and New York militia regiments hurried home, — they had been sent to resist the invasion — and some 10,000 trained veterans of the army of the Potomac had been sent for.

Our good ship weighed anchor at about 6 o’clock next morning and steamed down the Potomac. This was comfort. To be out of dust, out of the broil of the volleys, to be fanned by breezes as our vessel plowed the waters were sensations most delightful; and soldier-like we gave ourselves up to the enjoyment of the hour. The memory of that ride down the Potomac and into

Indiana, Fifth, Seventh, Twenty-ninth, and Sixty-sixth Ohio. Several other regiments were sent from the army. In all there were over forty regiments in new York City and other cities, during the draft of that year — over 10,000 men from the Army of the Potomac.
the majestic Chesapeake lingers as a pleasant reminiscence of that bloody summer of the war days. The next morning we stood out to sea, and up the coast far out of sight of land. The breeze freshened, the vessel, a propeller, had a provoking roll that soon brought a good share of the “land lubbers” on board to a realizing sense that they were not feeling well. Many of them wished that they were back on the land. They would gladly have been on shore, marching in the sun or rain, or even charging Lee’s veterans. Some wished themselves at the bottom of the sea, as they paid tribute to Neptune of everything in their stomachs, receiving small sympathy from their companions whose digestion was undisturbed.

On Saturday, August 22d, we rode into the beautiful harbor of New York, whose lovely shores seemed to us, viewing them for the first time, a dream of fairy land. The vessel anchored off Governor’s Island; and in the night we disembarked at Canal street and quietly marched up Broadway to City Hall Park. There some rough barracks had been provided for the men; but no provision had been made for the officers. But what cared we? We had slept out of doors most of the time for the past campaign; and wrapped in our rubber blankets, we lay down in the park, at the point where the city post office now stands, and slept as snugly as “a sword in the scabbard.” The next morning we must have dozed quite late, for when we awoke and made our toilets by washing with water poured into our hands from a canteen, with the same nonchalance as would have marked a similar ablution on the Rappahannock, we were the “observed of all observers.” The windows of the Astor House were crowded with on-lookers, as were the front windows of the old Lovejoy House on the east side of the park, while a dense crowd of pedestrians looked at us from the streets in blank astonishment. Our uniforms were seedy, but when our regiments were paraded for morning inspection, and the brown-faced veterans from the Potomac battlefields stood in line, New York knew that there would be no more rioting. The Twenty-seventh Indiana was stationed at the battery, at the foot of Broadway. The Second Massachusetts and Third Wisconsin occupied City Hall Park. Other regiments were in the parks and public squares further up town. The draft went on smoothly; and not a rioter dared peep. Every evening, as our regiments held their dress parade, the park was surrounded by a dense throng; and, as the battalions were put through the manual of arms; and, as the battalions were put through the manual of arms, the applause of the crowd was always hearty, for the regiments were admirable proficient.

The days glided away. We were kept closely at our posts, only half-hour leaves, in limited numbers, were at first given. But we were enabled to see much of the city; and we had small yearning to get back to the Rappahannock; and, after two weeks of rest and good feeding, we were a merry lot indeed. Wives or friends from our northern homes began to make
their appearance.

Our plans for sight-seeing, for going to the theatre, for giving a banquet, and all that, were soon driven from the tapis. September 5th, a lovely day it was, brought us the most unwelcome order, “Be ready to move at a moment’s notice.” A little later, “Command will move at three o’clock;” “No one to leave camp.” We packed up our meager budgets of luggage. The men, quick to guess the thought in Halleck’s brain, struck up —

“Rappahannock again, Rappahannock again;
And if ever I live till the sun shines to-morrow,
I’se gwine to go back to Rappahannock again.”

By dark that night, we moved down Broadway; and the lighters were a long time in taking men and horses out to the iron propeller “Mississippi.” The Second Massachusetts, Third Wisconsin and Twenty-seventh Indiana were assigned to this tidy steamer down the bay. The weather was perfect. The sea was comparatively tranquil, and the vessel not crowded. We bivouacked on deck; slept as sweetly as babies, “rocked in the cradle of the deep,” and had a delightful and jolly voyage. The steamboat’s captain — his name was Baxter — was vexed in waiting for a pilot, as he sailed up the Chesapeake, and we ran aground, but soon got off again. We could afford to wait very patiently, for we well knew that ride would be the last picnic excursion we should have in a long time.

By 2 o’clock on the 9th192, the steamer was at the wharf in Alexandria; and by sunset we were out in the miserable field again. The next morning we had got together some rations and were on the march over the dusty road southwestward, past Annandale, then mostly chimneys of burned houses, past old Fairfax to Manassas Junction, where we camped. Everything seemed to smell of old battled, and was covered with the musty debris of armies. Next day down by Bristow, where the cars were burned the year before, and there their skeletons lay, and onward to Catlett’s in the blazing September heat, relieved at last by a drenching thunderstorm. Next day on by Bealeton, down to camp by Kelly’s Ford, where the Thirteenth New Jersey, drawn up in line, gave us a hearty greeting of cheers; and we heard the familiar cannonade on the river — the greeting given us by “our friends,” the enemy.

We left camp on the morning of the 15th, crossed at Kelly’s Ford, and moved by way of Stevensburg to near Racoon Ford on the Rapidan. Here, in camp in the woods, the Second Massachusetts and Third Wisconsin maintained a picket and sent sentinels down to the woods just behind the hills

192  ED. NOTE.  9 Sep 1863.
on the opposite bank; and a great revival of religion was in progress in their encampments. In the night, from the river bank, we could hear the singing, praying and preaching of most enthusiastic camp-meetings.

We envied not the poor, ragged, half-starved soldiers of Lee’s army—who suffered so much and fought so bravely to uphold a system and a government that had nothing but poverty and derision for the poor white man—whatever consolation they could draw from religion; but perhaps we were a little cynical in doubting the quality of a religion that regarded a rebellion in the interest of human slavery and against the most benign government ever given mortals to enjoy, as a “holy cause.” Picket duty was relieved of its disagreeable exposure by mutual suspension of picket firing. Their’s [sic] were in plain sight on the opposite side, on a little hill; and one day they turned out their guard and saluted our officer commanding the picket with chivalric courtesy.

We had been two or three days at this duty when, at 10 o’clock at night, a Connecticut regiment from the First corps came to relieve us. Marching back to camp of the corps near Summerduck River, we found the whole corps under orders to move. Rumor said we were to go west. It had been reported that Longstreet’s corps had been sent from Lee’s army to reinforce Bragg in Georgia. Chickamauga had been fought; Rosecrans was in peril; and it was divined that we were wanted to assist him in the west. We marched to Brandy Station. There the paymaster worked all night to pay us off. We saw the Eleventh corps loaded into cars and started for Alexandria. Next morning we were put in march for Bealeton. There we learned our destination. We were put into ordinary freight cars, with rough, board benches for seats. The men were crowded in as thickly as they could sit. It would be a criminal offense not to huddle live stock in as thickly. Much as we loved the change, we left the Army of the Potomac with regret. We knew that it had had much hard luck; that it had before it the cream of the fighting men of the south, both generals and soldiers; that its battles were sure to be bloody; but we believed that ultimately it would triumph; and had it been left to us, we should have voted to stay and fight it out to the end on “the sacred soil.”

The transportation of so many men at such a rapid rate was admirably conducted, a credit to the railway officers and the Quartermaster-General. The long trains — 40 and 50 cars each — pulled out of Washington one after the other, over the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. The rebels exerted themselves to the utmost to break communications, but were foiled. They knew our destination and our force as well and as early as we did. We pushed on to Benwood, on the Ohio River, crossed it (Sept. 29th) on a pontoon bridge, took another lot of cars waiting for us and steamed westward through Columbus and Dayton. Ohio was then in the heat of the election. At every station the population turned out to greet us; and thousands of school
children lined the tracks singing: —

“The Union forever! Hurrah, boys, hurrah!
Down with Vallandigham and up with Johnny Brough,
While we rally round the flag, boys,” etc.\(^{193}\)

And we hurrahed from one border of Ohio to the other, except when — and it was a good part of the time — our mouths were crammed with the cakes, pies, cookies, meat, eggs and fruit, which the loyal Ohio people brought us without money or price. On to Indianapolis; changed cars for Louisville; crossed the Ohio, and the men were there given coffee by the Sanitary Commission\(^{194}\) at “the Soldiers’ Rest.” We were soon on the way to Nashville, and there took the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad, southward past the battlefield of Stone River. The ride over this road through the hilly region of the western watersheds of the Cumberland Mountains was dangerous enough. Much of the road was “strap rail,” — a strap of iron on wooden timbers. It was worn, and the timbers were rotten. The cars were laden inside with supplies for Rosecrans; and the troops rode on the top, having to hold on to one another like a swarm of bees to avoid being shaken off. We passed several wrecks with locomotives and cars upside down; and new-made graves, close by each, reminded us of the perilous ride we were not enjoying.

We reached Stevenson, Ala., very early on Sunday morning, (Oct. 4). Having been cooped up in or on the cars just a week,\(^{195}\) it was a joy to stretch the legs, to lie down on the soft turf. We got there in the nick of time. General Jo. Wheeler, at the head of a large force of rebel cavalry, had started on his famous raid to cut the communications with Nashville and starve out the beleaguered army of Cumberland at Chattanooga.

We were soon steaming back through the valleys and the great tunnel to Decherd, Tennessee, thirty miles down the road. Thence on the 7\(^{th}\), we went by rail to Duck River; on the 8\(^{th}\) we marched by zig-zag roads to bell Buckle, where Wheeler had captured a guard two days before; on the 9\(^{th}\) to Christiana, twelve miles away, but, as we marched, nearly twice the distance. Next day to Normandy, twenty-five miles, as we “hoofed” it. We were chasing after Wheeler’s cavalry, and we were without rations — our horses and

\[^{193}\text{ED. NOTE. In the 13 Oct 1863 gubernatorial election for Ohio, John Brough beat Clement Vallandigham, 288,000 - 187,000.}\]

\[^{194}\text{ED. NOTE. The Sanitary Commission was established in June of 1861 to aid the government in providing for the needs of sick and wounded soldiers and their dependent families.}\]

\[^{195}\text{We had ridden 1,192 miles.}\]
equipment had not come up. We lived on the country and formed the acquaintance of an indigestible slug of baked meal called “corn dodgers,\footnote{Corn Dodgers are made by combining corn meal and water into a thick dough that it formed into finger-shaped rolls, and grilled until brown on a hot griddle. } and felt much sympathy for rebel soldiers, when we came to eat mutton and beef, new-killed, without salt. But the march was interesting. The climate was superb, the air had a rich freshness, so different from the humid heat of the Atlantic coast. Our marches lay through great forests of beech trees with the mast of beech-nuts an inch thick on the ground. Streams of purest water gushed out of the hillsides, and flowed along in channels on bottoms of rock as smooth as glass. For some days we rambled about, having no sort of notion where we were. At Normandy we found part of the Twenty-second Wisconsin guarding the bridge. They generously gave us their rations and visited us in our bivouac; but we were so tired we ate up their food and fell asleep, leaving our guests to entertain themselves. After trotting about to head off the ubiquitous cavalry, which, of course, kept out of our way, but did much mischief, we halted at Elk river bridge, where with the Second Massachusetts, and, I think the rest of the brigade, we guarded the great bridge over the river. We enjoyed hugely the efforts of a colored regiment here stationed to show off its drill, and the fact that our officers were not safe from arrest, if they strolled about its camp.

On the 23d, after twelve days here, we moved up to Decherd. Thence we started over a mountain, on the 24\textsuperscript{th}, where wagons and artillery had to be lifted bodily over rocks of the roughest, down into Big Crow creek valley — the old home of the Creeks — to Tantalon. Next day, on through this beautiful valley to Anderson. Then our second division, under Geary, was ordered down into the Wauhatchie; and Gen. Slocum, with his First division, was to guard the rear from Murfreesboro to Stevenson, with headquarters at Tullahoma. We were sent back over that mountain of ledges, to Cowan, sixteen miles, and the next day, the 27\textsuperscript{th}, to Wartrace. There the regiment built a fort on a hill — impressing into service numerous colored men — and at a small bridge a mile south a company was stationed, and a stockade built, which would enable a small force to stand off a large body of raiding cavalry. Here we rested; and the climate was of the best. The regiment had 27 officers and 313 men present for duty, out of 502 borne on its rolls.

While here, Lieut.-Col. Martin Flood, who was physically unable for active field service, resigned to accept like rank in the Veteran Reserve corps, or Invalid corps, as it was oftener called. Major Edwin L. Hubbard, after a period of efficient service, also resigned; and Capt. George W. Stevenson was promoted lieutenant-colonel, and Capt. Warham Parks, major; and every man

\footnote{Ed. NOTE. Corn Dodgers are made by combining corn meal and water into a thick dough that it formed into finger-shaped rolls, and grilled until brown on a hot griddle.}
in the regiment felt that these promotions were worthily bestowed. 

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197 **ED. NOTE.** Martin Flood transferred to the Veteran Reserve Corps on 4 Dec 1863. Edward Hubbard was discharged on 3 Nov 1863. George Stevenson was promoted to lieutenant colonel on 4 Dec 1863. Warham Parks was promoted to major on 4 Dec 1863.
CHAPTER XXIII.
RE-ENLISTMENT.

THE proposal to re-enlist for three years or during the war came before the regiment, under orders from the War Department, in the month of December. Colonel Hawley, with patriotic energy, set to work, zealously seconded by all the officers, to stimulate a sentiment in favor of re-enlistment. The temptations offered were a bounty of $400 in installments and a thirty-days’ furlough, — the veterans to be sent home as a regiment to enjoy it. The arguments used in favor of it were that the war was likely to end the next year; that the regiment could thus preserve its organization and share the glory of a continuous service to the end of the war; that the money would be a snug sum to start life with; and that as “boys of ’61” the regiment ought to stay it out. The furlough was a most tempting bait; but down in the hearts of the men there was the manhood of patriotism, the feeling that the country needed them, and that they would not be contented at home while armies were contending.

The men hesitated some days, but finally came very gently to the conclusion that they could not go home and stay; that they would very likely re-enlist, and it was better to stay in a good, well disciplined, fighting, marching regiment than to take the chances of another organization. Those who did not re-enlist had strong personal reasons for not doing so. Some had become so broken in vigor, or their friends or affairs at home were so circumstanced that they felt justified in serving only their original term.

The patriotism of the “boys of ’61” was not of the demonstrative kind. But it was there “all the same;” and it shone out in true nobility, when to the old battle-thinned regiments the appeal was made for them to engage for a two or three years’ extension of their term of service. They reflected long and deeply. They knew what war was, had tasted its bitterness, seen its horrors, felt its misery. They longed for home and for peace. But in full view of danger, wounds, suffering that tried all the fortitude of man, they chose the path they knew to lead through further hardship and peril, because duty pointed that way.

By Christmas the officers present and 240 out of 314 men then present, had re-enlisted; and on Christmas afternoon the veterans started for home. The day was lovely, and the little band of 260 men, the remnant together of the 1,000 nearly who had left the state two and a half years before, were as happy and jocund as only happy soldiers can be.

The regiment arrived at Madison on the 29th, late at night. The evening

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198 ED. NOTE. This is December of 1863.
paper of the next day — the Wisconsin State Journal — records that “no adequate arrangements had been made for their comfort, and that they had to turn into hastily and poorly prepared quarters.” “These are the men,” it continued, “of whose hair-breadth escapes and daring achievements as we have heard so much every time anything of account has occurred on the Potomac and Rapidan, and who were so enthusiastically received in new York. They are a credit to our state, and have nobly represented it on that field of honor is not wanting in those who are proud of the title of fellow citizenship with such men, and that it is intended to give them a fitting demonstration. Surely, we should see these veterans march under arms, with their colors, scarred by the marks of many historic battles, as they did in New York, and as fellow Badgers greet and do honor to them at a festive board.”

But the veterans were eager to get to their homes. They cared more for a day at home with their wives, fathers, mothers, sisters, brothers 199 than for all the banquets and fine speeches in the world. The “Old Third” was strictly a “business” regiment.

The same journal says: “The officers and men of the gallant Third, to whom it was intended to give a suitable entertainment this evening, would not stop, as they were anxious to get home to spend New Year’s with their wives and families. Governor Salomon is to review the veterans at Camp Randall at 1 o’clock this afternoon, and afterwards they are to be furloughed for thirty days, thus enabling them to enjoy the pleasures of home after their noble service of three years. On their return they will be fittingly received. Their late arrival was caused by the cars running off the track. The regiment numbers about 225 men.”

The State Journal, of December 31st, notes that at 10 o’clock on the 30th Gov. Salomon reviewed the veterans of the Third Regiment at Camp Randall. “The veterans stood under arms, with the colors, that had braved the storm of battle so many times, in their center; and these with their appearance associated with so many daring deeds, producing inspiration. After showing their high state of discipline in several military exercises, the governor addresses them in a few, brief remarks, in which he expressed his pleasure at seeing them, and his admiration, joined in by every Badger, of their heroic deeds while defending their flag. He regretted that insufficient notice had prevented their having a more fitting reception; but as they would not stay that evening, owing to their natural wish to spend New Year’s at home, he could only wish that they would be fittingly received by the state on their return. Colonel Hawley then proposed three cheers for the governor of Wisconsin, which were given in regular army style, every man’s cap rising at once, and

199 ED. NOTE. The Editor’s own ancestor who served in this regiment, Lawrence Post of K Company, had none of these family members left living to go to.
each voice uniting in one grand cheer. The colonel then informed them that their furlough of thirty days began from that time, and the war-worn veterans gladly broke ranks for home."

The “boys” had a jolly time, though the weather went down to the bottom of the thermometer. During the month Col. Hawley and Adj. Bryant opened a recruiting office in Madison. In Fact, all the “boys” sent in of brought in recruits with them; and the regiment by February 1st, when the veterans rendezvoused to return to the South, had the addition of several hundred men to its rolls. In this work Col. Hawley displayed the energy and enthusiasm that characterized all his service. During the winter, with the greatest competition and several veteran regiments home, and recruiting officers at work for other organizations in every village, some 300 recruits were enlisted for the regiment. The gallant men of the regiment are entitled to a great share of the credit for their patriotic assistance. They brought in many a recruit; some brought brothers or relatives grown old enough for soldiers since the war began.
CHAPTER XXIV.
AGAIN TO THE FIELD.

ON THE 2d of February, the veterans reassembled at Madison; and on the 4th, at 11 A. M., started again for the field, reaching Tullahoma, Tenn., on the 9th. Encamped there until the 12th, and the non-veterans there joined them; and all then started to Fayetteville, county seat of Lincoln County, some thirty miles by the road, southwest of Tullahoma. That county was a rich region of southern Tennessee, noted for its intense secession sentiment, having voted unanimously to go out of the Union. Many outrages had been committed there. Shortly before the regiment went there, the guerillas had captured a small party of Union soldiers which were out on duty with a forage train and taken them to the bank of Elk river, and there bound them and murdered three of their number in cold blood. Two had escaped by swimming the river and reported the facts. General Slocum, by order of Gen. Thomas, sent in Col. Ketcham, with a detachment from Ruger’s brigade, to levy a forced assessment of $30,000 for the benefit of the families of the murdered men. The order given below narrates the circumstances so graphically that it is worth preservation.

HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF THE CUMBERLAND
CHATTANOOGA, Tenn., Jan. 1, 1864.

General Orders
No. 6.

It having been reported to these headquarters that between seven and eight o’clock on the evening of the 23rd ult., within one and a half miles of the village of Mulberry, Lincoln County, Tenn., a wagon, which had become detached from a foraging train belonging to the United States, was attacked by guerillas, and the officer in command of the foragers, First Lieut. Porter, Co. A, Twenty-Seventh Indiana Volunteers, the teamster, and two other soldiers who had been sent to load the train (the latter four unarmed) captured. They were immediately mounted and hurried off, the guerillas avoiding the roads, until their party was halted about one o’clock in the morning on the bank of Elk river, where the rebels stated they were going into camp for the night. The hands of the prisoners were then tied behind them, and they were then robbed of everything of value upon their persons. They were next drawn up in line, about five paces in front of their captors, and one of the latter who acted as leader commanded “ready,” and the whole party immediately fired upon them. One of the prisoners was shot through the head and killed instantly, and three were wounded. Lieut. Porter was not hit. He immediately ran, was followed and fired upon three times by one of the party, and finding that he was about to be overtaken, threw himself over a precipice into the river, and succeeded in getting his hands loose, swam to the opposite side, and although pursued to that side and several times fired upon, reached a house, when he was taken to Tullahoma, where he now lies in a critical situation. The others after being shot were immediately thrown into the river. Thus the murder of three men, Newell E. Orcutt, Ninth Independent Battery, Ohio Volunteer Artillery; John W. Drought, Company
H, Twenty-second Wisconsin Volunteers, and George W. Jacobs, Company D, Twenty-
second Wisconsin Volunteers, was accomplished by shooting and drowning. The fourth,
James W. Foley, Ninth Independent Battery, Ohio Volunteer Artillery, is now lying in
hospital, having escaped by getting his hands free while in the water.

For these atrocious and cold-blooded murders, equaling [sic] in savage ferocity any
ever committed by the most barbarous tribes on this continent, committed by rebel citizens
of Tennessee, it is ordered that the property of all other rebel citizens living within a circuit
of ten miles of the place where these men were captured be assessed, each in his due
proportion, according to his wealth, to make up the sum of $30,000, to be divided among
the families who were dependent on the murdered men for support, as follows: Ten
thousand dollars to be paid to the widow of Geo. W. Jacobs, of Delavan, Walworth county,
Wisconsin, for the support of herself and one child. Ten thousand collars to be paid to the
widow of John W. Drought, of North Cape, Racine county, Wisconsin, for the support of
herself and two children. Ten thousand dollars to be divided between the aged mother and
sister of Newell E. Orcutt, of Burton, Geauga county, Ohio. Should the persons assessed
fail within one week, after notice shall have been served upon them, to pay the amount of
their tax in money, sufficient of their personal property shall be seized and sold at public
auction to make up the amount. Major-General H. W. Slocum, commanding the 12th army
corps, is charged with the execution of this order.

The men who committed the murder, if caught, will be summarily executed, and any
person executing them will be held guiltless, and will receive the protection of this army;
and all persons who are suspected of having aided or harbored these guerillas will be
immediately arrested and tried by a military commission.

By command of

MAJOR-GENERAL THOMAS.

WM. D. WHIPPLE,
Assistant Adjutant-General.

A part of these murderers were afterwards captured. They were tried by a military
commission at Tullahoma; and others charged with similar crimes were tried by the same
tribunal during the winter of 1864. Able lawyers came down from Shelbyville to defend the
prisoners; and their execution at Nashville was subsequently announced in the
newspapers.

The Third Wisconsin was sent into the county and stationed at
Fayetteville, the county seat, to hunt down and extirpate the guerilla bands
which infested this region. Colonel Hawley was the right man to deal with
such a class. He would be indefatigable in dogging them, and strictly just in
giving them their deserts. A large number of refugees from Chattanooga were
also staying at Fayetteville, and they were to be cared for and kept from
starvation.

The regiment met a sullen reception, no inhabitants being on the streets;
but soon they found the soldiers had come to stay. They accepted the
situation with good grace and began to cultivate the “Yanks.” Business was
dead. The stores were used as quarters for the companies, and other vacant
buildings were assigned to the refugees for occupancy. A force of mounted men were soon detailed from the companies, and placed in command of two brave and excellent officers for such duty — Capt. Silas E. Gardner and Lieut. Alex. D. Haskins. They soon captured a number of the guerillas, and ran the rest out of the region. The adventures of these rangers would form an interesting chapter, if space permitted an extended narrative. They ran down and captured a notorious Capt. Elliott, head of a vicious, guerilla band. They also hunted down and made prisoners two desperadoes named Short and Miller, much to the discomfiture of their female relatives, who boasted that “no Yanks was smart enough fer to catch their boys.” Gardner and Haskins were gallant lads, and soon had friends among the handsome girls of the surrounding plantations, who gave them many a clue to the hiding places of the bushwhackers. They brought in some thirty or forty in all of a very desperate class of guerillas.

On the 5th of April the recruits arrived — some 300 in all — and were assigned to the companies. This gave the officers and sergeants much employment in teaching them the manual and “setting them up” in the school of the soldier. The new chaplain, Rev. J. M. Springer, here joined the regiment.

The reorganization of the county government under President Lincoln’s amnesty proclamation was a duty of the regiment; and Capt. J. W, Hinkley was appointed provost marshal of the county. He administered the oath of allegiance to several thousand; some took it bona fide, and some were, as they oddly expressed it, “whitewashed Yanks.” The male residents of the county were mostly men and boys, who had been in the Confederate army. Many had been discharged, but more were deserters, who saw that the Confederacy was doomed to defeat. They flocked to take the amnesty oath, helped reorganize the loyal government. The recent cases were marched under escort to Tullahoma for examination. Captain Hinkley writes: “In addition to all my other duties, everybody in the county who had a grievance came to me for redress. Some had horses taken by our army or by bushwhackers; some had been robbed of money or other valuables; some wanted permits to carry firearms, which I never granted; others wanted assistance to keep from starving. One man came with a case parallel to the woman who ‘wanted a pass to raise geese.’ He wanted a pass to raise a crop” they were sorry enough when the regiment went away, as it was succeeded by the Tennessee Union Cavalry, which immediately proceeded to kill some of the most prominent citizens of the place, who had taken the oath of allegiance; for the hatred of of Union Tennesseans towards those who had been secessionists was intense and implacable.

The Twelfth corps was reorganized about April 10th, and consolidated with the Eleventh to form the Twentieth corps; and Gen. Joseph Hooker was
assigned to the command. The Third brigade became the Second of First division, Twentieth army corps. General Williams still kept the division, and Gen. Ruger, the brigade. The five-pointed star was retained as the badge of the corps, at the suggestion of the officers of the Eleventh corps.

During the stay at Fayetteville, the small-pox broke out in the regiment, and the measles also had a run. Several deaths occurred, which are elsewhere noted. But on the whole, the regiment was in good condition. There had been many changed in the officers’ roster of the regiment, and the officers who started with it in the Atlanta campaign were: Col. Wm. Hawley, Lieut. Col. Geo. W. Stevenson, Maj. Warham Parks, Quartermaster T. J. Marvin, Dr. Oscar F. Bartlett, surgeon, Dr. J. Griffith Conley, assistant surgeon, Chaplain, John M. Springer; Company A, Capt. Ralph Van Brunt, 1st Lieut. Seth Raymond; Company B, Capt. Wm. M. Snow, 1st Lieut. Wilson S. Buck; Company C, Capt. Silas E. Gardner, 1st Lieut. James Collins; Company D, Capt. L. B. Balcom, 1st Lieut. [sic] C. R. Barrager; Company E, Capt. Julian W. Hinkley, 1st Lieut. Alex D. Haskins; Company F, Capt. James W. Hunter, 1st Lieut. Edmund L. Blanchard, 2d Lieut. Jasper Woodford (who was acting adjutant, vice Bryant, on detached service); Company G, Capt. Ephraim Giddings; Company H, Capt. Thomas Slagg, 2d Lieut. John E. Kleven; Company I, 1st Lieut. Wm. Freeborn; Company K, 1st Lieut. John M. Schweers, 2d Lieut. Jens Moe.

The service in Gen. Slocum’s command and the cavalry, though mere guarding of the railroad, was quite active. The country was infested with guerillas far and near; and outrages were committed by them in attacks on outposts or wagon trains, and occasional wrecking of railroad trains. It was a service that taxed the vigilance of commanders, and demanded frequent and long marches from detachments of the troops.
CHAPTER XXV.
ON TO ATLANTA — RESACA.

GENERAL GRANT'S plans for a general, simultaneous movement of all the armies of the Union against the Confederate forces were matured during the early spring of 1864. Theretofore, we had too often pounded in only one place at a time, giving the rebels opportunity to transfer their troops by interior lines from one part of the great theatre of war to another. Grant's purpose was to hammer the rebellion on every side at once and all the time. General Sherman's task was assigned to advance from Chattanooga upon Atlanta. He was delighted with the general plan, saying enthusiastically, "It looks like enlightened war." He accepted his assigned work with the ardor of his nature. "I am to knock Jo. Johnston," he wrote to Grant. He began the concentration of his troops for an advance as soon as the spring had made the roads passable.

His army in this advance had a difficult region to pass through. Southward of Chattanooga for some forty miles the country is a succession of rugged ridges, almost mountains, lying in a northeast and southwest direction, with deep valleys between, covered with thick forests. When one height is scaled, there is a descent into another deep, wooded valley, and another mountain ridge equally formidable confronts the column. The whole of the way, the country has many excellent positions for defensive warfare; and all that engineering skill and the control of the labor of thousands of slaves could do to make them impregnable had been done. They must therefore be turned. The campaign was one in which strategy must combine with hard fighting, much marching and constant pressure against the enemy. The armies under Gen. Sherman were constituted for the service to be exacted of them. The army of the Cumberland composed of three strong corps — the Fourth under Howard, the Twentieth under Hooker and the Fourteenth under Palmer, in all about 60,000 men — was to bear directly against the enemy. The army of the Ohio, under Gen. Schofield was to be used as occasion might require; and the army of the Tennessee, under the active, alert and skillful engineer and strategist, Gen. McPherson was to be the "whip-lash corps," to do the flanking. Sherman's force with which he set out was about 100,000 men, and 254 guns of all calibres. The enemy's opposing force was estimated at 55,000 to 60,000; but as he was to fight on the defensive from behind strong fortifications; and as Sherman must maintain a constantly lengthening communication from Nashville, the latter needed a force fully double that of his adversary. The movement was to begin about the first of May. [Ed. Note. — 1864]

On the 28th of April, under orders from General Ruger to join the
brigade, the Third said good-bye to its Fayetteville friends, marched to Tullahoma, and there stripped for the Atlanta campaign. It was then in splendid condition. The recruits and convalescents gathered in, gave nearly 600 muskets in line. Arriving at Tullahoma on the 30th, it was found that the brigade had marched southward two or three days before. Next day, Col. Hawley started to overtake the column via Decherd, thence east over Breakfield Hill to Tracy city, thence down the Battle Creek Valley, in the region known as the “Old Creek Country,” from which the Indians were driven in the days of Jackson,200 through Swedon’s Cove to Bridgeport. The march was tedious, through mountainous country, by winding valleys, over wretched roads, but in delightful air. At noon, May 4th, Bridgeport was reached. The 15th corps was at the time crossing the river, the 17th corps going to the front by trains; and the Third was delayed for want of road. On the 5th it crossed and marched toward Chattanooga, passing next day over the north end of Lookout mountain, with Missionary ridge and all its fortifications in full view. On the 7th, the march was over a part of the field of Chickamauga, where the trees for miles, torn with shot or shell and scarred with bullets, and the half buried dead attested the severity of the battle fought there the previous Autumn.

The enemy must be sought the other side of Taylor’s Ridge; and the army of the Cumberland was crossing it through Nickajack gap some eighteen miles southeast of Chattanooga. The Third marched rapidly all the next day and passed through the gap by “candle light.” The night was dark and still;

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200 Editor’s Comment: When gold was discovered on Cherokee land in 1828 the states in which these lands were found determined to rid themselves of their Indian populations. Shortly thereafter, Georgia, followed by Alabama and Mississippi, passed a series of laws intended to remove the five tribes from their own lands. The laws redistributed tribal lands to various counties, declared all Indian laws and customs void after 1830 and forbade the testimony of Indians against whites in court. This permitted the wholesale confiscation of Indian property. The stage was set for a major legal confrontation between the tribes and the states, and two resulting Supreme Court decisions, written by Chief Justice John Marshall established for the first time a legal statement on the status and rights of the Indian nations. These decisions, Cherokee Nation v. Georgia and Worcester v. Georgia, provided the foundation for all future federal-tribal relations.

The following remarks were passed by the Cherokee Nation to the Congress of the United States prior to the forced removal of these people from the lands: The title of the Cherokee people to their lands is the most ancient, pure and absolute known to man; its date is beyond the reach of human record; its validity confirmed by possession and enjoyment antecedent to all pretense of claim by any portion of the human race. The free consent of the Cherokee people is indispensable to a valid transfer of the Cherokee title. The Cherokee people have neither by themselves nor their representatives given such consent. It follows that the original title and ownership of lands still rests in the Cherokee Nation, unimpaired and absolute. The Cherokee people have existed as a distinct national community for a period extending into antiquity beyond the dates and records and memory of man. These attributes have never been relinquished by the Cherokee people, and cannot be dissolved by the expulsion of the Nation from its territory by the power of the United States Government.
and as the teams were passing over all night, lighted candles had been placed along the rocks to light the road, all the darker for the mountain sides on either hand. At daylight the regiment joined the brigade and came out in plain view of rebel batteries shelling the advance of Geary on Tunnel Hill. Geary had attacked Buzzard’s Roost the day before and met with repulse; and his wounded were being sent to the rear. Here sixty rounds of ammunition were put in cartridge boxes for close work. Johnston was at Dalton; and as his front along Rocky Face ridge was too strong to be carried, it must be turned. Johnston had fortified it to the maximum. The gorge of Buzzard’s Roost was impregnable; and the creek flowing through it had been dammed so as to make the ravine, in which the road-way led, a lake. Sherman therefore had sent McPherson by way of Villanow, down through Snake Creek Gap, to threaten the railroad at Resaca, southward on the Oostenaula river. McPherson, a little too prudent, lost his opportunity to cut the railroad and utterly cripple Johnston. He found two small brigades in strong position and fell back to the mouth of the Snake Creek gap. Hooker’s corps was then marched south to join and strengthen McPherson; and the Twentieth corps passed through Snake Creek Gap, a long, narrow defile between two high ridges called Chattagoota and Horn mountains. The hills on the sides rose above the heads of the troops hundreds of feet in almost perpendicular walls of granite. The gap is a rift in the mountains, where in places the sun’s rays seldom find way; and the mosses cover the rocks and fallen trees with a green and yellow coat, and the air is damp as in a cavern. The oaks and walnuts, lean and sparsely leaved, have weird shapes and long, slender branches struggling upward in search of warmth and light. It is a sombre, \textit{sic} dark avenue, through which in a serpent-like course the creek, so suggestively named, crawls through the gorges, toward the south into the Oostenaula valley. The country in the Snake Creek gap region is through long lines of mountainous ridges, with foot hills descending into contracted valleys, through which flow tortuous streams, shallow and narrow in dry weather, and in stormy seasons roaring torrents, which sweep everything before them, washing out the roads which with frequent crossings follow the course of the streams, rendering the roads impassable until the pioneers have made repairs. The Georgians never bridge these streams, as the bridges will not stay. The farms are scarce. A few patches of farm land on the slopes of the foot hills, or at placed where the valleys widen, afforded scant living for the “po’ white trash,” who were at the time referred to in this narrative nearly all in service in Johnston’s army.

On reaching McPherson, near the southern outlet of this pass, the corps went into camp along the banks of the creek. A violent storm of wind and rain came up in the night, blew down the tent flies and “pup” tents under which the soldiers slept and flooded the camp with the swift-rising waters, while the
thunders bellowed in the gorge. The drenched regiments had to hurry for higher ground on the hillsides, guided by the vivid flashes of the lightning which played unceasingly. It was an easy task to move, as the baggage and equipage were stripped to the minimum — one wagon to a regiment and one mule to a company.

Here the third with its division remained quiet for two days, while the Second and Third divisions of our corps went to the front.

Resaca is a little station on the railroad, just north of the Oostenaula river. It had been well fortified. The position was naturally quite favorable for defense. West of Resaca a little creek called Camp creek flows south, and its eastern banks are high; and on the west and north it was well entrenched. On the south and east flows the Oostenaula. Johnston had fallen back from Dalton and here made a stand. On the 13th and 14th, Williams’ division marched to the left in rear of the troops of the other corps then in position. In forming around Resaca, McPherson was on the right, on the west bank of Camp Creek, his right on the Oostenaula. The Twentieth corps was in the center, and on its left Palmer’s Fourteenth corps. Howard and Schofield had followed Johnston down from Dalton and were on the left. As the division of Williams moved toward the left on the 14th, it came up just as the rebels had attacked Stanley’s division of the Fourth corps, and were pressing it so hard that it was giving ground rather too freely, and one of its batteries was on the point of capture. Gen. Williams called out to them to get out of the way. He said he has “a division there from the army of the Potomac that would protect them,” a sly remark well calculated to make his own men fight like heroes under the circumstances. The rebel onset was instantly checked.

On the 15th all was quiet on the division front till noon. Our lines were pressing forward. On the brigade front the dense woods rendered it difficult to find the rebel line. The Second Massachusetts were sent forward to reconnoiter. About three-fourths of a mile out they found the enemy in strong force in front of a wood on a hill. Butterworth’s Third division of the Twentieth corps moved forward to attack, as did McPherson. Logan on the right gained

201 Cox says: “Stanley was outflanked and hard pressed when Hooker’s leading division (Williams’) arrived and turned the tide.” (Atlanta, p. 44.)

202 The corps from the Army of the Potomac were laughed at, when we went west, byu the Western troops. They used to yell out, “Kid gloves and paper collars,” as our regiments marched by, and indulge in some badinage on our fighting qualities. But after a battle or two they were glad enough to have the Twentieth corps about when there was fight on hand. The same sort of badinage was given the regiment in the East in the first years of the war by the eastern troops of the Army of the Potomac. “Backwoodsmen” and “Log Choppers,” were some of the terms given it, but in 1864 all the Twentieth corps were considered or thought by the various western corps to be eastern troops, so the regiment was in turn dubbed with the same epithets it had been throwing at the eastern troops in the Army of the Potomac, such as “Soft Bread,” “Paper Collars,” etc.
substantial ground, planting his guns so as to command the bridge over the
Oostenaula. Butterworth’s attack was upon the earthwork that the
reconnoisance [sic] of the Second Massachusetts had discovered. The First
division (Williams’) moved in on the left at double-quick. As they advanced
the skirmish fire told that the rebels were also advancing in the hopes of
cutting our line. The Third — Ruger’s whole brigade — at once prepared for
the onset. On the left was the Twenty-seventh Indiana, then towards the right
of the Second Massachusetts, Third Wisconsin, One Hundred and Fiftieth
New York and One Hundred and Seventh New York. The Third utilized a rail
fence and a few logs to make a slight breastwork, which was just completed
as the skirmishers came running in. A strong line of rebels followed and
struck the brigade square in the face, but soon quailed before the coolly-
directed fire. The Twenty-seventh Indiana and Second Massachusetts
wheeled to the right and opened fire on the flank of the advancing host, while
the other regiments gave them volleys in their front. They faced this fire for
a moment or two, then broke and ran. They soon attacked again, and were
easily hurled back. The third time, they tried to crash in our line, but were
repulsed with great loss. Our lines then dashed forward, as they fell back.
The right of the Third was advanced two hundred yards and came out into an
open field and pressed itself on the flank of a rebel brigade still firing at the
advance of our left and some of the Twenty-third corps. Captain Hinkley
quickly wheeled his company E and company H to the left and opened fire on
the flank of this brigade with telling effect. They soon fled, and some forty
rebels soon gave themselves up to the Third, though they could easily have
made their escape. In this battle the One Hundred and Fiftieth and One
Hundred and Seventh New York fought with their usual and distinguished
gallantry. The assault on them was close and heavy, and it was noticed that
the rebel dead lay very thick and quite near to their front. On the whole it was
a sharp encounter. Sherman says: “Hooker’s corps had some heavy and
sharp fighting, and captured a four-gun battery, guns and men.” (See Note
B in Appendix.)

The loss of the Third in this engagement was one man killed outright
and twenty-nine wounded, of whom nine afterwards died of wounds. During
this engagement a shell burst on the left of Company I, tearing off the leg of
and mortally wounding Giles L. Harrison, and bruising and blinding some
dozen men in Companies I and C with the mass of dirt and gravel it threw in
all directions.

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203 Ed. Note. There is no Appendix in Bryant’s text, and there is no Note B.

204 Ed. Note. Although the list Bryant gives contains only twenty eight names, not 29.
LIST OF KILLED AND WOUNDED AT RESACA, MAY 15TH, 1864


The death of the chaplain was a notable event. When the regiment was on its “veteran furlough,” the day before it left to return, the officers assembled at the Capitol on the invitation of the governor, the Reverend Mr. Springer was sent for, he being then an enlisted soldier in camp assigned as a recruit to the regiment, and when sent for a sentinel on post. The man’s appearance pleased the officers, and they elected him chaplain. As soon as his discharge could be had as an enlisted man, he was commissioned and joined the regiment and he made a very helpful chaplain, and was a devout Christian. When the prospect for the battle was manifest at Resaca, he asked for a musket and ammunition, as he said he did not wish to be lurking in the rear when the regiment was in battle. He had studied tactics, and Capt. Hinkley told him to act as lieutenant in his company, and that there would soon be plenty of muskets, if there was much of a battle. He did so; and was the first man hit — was shot through the legs and died a few days later in hospital. The picket which was posted out soon after this battle found in the front of the Third; the dead body of the chaplain of a Georgia regiment against which the regiment had fought. It was said by some of the Confederate wounded, that this chaplain’s son was a captain and had been killed; and the father was shot while on the field to recover the body of his son. After the battle the aged Confederate chaplain and his young son lay dead but a few rods from the place where Chaplain Springer fell.

After the battle of Resaca, the night was raw, chilly and rainy; and many of the men of the Third occupied an old cantonment of winter huts abandoned by the rebels. Their experience was much like that of Napoleon, when he helped the men ram home the cartridges at the siege [sic] of Toulon. They caught a cutaneous disease that soon exhausted the medical department’s supply of sulphur; and no stress of weather could drive them to like shelter a second time.
CHAPTER XXVI.
ON TO ATLANTA — NEW HOPE CHURCH.

NEXT morning, the 16th of May, found Resaca abandoned by “Jo. Johnston” and his people. They left six heavy guns, vast stores of ammunition and much other material of war. There was, of course, immediate pursuit. McPherson’s several corps crossed the Oostenaula at Lay’s Ferry on the right, Schofield by the left and, as the bridge at Resaca was overtaxed, the Twentieth corps was sent eastward to cross by ford and ferries above Resaca in the neighborhood of Echota, and bivouacked on the north bank of the Coosawattie. Fighting was heard far off to the right during the day. On the 18th the corps was roused at 3 A. M. and put in readiness for a move, and by 9 o’clock was on the march over crooked and wretched roads. A Twenty-mile tramp brought the corps to the vicinity of Cassville, there the enemy was found in considerable force; but the Union forces pressed right on, and in the “edge of the evening” drove the Confederates out of the town into their entrenchments beyond it, and prepared for a fight in the morning. There the Twentieth corps, or at least Williams’ division, remained a day or two.

After crossing the Coosawattie the country improved. The broad meadows of generous soil gave an abundance of green forage for the famishing animals of the army. A better class of people and houses, and well-tilled and vast fields of corn and a general abundance of well-to-do were noticed from the region south of the Oostenaula to Cassville.

Johnston had intended to risk a battle here, and ordered all the inhabitants of Cassville to leave town. They sought refuge in the neighboring hills, and came back as soon as Johnston retreated, during the occupancy of our troops. Their experience in having to “tie duds in bundle” and scurry off into the hills had taken all the flight out of them; and they saw all at once and in a new light the hopeless case of the Confederacy and the shocking inconvenience of having a war in their neighborhood. Their disgust with the authorities at Richmond was profound, because they had allowed military operations to disturb tranquility of the goodly town of Cassville.

The regiment moved with the brigade on the 23rd by way of Cass Station south, thence southeast to the Etowah river. The name of this river is a little too classic, in pronunciation, at least, for the average native; and the “po’ whites” and darkeys called it the “High-tower.” Crossing it on pontoons, the Third Wisconsin, with the division, encamped on the south bank; resumed march next morning, by cross-roads, through the woods, in a driving rain, and encamped about eight miles north of Dallas, to be driven out of camp by a deluge in the night. The weather was now becoming quite hot. The march from the Etowah had been through a streak of very poor country, of gravel
ridges, covered with scrub oak, black pine and hickory. The roads were rutted, gullied, full of boulders, deep with mud, and everybody was pasted with it, as it rained most of the time when it did not shower. The march had been up the valley of the Euharlee and over the Allatoona hills to the southwest of the pass, strongly fortified and firmly held by Johnston.

On the 25th, a five-mile march brought Williams’ division within three miles of Dallas. While halting for dinner, an order to fall in put an end to culinary preparations. A rapid counter-march was made. The division was called to assist Gen. Geary, commanding the Second division of our corps, who while moving on the parallel Marietta road had run into Hood’s corps strongly entrenched at the junction of three roads — from Acworth, Marietta and Dallas. Sherman had ordered Hooker to make a bold push to secure possession of this point, to which a little, log church, so common in the South, gave the name of New Hope Church. The First division marched back two miles crossed the Pumpkin Vine Creek, then turning to the right and eastward, it came up in rear of Geary’s division, which had pushed back the enemy’s skirmishers until they were supposed to be in the main line of works. Williams’ division was deployed with orders to push forward and drive the enemy from his position. The region was heavily timbered and the undergrowth was dense. The division advanced in line, through a piece of woods where the trees had been killed by girdling; and the rebel artillery brought down upon the troops a constant shower of limbs and splinters. The Third Wisconsin in this advance soon found itself in front of a six-gun battery well posted on a slight rise of ground, and in front of it behind a strong breastworks an infantry line evidently quite strong. A sharp fire of shell was opened upon the advancing line; and, as it came near, grape and canister flew from every gun; but the Third Wisconsin pressed on within about 150 yards of the battery. The regiments to the right and left had halted and begun firing. The Third, with its lines somewhat disarranged in passing through the tangled brush and over down-timber, also halted. The regiment in this advance had suffered heavily, but the extent of its loss could not then be seen, as the dense undergrowth prevented one from seeing much of the line. It had driven the gunners from their pieces; but the rebel infantry in their breastworks were pouring in a deadly fire. Colonel Hawley ordered the men to shelter themselves behind trees and fallen timber. This precaution was necessary, because the recruits in the excitement of the fight and eager to acquit themselves barely were oblivious of the fire that was fast thinning their numbers. The men sought shelter without falling back, and carefully covered the guns of the battery. Respecting this engagement, Col. Hawley thus reported: ["May 25, we marched eight miles when the enemy was met strongly entrenched at the crossing of the Marietta, Dallas and Acworth roads. Here the command was halted and the brigade formed in line of battle, and"]
advanced directly on the enemy’s works, my regiment occupying the center with its left resting on the Marietta road. In this hard-fought battle no decided advantage was gained further than learning the strength of the enemy, they being well entrenched with superior numbers and a well chosen position. The officers and men of my regiment fought with a heroism never excelled by any troops, and I take pleasure in saying that in this engagement, as well as in the former one at Resaca, not a single instance of bad conduct came under my personal observation or had been reported to me since, notwithstanding over half of my command consisted of recruits who had never before been under fire. My losses were 14 killed, 97 wounded, 12 of the latter having since died. The regiment fought that day but 150 yards from the rebel breastworks and faced a battery charged with grape and short-fused shell for two hours.”

This was a bloody battle for the Third, as the reported list below testifies:

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LIST OF KILLED AND WOUNDED AT DALLAS, OR NEW HOPE CHURCH, MAY 25TH.


Captain J. W. Hunter, of Company F, received a wound in the knee from a canister shot, apparently only a severe bruise. He was sent to Chattanooga, and there died on the 9th of June from blood poisoning. Captain Hinkley was also wounded in the head and disabled from service for three or four weeks, rejoining his command the day that the division crossed the Chattahoochee. Colonel Hawley had a slight wound, but was not disabled for duty. Captain William Ruger, brother of the General and member of his staff, here received a severe wound from the explosion of a shell disabling him for further field service in the war. His horse was killed by a canister shot; and Gen. Ruger’s horse was killed by a bursting shell.

The Third held its position close up to the works during the next day. The lines of both armies were at once strengthened. This movement on Dallas had for its object to compel Johnston to give up his strong position to Allatoona pass. He had been recently reinforced by Gen. Polk’s corps, and the southern press was scolding at a furious rate because he was constantly falling back; and he prepared to resist Sherman at this point with all his power. The 27th, there was heavy firing all day, principally towards the left. The Third lay in its line of battle constantly exposed, and the next day changed position about one-fourth of a mile to the left, passing in rear of the line of battle. It was a day of constant fighting all along the front. The Second (Geary’s White Star) division made a charge and lost heavily; and during the following night the enemy jumped over their works and charged on Geary, hoping to stampede him and thus break our line. The effort was a failure; and the loss was reported heavy on both sides. On the 29th, a fierce battle raged on the right of our corps, towards Dallas. On this day the Second Massachusetts started off as escort for 117 wagons loaded with the wounded men of the corps for Kingston, where hospitals were established. It was a tedious, torturing ride for the poor sufferers, jostled and jolted over the roughest of roads for nearly three days. The fighting had been desperate here, Howard’s (Fourth) corps had taken position on Hooker’s left, Schofield still farther to the left. Johnson’s division of Palmer’s corps (the Fourteenth) closed in on Hooker’s right. Pat. Cleburne, the Stonewall Jackson of the west, made dashing assaults on our lines, but was “knocked back” every time. The movement of the Williams division to the left was part of Sherman’s object to “overlap Johnston” on his right, extending our left nearer to the railroad toward

205 Ed. Note. Patrick Ronayne Cleburne, born in Ireland on 17 Mar 1828, hence the name Patrick. Naturalized citizen who located himself in Arkansas. A talented infantry commander, trained in the British army, Cleburne saw service at Shiloh, and later, in Kentucky, while preparing his command for combat, he was struck in the head by gunfire and lost the ability to speak. He relinquished command and was awarded a promotion to brigadier general. At the Battle of Franklin on 30 Nov 1864, after having had two horses shot out from under him, he marched forward with raised sword and was shot and killed within fifty yards of the Union lines.
Acworth, then about eight miles distant. All the troops had more or less hard fighting; and as some writer had said, “the woods moaned,” for wounded men lay in the underbrush, the rude, field hospitals being usually mere coverings of brush; the cabins, wherever one was found, being used by the surgeons for cases of amputation.

General Sherman was daily at the front, talking with the men, asking questions of the pickets, impressing all with confidence that he knew perfectly well what he was about. The men had unbounded faith in “Uncle Billy,” and never doubted the outcome.

On the 30th a heavy firing was kept up all along our line. Between 10 and 11 A. M. the Third advanced a mile, and the expectation of night attack kept men lying in line of battle all night. The 31st found the situation unchanged. The rebels placed in position several heavy pieces of artillery in front of the Third. Next day the division was relieved from this position by the Fifteenth corps, and moved about a mile and a half to the left, while a snapping skirmish fire kept all hands busy along a front of several miles. The Third fell into line at 4 A. M., June 2, and advanced with the Twenty-third corps and pushed the rebels back about a mile. Here a day’s work was done in the pouring rain, building a new line of works, while Generals Sherman, Thomas, Hooker, Palmer and Scofield [sic] visited the line. The front was advanced on the 3rd about twenty rods, and a new line of works put up. At 9:30 P. M. repose was ended by the advance of a strong line of rebel skirmishers. The tired men came into line of battle in their works and so remained till morning, moving then a mile to the left. The rain, [sic] fell and the woods were dripping all day, but the firing was incessant all along the line. During this week of constant skirmishing Johnston had struck heavily on our right, and been repulsed by McPherson. On the center Howard had struck hard on Cleburne, and he had been repulsed. The army was moving along the enemies’ front close up to his works, but gradually overlapping his right, enveloping the Allatoona pass. The 4th, the steady movements to the left continued. The Third worked in that direction a mile, still keeping itself cloaked with breastworks. Rain and firing along the line were both monotonous. The 5th, the regiment had a chance to stretch its legs, as it moved to the left of the line, and faced north. The trains were ordered to Allatoona. The men were glad enough to get out of the place, which the army had aptly named “Hell-hole.” On the 6th, the Third advanced at about 5 A. M., found the enemy a mile and a half in front, vigorously attacked him, and drove him back half a mile, and then fell to work throwing up an entrenchment in front and right of Pine Mountain.

This stronghold, as seen from the position of the Third, was a conical hill, bald on its top and half-way down its sides, and the rebel batteries and strong breastworks on the side were in plain view. The maneuvering of the
past ten days had compelled Johnston to abandon his strong works about New Hope Church, and then northeastward, and also to fall back from Allatoona Pass, upon another strong position from Lost mountain on his left, northeastward to Pine mountain, with the still bolder front of Kenesaw mountain farther to the east.

Here the Third had a day or two of quiet, while Sherman planned and maneuvered, and shifted his troops. The rebel works frowned from the three mountains, and from favorable points of view miles of entrenchments could be seen. On the 11th, the Third, with its division, moved two miles to the left still confronting Pine mountain and working closer. Rain and skirmishing were the order of the day. For the next two days the rain poured. The position of the brigade was a swamp, in which the skirmishers wallowed in mud, and all floundered and were drenched. Reports were that the enemy was massing in front.

Here the low grounds were infested with rattlesnakes, a poisonous spider of the scorpion species, and chigres, a pestiferous, invisible flea, that lighted upon the skin, penetrated it, raised a numerous progeny under it, causing intense irritation and often chronic sores. The insects of the South certainly did their part to uphold the confederacy.  

It was while the regiment was moving towards Pine mountain that Gen. Sherman greatly amused the men, by the rebuff he gave a quartermaster. The general happened to be near the head of the regiment. Hearing a sharp firing in a ravine some half a mile distant, he desired to know what it was. A mounted lieutenant of some other command happened to be riding along the road near by. Sherman, well-covered in his water-proofs, so as to be hardly recognizable, called to the officer to ride down where the firing was, find out what troops of ours were in there and report to him. The lieutenant not liking such exposure said: “Excuse me, sir, I am a non-combatant” (with the accent on the bat.) “A what, sir, a what, sir.” growled Sherman, “a non-combat’ant” I did not know I had such a thing in my army. What is your name sir?” By this time the quartermaster saw whom he was talking to, and with apologies hurried off to get the information desired.

June 14th, a furious cannonade was the reveille. General Polk, the soldier-bishop, commanding a corps in Johnston’s army was killed while

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206 ED. NOTE. All spiders and all scorpions are arachnids, though spiders are not scorpions, and neither are scorpions spiders, so what the writer meant by “spider of the scorpion species” we will never know. As to the “chigres,” having lived in coastal South Carolina, I have a good idea of what specifically is meant. Commonly called “chiggers” or “sand fleas,” the species Tunga penetrans is a tropical and sub-tropical insect, about one millimeter in length, though a pregnant female may be as large as a pea. Such a female burrows into the skin usually on feet or lower on the leg, causing extreme irritation to the (in this case, human) host. Some people (such as the editor) are allergic to the pests, and suffer even worse than others.
standing out in view reconnoitering on Pine mountain, in full sight of the skirmish line of the Third regiment. By constant pressing the line of the enemy was pushed back a mile and a half along our corps front; and this brought it well in between Pine and Lost mountains, bearing down toward Marietta. This movement of Thomas, with other maneuvers, caused the enemy to abandon Pine mountain and fall back to Kenesaw, while McPherson, now on our left pushed forward and lapped well around the north end of the fortified lines of Kenesaw. But Lost mountain was still held on the left of Thomas, and there the enemy’s works scowled upon the Union forces below.

The 16th was a roaring day. Lost mountain was abandoned. The steady push of our forces at all points had gradually brought them into the range of the greater works and heavier guns of the line of defense from Kenesaw mountain southwest and westward of Marietta. Old Kenesaw was alive with batteries; and they threw iron at our lines all day. Shells fell in the hospitals of Williams’ division, and the wounded had to be laid for safety behind the breastworks. Two shells passed through the breastwork of the Third wounding several men. The exposure of head or hand was the signal for a volley. The men suffered with thirst; and water could be got only by running to a spring, with skirmishers firing by the score at the venturous volunteer thus attempting to bring water. The old veterans of Gettysburg were reminded by the cannonade of the hour that preceded Pickett’s charge. Geary’s division relieved the situation a little by digging a trench up to an angle of the rebel works and from its cover silencing a number of guns on the front of Williams’ division.

At 2 A. M. on the 17th the Third, with its division, advanced. The rebels had fallen back from the front. Pushing on towards Marietta, the enemy was found, and a skirmish, rising nearly to the dignity of a battle, was kept burning. Our men knew the enemy were soon to fall back. The place of the brigade was here taken by the Fourteenth corps, and the Third, taking a new position farther to the left in a dense thicket, began a new line. It was moving, skirmishing, felling trees, digging breastworks day after day. The rain fell in floods, but the work went on. For two days on this line the enemy’s cannon in front kept roaring. The rebels fell back a short distance on the 19th; and at 10 A. M. Williams’ division advanced and pushed the enemy into a line of works extending from Kenesaw. It still rained. The roads were so horrid that rations could not be got up; and the men, enduring such constant work and strain, felt the gnawings of hunger, and swore about the commissaries.207

207 The stores of hard bread came by rail from Nashville, and were often detained upon the road; the weather being hot and rainy, the bread, as an Irishman would say, “took hurt.” The moisture and heat made it maggotty. The “boys” called their hard-tack “worm sandwiches.”
The Fourth corps took the ground held by Ruger's brigade at daybreak of the 20th, and in a pouring rain it moved to the left about two miles, passing in front of the Twenty-third corps. This movement swung the right of our armies down southward between Lost Mountain and Kenesaw, so as to face the enemy's lines extending southward from Kenesaw west of Marietta. The next day was one of sharp work on Ruger's front. The Third, with Companies C, F and K out as skirmishers, was sent out to feel the enemy. He, resenting the intrusion, in turn attacked, crowding the regiment back upon the One Hundred and Seventh New York. This was soon reversed. The regiment again advanced to the ground previously gained, losing in the affair eight men killed and wounded.
CHAPTER XXVII.
ON TO ATLANTA — KULP’S FARM.

MOVEMENTS of the armies for the last week had brought them in front of the fortified lines along the Kenesaw\textsuperscript{208} mountain. Schofield’s corps (the 23\textsuperscript{rd}) was on the extreme right on the Sandtown road, Hooker on his left covered the Marietta road, Howard came next, then Palmer. McPherson was farther to the left in front of Big Shanty. In front of the center, and to the northeast of where the Third was in line, frowned Old Kenesaw. The right of the Union line had worked southward, and Hooker was not facing eastward against the strong lines there were an extension from Kenesaw to the southwest. His advance had brought his troops with Schofield’s on his right upon “Kulp’s Farm.” This is on a road leading to the southwest from Marietta and some three miles out. With its church, school house and slave quarters it seemed quite a village. From these houses running north is a valley in which is Greer’s plantation. The land is rising on both sides. In the ravine is a small rivulet fringed with trees, with a few thickly wooded knolls scattered over the valley and on its western sides. Hooker, knowing that a heavy force was in his front, sent out a heavy line of skirmishers on the morn-[sic] of the 22d. Ruger was moved to the right and gained ground forward, on the south of Kulp’s farm. There were indications of an attack; and Hooker prepared to meet it, with which view he had Williams throw out along his front a heavy line of skirmishers to keep the enemy engaged while he formed line. The One Hundred and Twenty-third New York supported by the Forty-sixth Pennsylvania, One Hundred and Forty-first New York and Fifth Connecticut, advanced across the fields toward the Greer house. Ruger’s brigade was further to the right; on the side of that was Schofield’s Twenty-third corps. Geary’s division was on the left of Williams, whose line was well-chosen and in convex form.

Hood, who seems to have planned the attack on his own motion, formed his corps at 4 o’clock, evidently in the belief that he could strike Hooker unawares, while in march. He placed Stevenson in the center, Steward on his right, and Hindman considerable to the left — all in line of divisions front. Throwing out a cloud of skirmishers the Confederates came on in grand array, cheering and yelling rebel style. The Union skirmishers fell back slowly, while our lines braced up to receive them. Winegar’s\textsuperscript{209} battery of 3-inch rifled guns and Woodbury’s light 12-pounders joined in a converging fire of canister and canister.

\textsuperscript{208} \textit{ED. NOTE.} At some point after the publication of the original text of this work, the spelling of “Kenesaw” changed, and it is presently found on maps as “Kennesaw Mountain.”

\textsuperscript{209} \textit{ED. NOTE.} Lieutenant Charles E. Winegar of New York
case-shot, and with the guns of the Twenty-third corps, which played obliquely across the front of Ruger’s brigade, made fearful havoc with the now exposed enemy. The main force of his attack fell on Knipe’s brigade to the left. The Third Wisconsin, not itself directly confronted, as Hindman’s division had advanced further to the Union right and struck Hascall’s division of the Twenty-third corps, fired obliquely down the ravine that extended northward from where the regiment stood. The rebels, when checked by the terrible fire of Knipe’s brigade and the batteries had sought this ravine for shelter; and they were here exposed to the enfilading volleys of Ruger’s brigade, which added to the storm of bullets, shell and other missiles from the batteries soon changed their cheers into groans, shrieks and cries of terror. It is doubtful whether the regiment ever poured its fire into a more helpless and compact mass of victims. It was an episode of most murderous war. As the advancing rebels came under the deadly fire, Stewart’s line wavered. Stevenson came forward. Officers could be seen frantically waving sabers and trying to rally men. Hotter and hotter poured the fire. Soon the rebel line gave way. A panic-stricken mob, it fell back with riderless horses and dragging banners. Our regiment was at this time well sheltered on one of the thickly-wooded knolls; and did not suffer in this action. Meantime, Hood had sent two regiments down the Powder Spring road to march past the Union right, as he supposed. They struck Hascall’s division of Schofield’s corps (Twenty-third), having passed to the right of Ruger, and were soon sent back broken, thinned and dismayed, after a stubborn fight. In this assault the Confederate loss in front of Williams and Geary was over 800; and in front of Hascall it was also great; 300 of their dead were buried by Williams’ details, and 1,100 muskets were picked up.

This mad blow of Hood’s was given in the evident belief that Hooker was unprepared and moving carelessly in column. Among his many mistakes this was a sad one for his people. A correspondent of the New York Herald who was over the field after the repulse thus writes: “Along the little stream ran a rail fence. The rebels had crowded behind this for protection, but were literally mowed down. The torn, bloody knapsacks, haversacks, and frequent pools of blood were ghastly evidences of how they suffered. The stream was choked up with bodies and discolored with blood. In the ravine and around the house where they had crowded for shelter, their bodies lay piled on one another,” this was the place into which the volleys of Ruger had poured.

An amusing episode happened while in bivouac under the guns of Kenesaw, which rather took the conceit out of the veterans, showing that they were not panic-proof, old and hardened as they were. The brigade one night had stacked arms in close order, regiment behind regiment, in a little copse of woods to be out of sight of Kenesaw. In the dead of night, when the brigade was in deepest sleep, one of the company mules got loose, ran into
the woods and into the bivouac of the brigade. He knocked over a stack of guns, exploding several in an adjoining regiment. The men were awakened by the shots, and accustomed to expect night attacks, their first, waking thought was that the rebels had caught them napping. There was a moment when the regiments were on the point of a general Bull Run stampede, and the Third came near catching the infection. Colonel Hawley’s voice, “Steady, men, steady, there,” restored order. The next morning there was not a man in any regiment of the brigades, who knew anything about the occurrence. Every one insisted that he had slept soundly all night.

The work up to this time had been most arduous. Rain, mud, gloomy woods, dense thickets — a scene of dismal and nasty discomfort. Broken sleep, night marches, the constant vigilance of the picket and skirmish line, the hard labor of building breastworks — only men of skin, bone and gristle could endure such a service; and that was all that was left in the frames of these sturdy men. But they were confident, cheerful, even jolly; and when tired of shooting on the picket line, would go back a little out of range, pull out a greasy pack of cards, squat down around a rubber blanket and enjoy with zest a game of euchre or “old sledge,” and then filling the cartridge boxes return by darting from tree to tree to the skirmish lines each taking a stink to knock over a “Johnnie” before dark. During these days Col. Hawley was constantly at the front line; and Lieut.-Col. Stevenson and Major Parks were among the best commanders of a skirmish line to be found in the army.

The 23rd and 24th were spent in crowding forward a little, strengthening works, and working up toward the right of the Kenesaw position. The activity was on this day and the 26th chiefly in front of McPherson. The 25th was a skirmish day; and on the morning of the 26th the brigade forged to the right, and built a new line of works.

The 27th was the day Sherman had selected for an assault on Kenesaw. In this bloody, unsuccessful assault the Third and Williams’ division took no part. But Ruger’s brigade was extended along Geary’s front, while he massed his division to support Howard’s corps which bore the brunt of that desperate charge and suffered the heaviest losses. McPherson had at the same time advances; and Logan’s corps had gained some ground at the base of the mountain, driving the enemy from two successive lines of works. The Sixteenth corps had also made an attack upon the enemy’s lines, but had gained no advantage.

Early in the morning of this bloody day Baird and Davis’ division moved on the right of Howard. Geary’s division (Twentieth corps), closed up on the enemy, so as to engage him on its front. Williams and Butterfield came next with Scofield [sic] (Twenty-third corps), southward on the right. In the assault on Kenesaw — no attempt to describe which is here made — Geary’s division of our corps was engaged. Williams’ division witnessed the gallant but vain
struggle, ready and expecting to be sent forward. Some 3,000 men of our side fell on that bloody hillside. Next day, under the flag of truce they were gathered up, the dead buried, the wounded taken out of their little coverts and cared for as well as they could be, while Confederates and Union men, generals and privates, mingled together, talked over the situation, drank together and exchanged compliments and cigars with much courtesy and “renewed assurances of distinguished consideration.” The individuals of each army always had a curiosity to see what manner of men were at the other end of their guns, and mingled freely whenever a truce permitted.

A heavy cannonade, kept up during the day on the left toward Kenesaw took place next day, 28th, and later, after the burial of the dead under truce was over, the firing was general along the whole line. On the 29th the same pastime did not prevent the usual muster. The regiment made out rolls for six-months pay. The last day of June was the last day of service of the non-veterans. They were mustered out July 1st; and unspeakably glad to leave, as the service for the last two months had been of the most wearing kind. The skirmishing, along the lines, showed that all was still tight and snug on the rebel front.

It is impossible to give a description accurately of the movements of the regiment between Pine and Lost Mountain and thence to the front before the southern extremity of the Kenesaw ridge. The country is very hilly, almost mountainous, heavily wooded, with dense under-growth; here and there quagmires and swamps in which some of our artillery was mired and had to be taken out piece-meal. The enemy slashed timber in their front; and in probing for their lines a volley from their heavy skirmish lines was usually the first intimation our troops had of the proximity of the adversary. Frequently our pickets and advance guards received a volley in their faces from unexpected quarters.

In the operations about Kenesaw mountain, the regiment lost in killed and died of wounds 3, in wounded 16, as was officially reported to the Adjutant General of the State.

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**KILLED OR DIED OF WOUNDS ABOUT KENESAW**


CHAPTER XXVIII.
ON TO ATLANTA — PEACH TREE CREEK.

W

ITH the opening of July 2nd, the enemy did not speak up, when our
cannon in front of Kenesaw gave him the compliments of the
morning. The pickets then crept up the sides of the mountain; and
soon their blue coats could be seen on the great works. All knew that orders
to march would soon come. McPherson had quietly left his front on the left,
slipped around our right down toward Chattahoochee; and this move put the
enemy in motion backward as soon as he discovered it. “Old Sherman has
give we ‘uns orders to march,” said the rebels, as they trudged away. With
part of our forces across the river between him and Atlanta, Johnston’s
position would be indeed perilous. So he at once fell back; and at night the
Twentieth corps received orders to march. At dawn the pickets advanced,
followed by the main line, passed over empty fortifications, and swept on in
fine spirits, Williams’ division passing to the right of Marietta. The day was
delightful, the enemy on the run, and our division picking up prisoners at every
step. The enemy covered the retreat with a battery of rifle guns which were
served with wonderful skill and precision, much to the annoyance of the
regiment. One of its shells unexploded, that fell in the ranks of the Third, was
of English make. Later, in the trenches before Atlanta, similar shells fell in the
works of the regiment, presumably from the same battery; and it bore the
name with the Third men of the “English battery.”

The regiment camped that night on Nickajack Creek, four miles south
of Marietta. The day’s march had been through a level country heavily
timbered. The whole of Sherman’s command had advanced. Thomas’ army
demonstrated vigorously in the front, to allow McPherson to work to the right.
The Third regiment moved to the right one and one-half miles; and heavy
captures of prisoners on our right, with several guns made July 4th more
glorious. Indeed, the rebels seemed eager to be captured after the fall of
Kenesaw. The prosperous campaign and a mail received from home put the
troops in the highest spirits.

The next day the advance for six miles was over a succession of
breastworks thrown up by the enemy along the line near Smyrna Church.1
thousands of slaves had been employed to give the rebels a defense at every
place where a stand was practicable. The division was now about two miles
from the river. The Fourteenth corps were to the left, Twenty-third in the rear,
the others on the right, when the regiment at 7 P. M. formed line on high
ground in sight of Atlanta. The movements of the next day shoved the
Twentieth corps somewhat to the left. The day was fiercely hot, and the
mosquitoes [sic] of the Chattahoochee were as bad as the rebels in their thirst
for Yankee Gore. A heavy firing told that the Seventeenth corps on the right was pounding at something. The enemy had formed a line with his flanks on the river, around the railroad bridge.

A skirmish line was put out; but they agreed with the rebel line to keep peace, until an advance was ordered and notice given, which truce was faithfully kept on both sides.

Sherman’s strategy soon hoisted Johnston out of this stronghold. McPherson had switched from our right to our left, moved up the river some miles, boldly crossed and was moving down toward Atlanta; and other corps were also over. On the 9th, Johnston withdrew across the river and burned the railroad bridge. A grateful rest was now given to the Twentieth corps. With pickets advanced to the river, the men ate blackberries and slept for a week. One of the “boys” thus writes of the experience during this brief respite:

“The men had little time during the past two months to devote to efforts of personal attention or cleanliness, and during the brief season of rest on the Chattahoochee river, nearly all the troops made the much needed repairs to clothing and general equipment. The troops were peopled with ‘gray backs,’ and in this camp on the river everything in the nature of a kettle was used in which to boil clothes and thus rid themselves of this disagreeable pest. To see fully 500 naked men scattered along the river bank attending to boiling clothes, while about 500 more naked men were scattered in groups or playing cards in the shade of the trees, and all vigorously applying a brush of bushes to ward off the attacks of the winged insects of a southern forest, while above their heads, flaunting and drying in the summer breeze, were garments of varied hue and shape — altogether it was a sight to provoke a smile from even the gods of war.”

During this delay on the river, the pickets became very friendly, and picket firing was by mutual agreement suspended. It is recorded that one day while the men on picket on both sides were standing on the banks of the river, under one of these private truces, a rebel officer rode up and ordered his men to fire on the “Yanks” standing on the opposite bank. The men refused, insisting that they had agreed to a truce and they were not going to break it. The understanding usually was that when the orders required these truces to be called off, the first volley should be harmless.

The corps then moved past the Fourteenth corps on the left, July 17th, and crossed the Chattahoochee at Pace’s Ferry, four or five miles above the railroad bridge, on a pontoon laid where the stream was about 150 yards in width, and then marched southeast toward Buckhead, though a hilly, heavily wooded region abounding in blackberries. The regiment encamped in the forest.

The enemy began to interpose objections very soon. Skirmishing began in good earnest when the corps started south at 7 in the morning. At 3 P. M. the column halted and put up a line of breastworks. Hunger began to gnaw, and there were no rations. At 7 P. M. of the 17th the division, following the
Second, moved south one mile, and bivouacked near the north bank of Peach Tree Creek.

The next morning the whole army of the Cumberland was across the creek, and taking position in line of battle. At about 3 P. M. while adjustments of position were being made, and before any considerable breastworks had been thrown up, Hood came out of his entrenchments and attacked with fury. The force of his assault fell upon the Twentieth corps, which was somewhat in advance of the Fourteenth corps on the right, and more directly in front of Hood’s advance. The Third Wisconsin was on the right of the Twentieth corps, somewhat refused and its line ran through a ravine; and the overlapping of the Fourteenth corps threw the left regiments — the Tenth and Twenty-first Wisconsin — in front of the Third regiment and part of Ruger’s brigade.

The story of this battle is briefly told by Van Horne in his “Army of the Cumberland”: “The enemy first attacked the right of Geary’s division, then passed around to attack him in front and rear. Williams’ division not being fully abreast, this advantage was possible. Geary was therefore compelled to change front to the right with almost all of his division, and extend his line to connect with Williams, leaving only five regiments, with his artillery, on his first line. When the noise of sincere battle was first heard by Gen. Williams, he was in the act of moving artillery to his skirmish line to dislodge the enemy from his fortified outpost; but warned by the heavy volleys of musketry on his left he deployed his division at double-quick — Knipe’s brigade on the right, Robinson’s on the left and Ruger’s in reserve — to await the developments of the attack. He placed his batteries by sections, to command his front and flanks, and held three sections in reserve. Hardly had these dispositions been made before the enemy advanced on Williams in great force, and having driven in his skirmishers, with his line of battle under cover of the thickets and undergrowth, approached very near without being seen. His attack, as in other cases, was direct in part, but heavy masses swept down the ravines to the right and left. Hearing heavy firing on his right, Gen. Williams sent the Twenty-seventh Indiana (of Ruger’s brigade) to reinforce Knipe’s right. This regiment and the Forty-sixth Pennsylvania speedily checked and drove back the enemy, and held the ground until the close of the action. On the left the attack was more threatening, because made with stronger columns; but Robinson’s brigade, the artillery and Geary’s line upon the other hill, poured

a destructive fire upon the enemy, and here, too, he was completely repulsed. This first attack swept from Newton’s position to Col. Anson McCook’s brigade of Johnson’s division of the Fourteenth corps; but though signally repulsed, Gen. Hood did not desist, and soon again from Newton to Johnson the battle raged furiously.

“The second, general action was commenced upon Newton’s left in an effort to double up the line by taking it in reverse as well as in flank. This time Gen. Thomas sent for the artillery of Ward’s division, and in person urged the artillery horses to the greatest speed possible, and then directed their action. These guns and all of Newton’s, with all kinds of metal most destructive at short range, opened upon the heavy, assaulting columns and they were again repulsed. Again the battle raged to the right; but as the National line was now compact, the enemy exhausted himself in direct attacks. His infantry assaults, as at first, extended from Newton to Johnson, and further to the right his fortified artillery was most active, but charge after charge from left to right was repulsed, until 6 P. M., when he abandoned his effort to break or turn the line. In this action artillery was used with fearful effect, and so skillfully was it posted and so bravely defended that the enemy did not touch a single gun.

“When it is considered that four divisions and one brigade in open field, repulsed an attack of the army which was intended to initiate such offense as should destroy Sherman’s armies, the grandeur of this victory becomes apparent. Not Gen. Hood alone, but Gen. Johnston, also, was defeated at the battle of ‘Peach Tree Creek.’”

The Twenty-seventh Indiana fired 100 rounds per man in this battle; and the gallant Col. Colgrove had his side turned black and blue by a cannon shot that grazed him and was supposed to be mortally wounded. He was disabled for the rest of the campaign. He is now an examiner in the pension bureau at Washington.

Our regiment did not as a whole become actively engaged; nor did the other regiments of Ruger’s brigade, though several of the regiments of Ruger’s brigade, though several of the regiments suffered losses. Some of the right companies of the Third opened a fire on the enemy, which assisted a regiment of the Fourteenth corps, that was the moment overborne. The Third lost two killed and five wounded.

KILLED — Company D: Cornelius Cornell and Andrew Oliver. — 2.

The loss in this battle in the Twentieth corps was: Williams’ division, 580; Geary’s, 476; Ward’s, 500. Sherman puts the enemy’s loss at 4,400.
General Cox estimates it at 6,000. Speaking of Williams’ division, Cox says: “The reputation of that division gives assurance that it gave quite as good an account of itself, in the punishment of those who attacked it.”
CHAPTER XXIX.
THE FALL OF ATLANTA.

The Twentieth corps did little fighting on July 21st, and the day was mostly occupied in strengthening the lines. The rebel pickets were so near that their stray bullets were annoying, and it was ordered that they be invited to remove to a more respectful distance; in other words, that the picket line of the brigade be advanced. It was put forward, picking up a dozen or more prisoners. Soon it was apparent that the rebels had retired within their works. Captain Hinkley, who was in command of the detail on picket from our regiment, under Maj. Smith, One Hundred and Fiftieth New York, writes thus: “We found their picket on a hill about a mile from the fortifications immediately surrounding the city, on the north, and at once proceeded to drive them back towards the works. From this hill we could see the spires of Atlanta in the distance and the two forts, one on each side of the railroad track about three-fourths of a mile distant. There was an open field in our front, and beyond that some timber and underbrush. We drove their skirmishers on through the brush, and were within about 300 yards of the main fort on the east side of the railroad track when they made a more determined stand; and we halted to consult as to the situation. We had received no orders since starting in the morning. There had been much firing off to our left; and by this time it had grown very heavy. All of us were satisfied that there were but a few troops in our front, and that a division could enter the city. Our little command was less than 200 men; and so far as we could see no other brigade in the corps had advanced their pickets with us. Major Smith sent back a man to report at brigade head-quarters; and I sent one back to report to Col. Hawley. The skirmishers in front were keeping up a scattering fire when the enemy brought out a brigade in line of battle to drive back our skirmishers. The roar of their musketry satisfied me that there was a large force; and I ordered my command back to the top of a hill where we had a good position, sheltered partially by the crest of the hill. The enemy were compelled to come out in full view to attack. They came far enough so that we opened a brisk fire upon them; and then they fell back again into the shelter of their works, leaving pickets as close to ours as they could stay. There were apparently not more than 2,000 or 3,000 men to oppose our entry into the city.” Meanwhile the whole corps began to advance and took position northwest of the city. In the desperate battle of the 22d on the left, to the east of Atlanta, the Twentieth corps was not involved. The glory of repulsing that bold assault belongs to the Army of the Tennessee, which on that day lost its beloved commander. General Hood, who had succeeded the cautious Gen. Johnston,
had fought in the Army of Northern Virginia, under Lee, and was a believer in the tactics of Lee and Jackson; and he hoped by sudden, unexpected attacks to crush a part of Sherman’s army. His attempts on the Army of the Cumberland had failed, but he hoped to strike the flank of McPherson when “in air;” and the attempt cost him dear. The sturdy Army of the Tennessee knew nothing of defeat; and was then too old to learn. But while that battle was raging, the Twentieth corps was drawing nearer the city, taking its place in the investment on the north and northwestern side. The Third Wisconsin was assigned a place a little to the east of the track of the Western and Atlanta Railroad, and west of the road by which the regiment had marched from the battlefield of Peach Tree Creek — its line being about 700 feet distant and northwest of the northwest angle of the rebel line of fortifications. The various regiments in all the corps set to work immediately construction fortifications and planting batteries. In rear of the Third regiment was a hill, the crest of which was about 80 yards behind the trench in which the regiment was posted. A battery of 20-pounder Parrott guns was planted on this hill, and a work thrown up to shelter it. During the investment, this battery threw a shell into the city every 15 minutes, all night long, over the heads of the regiment.

The army soon settled down to the work of a siege. Strong lines of entrenchments were thrown up by the several corps, — the Seventeenth corps on the right, east of Atlanta, on its left the Fifteenth corps, then in order, the Twenty-third corps, (Army of the Ohio) then the Fourth, Twentieth and Fourteenth, (Army of the Cumberland). The line was about five miles long, and was soon entrenched to prevent a sally of the enemy, about as strongly as his own works.

The trenches usually built by the Third Wisconsin in the field were of the same general form, shape and dimensions as those built by the other regiments. Two essential features were observed by the men in building them, — and they had become as expert as engineers in adapting them to use and in their construction — to make them thick enough to prevent the penetration of shells and balls from heavy ordnance, and deep enough to stand behind them and safely handle the musket, that is, when time and circumstances permitted. The line was staked out by the living line of men, oftentimes under heavy fire of musketry; and while a part of the men returned the fire, another portion dug and delved with desperate energy to secure the protection such a shelter afforded. In this work men loosened the earth with bayonets. Officers often used their swords for the same purpose; and when the spades and shovels could not be had, tin cups and frying-pans, bits of board and even the hands were used to cast out the earth as fast as it was loosened. The usual issue of picks and shovels was a dozen to a company. The men availed themselves of rails, stones, stumps, trees, everything at
hand suitable and movable to add to the pile; and thus a strong, heavy earthwork would rapidly assume shape, from which steady troops could rarely be routed, if attacked.

The field entrenchments or rifle-pits were usually built in the manner above indicated, but those built by the regiment before Atlanta were superior to any it had ever thrown up in the field. From the crest of the hill in rear of the regiment, on which the 20-pound battery was placed, there was a slope of about thirty feet so the line of entrenchments, about 300 feet south and nearer the rebel lines. Then for a distance of about 150 feet more the land sloped probably ten feet down to the bottom of a swale. Thence there was a rather abrupt ascent for about 600 feet to the rebel works. The distance between our batteries and the enemy’s works was probably about 1,000 feet. The permanent works built by the regiment and occupied during the siege, were about eighteen feet thick at the base and eight feet on top. Their vertical depth above ground was about four feet; inside was a berme about three feet wide, its surface about one foot lower than the original surface of the ground, and fifteen inches higher than the bottom of the trench. The berme was for the men to stand on when firing. From the berme to the back earth-wall the distance was about twelve feet. The vertical inside wall of the parapet was held up with posts, fence rails and other available lumber. Head-logs from eight to ten inches in diameter and from fifteen to twenty feet long were placed along the top of the parapet, resting on billets of wood three or four inches thick, to protect the men while firing. When a cannon ball struck one of these, there was consternation and activity behind it; nothing worse.

To protect themselves from the burning rays of an August sun many of the companies and regiments covered their trenches with screens of pine boughs on frames of poles and crotched sticks. But sooner or later these were all ordered to be taken away.

The headquarters of the regiment were a little in rear of the crest of the hill’ and officers passing from the companies to the colonel’s tent, or returning by daylight, had to do so with the assurance that a dozen or more of the enemy’s bullets would be seeking them. The officers of the companies either lived in the trenches, or had their tentes d’abri (top of page 261) a little in rear with barricades thrown up in front to protect them from the enemy’s missiles.

On the 25th, soon after the works of the Third Wisconsin had been completed, Capt. Thomas E. Orton was sitting in his tent, having finished a letter that he had written to his parents. A shell from one of the enemy’s guns penetrated the barricade in front of his quarters, then exploded close to his body, mortally wounding him; and he died a few hours afterward on the same day. Lieutenants Barrager and Schweers, who were in the ten with him at the
time, were also severely injured.\textsuperscript{211} Lieutenant Haskins was then assigned to the command of Company K.\textsuperscript{212}

Captain Orton was a young man of great promise. His purity of life, excellent deportment, soldierly qualities of courage and loyalty to duty made him an excellent and popular officer. He had won his way from the ranks by his own merit; and had he lived would have made an honorable and prominent mark in civil life.\textsuperscript{213} A nobler young spirit did not pass from earth in that great struggle.

The 26\textsuperscript{th} was honor day for the Thirteenth New Jersey of our brigade. A pestiferous nest of sharp-shooters infested some houses in front of the line, peppering away everytime [sic] a person was exposed. Becoming tired of their mischief the Thirteenth proceeded to abate the nuisance. They advanced at a signal, pounced upon the “Johnnies,” captured thirty-five of them, and burned the building, then returned to their entrenchment, while the rebel cannon boomed and thundered, cheered for their gallantry by the long stretch of the Union line.

On the 28\textsuperscript{th} there was a roaring battle on our right at Ezra Church, where the Fifteenth and Seventeenth corps had been moved the previous day, in accordance with Sherman’s plan to move against the railroad below Atlanta. This was Gen. Logan’s fight; and he repulsed the enemy handsomely, killing and burying more than his own loss in killed, wounded and missing.

General Hooker was relieved on the 28\textsuperscript{th}, at his own request, from command of the Twentieth corps. He was displeased because Gen. Howard had been assigned to the command of the army of the Tennessee in place of McPherson. The corps had great respect for Gen. Hooker’s fighting qualities; but they were pleased to have Gen. Slocum return to the command.

The rebel picket line was very close to the camps of our brigade, and their shots were a constant annoyance, preventing all liberty of movement. They were about 200 yards from their main works, and about 400 yards from Ruger’s camps. It was determined to reverse this order of things; and at daylight, July 30\textsuperscript{th}, at a preconcerted signal, the brigade picket line, under the command of Lieut.-Col. Morse, of the Second Massachusetts, jumped out of their pits, rushed forward across the space between the pits and captured the

\textsuperscript{211} Lieutenant Barrager served until the close of the war; but in a few years became physically a wreck, and died in 1888, in consequence of the shock received as above narrated.

\textsuperscript{212} Ed. Note. This is actually Alexander D. Haskins, of Dexter, Wisconsin. He was promoted to 1st Lt on 25 Jul 1864 and to Captain on 31 Aug 1864.

\textsuperscript{213} Ed. Note. Orton’s biography appears in the biographical section in the back of this text. The original text refers the reader to the appendix, but there is nothing in the book identified as such.
The diary of Corporal Meffert records graphically the experiences on this line: “On the 4th, our picket line was advanced over 75 yards, so that our videttes at night were not over ten yards apart in places along the line. While stationing some videttes, I got by mistake inside the rebel line, and came near being captured. On returning to my line I passed within six feet of three rebel pickets, but they did not date to halt me, as some of our men were lying within twenty yards. On the 10th, Sergt. Jones, of Company K, was killed while sitting on a cracker box making out the morning report. His head was a little higher than the line of the works, and a rebel sharpshooter seeing it shot him, the bullet striking his right temple, and he died without a groan.”

These truces generally came about in this way: A rebel tired of crouching in his pit, calls, “I say, Yank.” “Well, Johnny Reb, what is it?” “I’m go’n to put my head out, don’t shoot.” “Well, I won’t. Let’s all stretch our legs.” “All right.” Then for an hour there would be peace. Then, recalled to a sense of duty, the cry would be, “time’s up Yanks, look out, we uns is go’n to shoot. Be keerful.” “All right Johnnies, lay low.” The story is told that once a rebel officer came out in great rage to finding the pickets visiting each other. He ordered his men to fire on the Federals who were some distance from their holes. They refused. Snatching a gun he shot a Union soldier, wounding him. The rebel soldiers denounced this breach of faith, and called out “Yanks, don’t blame us, we ‘uns couldn’t help it.” At night those men deserted to our lines, assigning as a reason that they could not with honor serve in an army which had broken their private truces.”

The duty of the videttes or pickets was of the most disagreeable nature. They stood in pits or holes in the ground deep enough to protect their bodies, and enable them to crouch down to avoid exposure. The position was cramped and uncomfortable; but there they must remain constantly vigilant in sun and rain, sick or well, from 2 o’clock in the morning until relieved twenty-four hours later.

Captain Gardner, of Company C, commanded the detail of the Third in this bold exploit, himself leading the way. The picket line was at once advanced and strengthened, by placing the Second Massachusetts forward to support them. Breastworks were here thrown up, at the advanced post, and held in spite of a tempest of shot and shell from the enemy’s forts and main breastworks. Many of our men fired 200 rounds of ammunition in a day. At night the advanced position was made impregnable against anything save overwhelming force. The enemy were thus compelled to withdraw their artillery on the sides exposed to this front and close the embrasures of their forts.

Thus matters remained, the regiments of the brigade relieving each other in this exacting duty. After a week or two the pickets, by private truce, at times agreed to cease firing; but they would not meet our men between the lines nor trade papers or tobacco. Their men would gladly have done so, but they said it was forbidden.

The entire rebel picket force — seven officers and ninety-seven men — with but few casualties, and none in the Third.

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Editor’s Note: Meffert, William C. Civil War Diaries. Three pocket diaries kept by Corporal William C. Meffert of Arena, Wisconsin, while serving with Company H, Third Wisconsin Infantry Regiment. Wis Mss 24S - State Historical Society of Wisconsin Archives Division, Madison, 4 / 16 / C1.

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four hours later. Within a few yards was the rebel picket line; and unless a truce was agreed on, any carelessness of a vidette was likely to cost him his life.

The daily life of the soldier in these trenches was monotonous and uninteresting, as the Third Wisconsin men and all engaged in the siege found it during a tour of thirty-six days. As Mr. Goodhue well tells it: “We lived a day and night, under the burning sun, the dews of night, and the rains that fell often in that battle summer in Georgia. The soil was yellow-joint clay, sticky and yielding when wet, but it cracked, disintegrated and became dusty when dry. The floor of the trench was of this clay, and under the tramp and wear of so many feet for so many days it became as smoothly even and firm as a cemented cellar floor.

“The daily routine of the regiment during its stay in these trenches was about as follows: Roll call about 4 A. M., or at the first streak of day; roll call after breakfast, 7 A. M.; roll call, 12 noon; roll call, 5 P. M., and detail was then made for picket; roll call at 9 P. M., then came “taps.” The picket guard was awakened at 2 A. M., when the old picket was relieved and returned to the regiment. If the enemy did not blow up the works with their shells, compelling nightly repairs with shovel, pick and ax, the monotony of life would have been more so, for with roll calls and picket duty there was little else to do, but cook, eat, play cards, write letters, mend clothes, clean arms and accoutrements [sic] and divest oneself of garments and seek the ever present ‘gray back.’ There was one pest that stayed with us from early morn until dewy eve; and that was the common house-fly. This little torment swarmed in legions and the legions were myriads. Sleep was impossible while day light existed, so persistently savage were they; and one was required to keep a hand in constant motion to ward off their attacks. All sorts of devices were tried to get a brief snooze. The men, during those hot and sultry days, particularly those who had been awake and alert all the previous night and day on picket, desired to get a chance to sleep during the day, but the fly said no; and he was a law unto us in this respect. There was no sleep while daylight lasted, and when night came there were many awakenings through alarms, false and otherwise, fearing an attack or sortie by the enemy. One method was adopted by the ‘boys’ to drive out the fly that was satisfactory to behold, if not in its results. A party of half a dozen or more would each contribute a spoonful of sugar to a mass, which was sprinkled in a circular line about two feet in diameter, on the trench floor; the powder from a few cartridges was then sprinkled on the sugar; and the ‘syndicate’ then waited for the flies to cover the line, which they soon did in a dense, black swarm. Then a lighted
match was applied to the circle and instantaneously the ground was covered with a writhing mass of wingless flies. Boards from cracker boxes were then thrown upon them, and while one of the party danced a juba break-down on the boards the rest sang, ‘Go tell Aunt Rhoda;’ yet such wholesale slaughter never for a moment freed the ‘Land of Nod’ from these winged tyrants.

“But the men had no reason to complain, if they got as much sleep as did their commander. Excepting when on picket, the men got even more sleep than did Col. Hawley. This vigilant officer was always present at roll call, no matter when held, whither at the grey of early morn or at the last roll-call at night; and if there was a call to arms in the night almost the first voice we heard in the darkness was his firm command: ‘Fall in! Fall in men, lively!’ as he walked rapidly down the line to see that his regiment was not only as it should be, but as he always maintained it — ready for immediate duty. His headquarters were over the hill, behind the 20-pound battery, but it is doubtful if he slept there half of the night during the investment of the city; rolled in a blanket and lying on the grassy slope somewhere between his regiment and the battery, with his orderly awake and near him, Col. Hawley would snatch a few hour’s sleep and before daylight came was up and either with the regiment, or back beyond the hill at his headquarters.

“After a day of roaring turmoil, of flying shot and shell, the shades of night generally brought rest and quiet to the troops of both armies; and when darkness had fairly covered the land the men of the regiment came out of the trenches and reclined on the outer slopes, chatting and smoking, while violin or flute played the sweet and plaintive airs of other days, in other lands more peaceful; and then the voices of the men would gather in numbers and strength, and the melody of ‘Annie Laurie,’ was wafted in the summer air, even as it had been in the trenches before Sebastopol or at Lucknow. Occasionally the excellent brigade band would take position within the works of the battery on the hill, and give us charming music — symphonies from the great masters without the flare and flam of cymbal and drum. ‘Our friends,’ the enemy, were always sympathetic listeners to all of our performances. Evidently our band was a great treat to them, for we never heard a band play within their lines, and seldom did we hear a drum; the bugle was often heard among them.”

Often in the clear evening the two lines bombarded each other with song. Our men would sing the patriotic songs of the north — and their were many excellent voices among those strong-lunged, strong-hearted fellows. The rebels would listen until their turn came, and then pay back in “Dixie,” “My Maryland” and other songs to “fire the Southern heart.” Then they would

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217 ED. NOTE. City, capital of Uttar Pradesh state, northern India, on the Gomati River, at the junction of numerous roads and rail lines
exchange ditties of love and war and the grand, old hymns of religion.

The life so cheerfully borne by these brave men had its dangers as well as discomforts. The shells of the enemy, from ordnance much heavier than any of ours, were daily flying overhead, bursting in air, or dropping into the works. There was a constant duel between the batteries; and the compliments of the 20-pounders behind the line of the Third were returned. Our men were in danger from both, as many shells burst on leaving the guns scattering fragments among our men; and one of the guns burst one day, and its broken muzzle came whirling into the trenches, fortunately doing no injury. The pickets of the enemy were so near, that any exposure of the person was followed by the “zip” of the bullets uncomfortably near. One of the Third men rather boldly attempted to bring a box of hard-tack over the hill to the trenches one day. A bullet struck the box on his shoulder very close to his ear. As he dropped the box and ran at a 2:40 gait, our men roared with laughter, while derisive cheers were heard across the valley in the enemy’s works.

The officers of the regiment had their mess together at the rear behind the hill, near headquarters; and to go to meals they had to pass from their entrenchments up the hill; and they were sure to be fired at in going and returning. It is not recorded than any of them omitted meals on that account. They had grown quite callous to danger; and one of them write, that when at their meal one day a waiter was shot through the heart while serving them, by a bullet that came sliding over hill, it did not delay the meal.

A heavy detail was required daily to patch up the works which covered our batteries. It was frequent for some great shell — supposed to be a 64 pounder — to strike a work, explode deep in the earth and bury gun and gunners in loads of dirt. But our gunners at length got such range, and our pickets were so precise in marksmanship, that they compelled the closing of several of the enemy’s embrasures.

A change — thanks to Sherman and Heaven — came at last. On the 25th of August our guns threw an immense amount of iron into the doomed city. In the evening the band played its choicest repertoire, roll was called, “taps” sounded in the regular way; and the men lay down to rest without a thought of change. “I was on picket duty that night,” writes Capt. Hinkley. “It was one of those still, clear nights, when slight sounds cane be heard at a distance. As I passed from man to man giving the word to follow instructions previously given, for each man to go silently back to the camp and wait till I joined them, the Confederates were changing their relief. I heard one old sentinel tell the new one to keep a sharp look on the Yanks, for something was going on; and he believed the Yanks were getting ready to attack them.”

About 10 P. M. the order came to “fall in.” Ruger’s brigade was extended in the trenches of the division in a long, thin line, with a strong skirmish line in front. To the rear could be faintly heard the clatter of moving
troops and wagons. The night was clear, starlight, without a moon. The regiment stood an hour or more, while the sound of the moving army became so distinct in the “stilly night” that it seemed the enemy must have heard it. Near midnight the regiment withdrew from the works. The Twentieth corps had been ordered back to Chattahoochee, while Sherman, with the rest of the army, executed the brilliant, strategic movements to the right, southwest of Atlanta, that resulted in the fall of the “Gate City.”

But the picket line and skirmish lines did not withdraw as early. Major Warham Parks thus records his experience: “It fell to my lot that night to command the division picket, and it was the most anxious night that I ever passed. Our picket line was always pushed out close to that of the enemy, and my videttes were so close to their’s [sic] that we could hear their whispers. The movement of our army was within reach of their best artillery, and could easily be noticed or marked by the ear although covered by darkness. I had hoped, as all our corps had expected, that the entire movement (of the other corps past the rear of the Twentieth to the right and of the latter corps, then back to the Chattahoochee) would be made in the night and that day light would find us in our entrenchments at the bridge prepared to meet the enemy, if he should fancy we were retreating, which as we afterwards found, he did think we were doing. But it was broad day light before I, who had held the last line — all being gone, both to the right and left of me, and the corps far to the rear, before I got orders to fall back. We expected to be followed and attacked, but luck was with us. We got off with only two slight wounds.”

As the eastern sky showed the first streaks of light, the Third Wisconsin took its assigned position in the line, on the banks of the Chattahoochee, about one-fourth of a mile below the railroad bridge, on the extreme right flank of the corps. Here the whole command fell to work like beavers to fortify position. Trees were felled, strong works thrown up, first for the artillery. The Corps expected attack and no one needed spur to make those works strong. Then came a period of relief from the dreary confinement in the trenches. Best of all, there was the river in which thousands of men were bathing when not on duty, and feeling the blessed sense of cleanliness once more.

As a precaution against attack — for the Twentieth corps thus situated was a tempting bait to Hood — reconnoisances [sic] were made daily toward Atlanta. The Third, or strong detachments from it, frequently went on these trips. The enemy was found in the breastworks that had been on the Union line. But he made no advance upon the corps evidently feeling uneasy about his own rear. In one of these reconnoisances, [sic] under Col. Hawley on the
29th of August, a smart little skirmish was had, and Corp. Geo. H. Meissner, of Company F, received a wound of which he afterwards suffered amputation.

General Slocum arrived while his corps were here, and again assumed command, receiving a royal welcome. As he rode along the lines, he was cheered to the echo. The Twentieth corps had come from the army of the Potomac. There it had won laurels; and it wanted a corps commander who had been identified with that army; and our corps fully appreciated the feeling of the army of the Tennessee, when a commander was assigned to them who had not helped to make their glorious history. A most vigilant picket duty was kept up; the recruits were drilled; and on the night of September 1st, heavy explosions were heard in the direction of Atlanta; and flashes like distant lightning, told that Hood was blowing up his magazines, or that Sherman was attacking the city from the west.

The corps was now all animation. A reconnoitering party was sent out in the morning, which found Atlanta evacuated. The explosions of the night before had been of some eighty carloads of munitions, which Hood had loaded to remove; but the railroads were cut, and he destroyed them. The corps at once entered. As our brigade marched in, the band of the Second Massachusetts played, never with more spirit, “The Star-Spangled Banner.” There was shown much Union sentiment by the people. Many houses were illuminated, and women brought out water in pails along the street as the troops marched in. Immense stores of tobacco were found; and no soldier for long afterwards lacked that comforter of the march or picket’s vigil — his quid. The day before Atlanta fell tobacco was a dollar a plug. The day after, tobacco was gratis and cigars 25 cents a hundred, and hawked about in rubber bands. It was hard on the poor, tobacco dealers of Atlanta and ruinous to the sutlers of Serman’s army, for their large stocks at once became worthless.

It was said that when Sherman and his army disappeared from the front of Atlanta, to make his movement to the right, the people felt greatly relieved. The good rebels all went to church and offered prayers for the success of their cause and thanksgiving for their deliverance. The jolly Confederates of the baser sort celebrated the event by “a glorious drunk.”

And thus closed a most arduous, eventful campaign, brilliant in strategy and splendid in its display of the valor, endurance and intelligence of the subordinate commanders and the men in the ranks. The armies there combined were of the best that upheld our flag — “Tennessee,” with its glorious record; “Cumberland,” crowned with glory; “Ohio,” of gallant history.

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**ED. NOTE.** Corporal George H. Meissner was from Pulaski, Wisconsin. He was taken prisoner 25 May 1862, presumably at Winchester; wounded on 29 August 1864; discharged on 4 June 1865. He was disabled due to a leg amputation.
The Twentieth corps, proud representative of the Army of the Potomac, had no cause for shame. In this campaign it had fought in most of the battles, fought several nearly alone, suffered defeat in none, repulsed every assault, had been almost every hour at the front, and for weeks constantly in range of the enemy’s guns. Its record told the story of its valor. Of the 32,233 losses reported, from May to September, 7,417 were from the Twentieth corps, nearly all killed and wounded. Constituting about 15 per cent. of Sherman’s effective army, its losses were over 22 per cent. This fact told of its fighting service. The Third Wisconsin, when its losses were counted up at the end of the campaign, had suffered thus, as Col. Hawley reported to the Adjutant General of the State: Killed in action, 23; wounded, 162; missing, 1; total, 186. Of the wounded, 24 subsequently died; total mortality, 47. 

President Lincoln sent the thanks of the nation to General Sherman and his gallant officers and soldiers, and said that the “marches, battles, sieges and other military operations that have signalized the campaign, must render it famous in the annals of war.” General Grant wrote to Sherman, “I feel that you have accomplished the most gigantic undertaking given to any general in this wart, and with a skill and ability that will be acknowledged in history as unsurpassed, if not unequaled.” All this history, the Third Wisconsin had borne its humble part, and knew full well how much of hard fighting, hard marching, constant vigilance, exposure to all that is disagreeable and uncomfortable; how much of every present danger, and how much of toil this great triumph had cost. It had suffered its full average and more of the losses, and participated in most of the battles, though in some of them by the fortune of war it had not been so severely exposed as some of the troops engaged. It could claim without presumption its share of the glory.

The energy and gallantry of all the troops in all the movements toward and about Atlanta testified to their confidence in their great commander, as well as their determination to take the city. Immediately after the crossing of the Chattahoochee it was known that the careful Johnston had been superseded by the rash and impetuous Hood; and all had been warned to be on guard day and night, for he would be likely to strike and strike hard, where least expected. Yet regardless of these warnings, the men advanced without fear or misgiving to the out-works of the city, repulsing every one of the assaults made while the investment was in progress. They threw the dirt of their entrenchments in the faces of their foes, and met with calm and contemptuous courage every effort of a desperate enemy. As they used to say in their badinage with the rebel pickets, “Atlanta is out, and we won’t be Hoodwinked out of it.”
The losses before Atlanta were officially reported as follows:


NOTE: [italicized text] in square brackets added by editor.
CHAPTER XXX.
ATLANTA IS OURS.

UPON entering the city the Third Wisconsin went into camp upon the west side, between the inhabited part and the abandoned works, a half a mile or so north of the old race course, changing camp two or three times, in order to be near the fortifications. It was a pleasant locality in a large, grassy field with scattering trees and no undergrowth. Here a regular camp was laid out, such as the regiment had been accustomed to in its earlier days of soldiering. Soon the news came of Hood’s fourth or fifth and final whipping, at Jonesboro, and that his army was fleeing into Alabama. General Sherman soon came into the city with his headquarters, as did other army and corps commanders. On the 18th the corps passed in review on the streets of Atlanta, before “Pap Thomas,” who gave a most gracious salute as each regiment passed; then, as the column passed Gen. Sherman’s headquarters, he came out bare headed, his blue coat open, revealing his white vest. His spare, active figure, closely cropped beard, keen, blue eyes, his natural, military bearing were the impersonation of the American general. Never Napoleon was more loved and admired by his soldiers than Sherman by the heroes of Atlanta.

Stores came in time and the regiment was reclothed; for the campaign and the siege, as may well be imagined, reduced the spring outfit to a condition, for which the term “shabby” would be too mild. Drills were resumed, and the service for a few days was “soft,” though the corps was soon put to the work of fortifying around the city, and heavy details made from the regiment. An entire line of works, for the use of a smaller body of troops, was erected, — the rebel works being too far out and too extended.

The Twentieth corps remained in Atlanta, while Sherman with the other corps of his army went north of the Chattahoochee to drive away Hood, who was tampering with the long line of railroad communication. The several brigades were posted about the city in the shorter line of earthworks which they threw up. On the 2d of October, the regiment was put on half rations of meat and corn meal. Large numbers of cattle had been driven from Louisville, Kentucky for army supply; and they were nearly starved, having eaten every green thing for miles about Atlanta; and the emaciated beef issued from these skeletons the men used to describe as “dried on the hoof.” On the 11th of October a break was made for something to eat. Famine began to look the corps squarely in the face. The Third Wisconsin, with other regiments, started

219 EDITOR’S NOTE: Bryant here refers to General George Henry Thomas, 31 July 1816 - 28 Mar 1870, acclaimed by the press as the “Rock of Chickamauga,” and nicknamed “Pap Thomas.” He received the Thanks of Congress on 3 March 1865.
at 5 A. M. with a train of 500 wagons and a force of about 2,500 men, most of whom rode in the wagons. About fifteen miles eastward of Atlanta corn, potatoes, hogs, sheep, geese and chickens were found in abundance; and the troops roamed around harvesting cornfields by driving through them, while the men husked the ears and threw them into the wagons, keeping a tempest of ears flying while the mules moved slowly through the field; each husker with his gun slung upon his back, for Iverson’s cavalry was lurking about to cut off any small bands of foragers. After work during the day collecting in supplies, the men sat up all night to eat. Not having had a full meal since the campaign began, it seemed they never could get enough. Boiling corn or mush and boiling geese sent up savory odors from all bivouacs. When a bit of salt pork was found it was hailed as a god-send, divided up into tit-bits, and sucked raw for the salt, for the corps had been for a long time out of salt, and no condiment was ever more grateful to the palate. In two days the wagons creaked under their loads. The foraging party then returned after a march of fifty miles. On the 23rd, the regiment participated in a similar foraging expedition, southeastward of the city, marching forty-four miles, and bringing in 800 loads of corn. This supply gave the poor cattle life enough to stand up and be killed.

Sherman soon drove Hood away from his communications — “that infernal line,” as Sherman called it, when it required so much vigilance to guard it from May till November, when he cut loose from it entirely; and on the 29th of October trains came in from the North.

Soon after the occupation of Atlanta Col. Hawley was given leave of absence to visit Wisconsin and urge the assignment of recruits to fill up the ranks of the regiment. His efforts were successful, and while here some 200 recruits joined the regiment, among whom were a dozen or more full-blood, Chippewa Indians, who for the first time wore white man’s clothing when they put on the Federal uniform. The recruiting officer had given them all English names on enlistment, and pasted each man’s name in his cap. But they had exchanged caps, unable to distinguish one from another, so that their names were in hopeless confusion. They were assigned the hap-hazard named they were enlisted by, and the men soon called them by their English names. They made good fighters on the skirmish line, but a bomb-shell was beyond their courage. It was “heap gun,” too much for them.

The Third Wisconsin was sent on a reconnoissance [sic] on the 2nd of November. Previous to this, orders had been given to reduce baggage

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220 ED. NOTE. Alfred Iverson, Jr — 14 Feb 1829 - 31 Mar 1911. Mexican War veteran. Iverson’s command at Gettysburg was demolished by Union I Corps, due to mistakes made by Iverson, who had something of a nervous breakdown afterward. He recovered his reputation in charge of cavalry under MajGen Joseph Wheeler.
preparatory to a long campaign; and on the 13th the regiment helped to tear up railroad track between Atlanta and the Chattahoochee. All preparations pointed to a campaign somewhere farther into the heart of the south. The southern papers were aware of this purpose; and an Augusta journal said, in frantic appeal, “The northern Attila and his horde are coming upon us.” All preparations were made. Officers were all back from their leaves of absence; the sick and feeble were all weeded out and sent north; and many of the soft recruits were sent back for garrison duty. Only the toughest and best were selected for the arduous service in prospect.

The city of Atlanta was destroyed. Sherman’s orders were to destroy the public buildings, and such stores as would be of use to the enemy; but the devastation had gone much further. On the 14th, the orders for march came; and the night before was one of excitement. The fires set by the order of the engineers, and many more set by soldiers in wantonness of mischief and against orders, made the scene one never to be forgotten. All the public buildings and many dwellings were in flames. Millions of dollars worth of public stores for which there was no transportation were destroyed; and the flames rose high, presenting a scene of awful grandeur.

Preparatory to departure, there had been a reorganization of the army. Part of the troops participating in this movement on Atlanta were sent back to Tennessee under Gen. Thomas. Sherman retained as the “Army of Georgia,” the fourteenth and Twentieth corps, which constituted “the left wing,” under Gen. Slocum. The “right wing,” under command of Gen. Howard, was composed of the Fifteenth and Seventeenth corps of the army of the Tennessee. The change took from the brigade in which the Third Wisconsin served its commander, Gen. Ruger, who was assigned to command a division in the army with which Gen. Thomas was to protect Tennessee and that region of the country. His old command parted with him reluctantly, but were glad of his well earned advancement to a higher command. Colonel Carman, of the Thirteenth New Jersey, was placed in command of the brigade as ranking colonel.

The Third Wisconsin, in putting itself in shape for the great unknown movement, sent off its feeble, sick, some soft recruits; and had “present for duty,” and starting out the following officers and enlisted men, distributed as follows:

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The splendid, fighting regiment, the Twenty-seventh Indiana, had been dis-organized. Reduced by service and battles to but a small number, it was not recruited up as it ought to have been, but was absorbed by transfer into the Seventieth Indiana, a regiment of which Benjamin Harrison, now President of the United States, was colonel. The surplus officers were mustered out of service.

While in Atlanta, on the 8th of November, the regiment held its election, as authorized by the laws of Wisconsin, casting 304 votes for the Lincoln electors, and twenty one for those of McClellan. But they had done their best work for the Union cause and ticket by assisting in the work of taking Atlanta.

In reducing baggage, the companies could carry but a mere handful — an axe or hatchet, a kettle or two, some coffee pots; and the officers were each allowed to put in a small gripsack, the half of a shelter tent, or tente d’abri. Each man carried his all — his clothing in his knapsack, or more frequently he had only what he wore on his back, his half of a shelter tent, and his forty rounds or more of ammunition in his cartridge box. If he was wise, he generally had his own kettle, a tin can, which made him independent of messes or company cooks, wherever he might be. His haversack, a canvass bag, carried his rations, sometimes his supply for three or five or eight days at a time, which he often had stored in his stomach in half the time covered by the issue.

On the march to the sea the officers present for duty were Colonel William Hawley, Lieutenant Colonel George W. Stevenson; (Major Warham Parks was detached as provost marshal of the corps); Dr Oscar F. Bartlett was absent with leave; Assistant Surgeon J. Griffin Conley was absent sick. John H. Meigs, adjutant, — vice Bryant, resigned to enter another branch of the military service\textsuperscript{221} — was absent sick. Company officers present — Company A: Captain Ralph Van Brunt; Company B: Captain Wilson S. Buck,

\textsuperscript{221} ED. NOTE. Edwin E. Bryant resigned on 21 June 1864 to accept an appointment as Enrollment Commissioner; why he does not specify this is curious.

[EDITOR’S NOTE: These names are given in the fullest form known to the editor, instead of using the abbreviations and initials-only given by Bryant.]
CHAPTER XXXI.
THE MARCH TO THE SEA.

A DULL, CLOUDY AND LEADEN SKY HUNG OVER Georgia when, on the morning of the 15th of November, the Twentieth corps and other corps heard at 5 o’clock the last reveille at Atlanta. A dark pall of smoke hung over the desolated and half-burned city, as the columns of troops on every road to the eastward moved out with a long, swinging “route step,” at a “right shoulder shift,” singing:

“John Brown’s body lies a-mouldering in the grave,  
But his soul is marching on.”

None knew where they were going save the commanding general; and he was to be guided by events. All had unbounded confidence in him, and started out on that uncertain, and, as it seemed, perilous, enterprise with light hearts, eager for more adventures, zealous to strike deeper into the vitals of the Confederacy.

The line of march of the Twentieth corps lay through Decatur and eastward, seemingly in the direction of Augusta. The first camp was near Stone Mountain, a wonderful sight, being a huge, granite boulder some 2,000 feet long, 800 feet high and 300 or 400 feet thick, with its sides in most places nearly perpendicular — a wonder to the soldiers as well as to geologists. The next day’s march took the corps into a land of plenty for man and beast, outside the region theretofore ranged by army foragers. The troops in march soon presented a ludicrous sight. With bayonets fixed and adorned with chunks of fresh beef, pig, spare-rib, livers, dressed chickens, the column looked anything but soldierly. But the men were “living high.” Fresh meat and potatoes were a grateful change to their palates after so long communion with the army ration. But there was hazard in this foraging on the flanks, as small parties of the enemy lurked about; and, if the men strayed too far out in too small numbers, they were picked up, and, in some instances, killed outright. Six men222 of the Third Wisconsin were thus captured by the enemy, near Stone Mountain on the second day’s march.

By the 20th of November rains set in, and the regiment had its turn with the wagon trains, and on the 21st was obliged to lift wagons out of the mud. The march now led from Yellow river toward Milledgeville. Going into camp late at night, drenched and wet to the skin, a sharp freeze in the night froze

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222 Sergeant Charles Lord [taken prisoner at Stone Mountain], Company A, and Privates Moses Carnes [taken prisoner 18 Nov 1864], Sidney Clark [taken prisoner 18 Nov 1864], Frank Larousch [taken prisoner at Stone Mountain], John Warner [taken prisoner 16 Nov 1864] and John Smith [taken prisoner 16 Nov 1864], of Company C. [Details inside square brackets supplied by the editor.]
every blanket stiff. The next day’s march was over “hubbles.” On the 22d, Col. Hawley told the men that they shoud [sic] lead the column into Milledgeville, if they would beat Geary’s (Second) division in reaching the Oconee bridge. The freeze of the night had made a crust of solid ground; and the regiments of Williams’ division hobbled along at a brisk pace. It told heavily on the shoes and on the half-shod feet; for many of the men had started out poorly shod, or had thrown away their new shoes rather than “break them in.” After crossing the Oconee river, the land became higher, more, hilly; and well cultivated farms were on every side. Abundance of food, forage and good water were found. At 1 P. M. the regiment saw the church spires of Millidgeville and the cavalry reported the city free from armed men. This was unexpected, for all the rebel newspapers were exhorting the people to “arise harry, shoot, starve and drive out” the barbarian horde of invaders, and had declared that the entire population of the state were up in arms.

The march, with no considerable body of the enemy to oppose soon became a monotonous, but for part of the way, a most enjoyable “pic-nic excursion.” The enemy was too far away to interfere much with the infantry. The two wings sweeping along on parallel roads, several columns each pursuing a different path, covered an extent of country forty miles or more in width, with foraging parties taking in the side-roads and by-paths. They “mowed a wide swath,” to use Halleck’s expression.

Foraging or “bumming” was a feature of this march, that makes the campaign somewhat notable in the annals of war. As the troops must needs subsist off the country through which they passed, a systematic organization was provided to supply the army with its daily food. The commander of each brigade sent out a detail, each day, of about fifty men. They started ahead early in the morning in charge of bold, enterprising but vigilant officers. When they came to a plantation they took its mules and vehicles, often the family, pleasure carriage, and loaded them with corn, potatoes, bacon, pork, meal, or whatever eatables were found; and they made a grotesque appearance, often coming in each mounted on a mule whose body was hidden by the geese, chickens, hams, sheep, etc., which were piled on. The duty was perilous, as often guerillas or bushwhackers were encountered, but the men greatly enjoyed the detail.

“To forage liberally off the country” was Sherman’s order. This was rather a dangerous power to entrust to men. In some instances it was much abused. While the regular foraging parties were quite decent, and carried out the scope of their orders fairly, it is undeniable that in some instances there was pilfering, needless pillage and some wanton destruction. But on the whole, “Sherman’s bummers” have not been fairly treated in history; and foreign, military writers and our southern friends have hardly done them justice. Some have conveyed the idea that they were a horde of camp
followers, distinct from the regular soldiers, irresponsible, hovering about the army and committing outrage, arson and murder. This is far from the truth. During the campaign from Chattanooga to Atlanta the “bummer” was unknown. He was then in the ranks, and in battle or skirmish every day. When the army closed about Savannah, he was in the ranks and as ready to wade through rice swamps to charge a rebel fort as to advance upon a poultry-yard or herd of swine. Here he remained until the army left Savannah, the orderly soldier, doing the daily, routine duty of camp.

Even in their foraging expeditions, the bummers were the keen, alert, brave soldiers, full of resources, shrewd in strategy. They were the young, strong, bold men of the service, advancing without fear against the rebel cavalry. If the latter ran upon a detachment of foragers and firing began, other detachments, pricking up their ears when they heard the guns, galloped to the scene of conflict, dismounting and approaching from all directions, they often took the cavalry in flank or rear and usually put them to flight, or held them at bay till other detachments swelled the force of foragers, or reinforcements arrived from the column. General Wheeler, commander of the rebel cavalry in Georgia, during the “March to the Sea,” said in a dispatch: “As for driving the enemy’s cavalry, I have all I can do to hold my own with his mounted foragers.” They were quick to report the appearance of the enemy; were excellent flankers; and in some cases made obstinate resistance to the enemy’s cavalry. Indeed, if some of the fights between the foragers and the enemy had been fought in the revolutionary war or the war of 1812, they would have come down in history as memorable battles.223

General Sherman was strolling about a great deal from column to column, and frequently came upon the men on their hunt for their supplies. Once, it is said, some of the Third “boys” were hunting for some molasses. Finding a barrel, they were rolling it to camp close by, when whom should they confront but Gen. Sherman? They were dumbfounded for a moment; but the general soon relieved them by taking an axe from the yard, knocking in the head, dipping his finger in the syrup, tasting it, and telling the men to help themselves in an orderly way, and not waste it by scrambling; and to give a canteen full to as many as possible.224

The foragers brought in many fine, game cocks, and cock-fighting became a great sport with the “boys.” Every battery had its cock; and the birds that did not show game qualities soon found way to the stew-pan, while

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223 “Some of these foraging parties had engagements with the enemy which would in ordinary times, rank as respectable battles.” — Sherman’s Report.

224 This incident is vouched for by the soldiers, and it was told in a story of the march, published soon after the war.
the fighters and champions were made pets and carried along on the guns, or among the infantry on the shoulders of the men.

At every halt there was a ring formed and a “main” held, in which regiments and batteries staked their championship on the prowess and skill of their “rooster.” The successful birds were named “Billy Sherman,” “Johnny Logan,” “Pap Williams,” etc., while those who went to the stew-pan were dubbed “Beauregard,” “Hood,” “Hardee,” or other like celebrities of the Confederacy. The soldiers wanted something to pet. To get a dog, a donkey, a coon, kid or goat, and make it the pet of the regiment was the habit of all; and the men of the regiment would protect, watch and feed, and even fight for their favorite dog, car or goat.

The slaves along the route were in ecstasy. If it had been permitted, the great mass of them would have followed the army, but as this would have resulted in their starvation by tens of thousands, it was discouraged. There was much inconsiderate censure of Sherman in the North at the time, because the command took up the bridges, leaving behind sometimes a caravan of black people behind. General Sherman used to talk with the colored people a great deal, and discourage them from following him in masse; but, despite all, they cam on by the thousands, a dense mass, carrying bundles, toting babies, or stowing them in bags on mules, with their woolly heads sticking out, or drawn in vehicles of every kind and description. It was a common thing to see the woolly heads of “pickaninnies” protruding from a bag on one side of some old jaded pack-mule, their wondering, starving eyes gazing about them, and a ham or flitch of bacon balancing the burden on the other side. Mothers carried crying babies in arms; and many tired, little ones were whipped and spanked to make them keep up with the moving cloud thus making exodus from a land of bondage. Many of the generals and officers, it is said, encouraged the slaves to follow the army. It would sound well at home about election time that General So-and-so had freed so many slaves and led them out of slavery. But how many hundreds or thousands of these poor, confiding creatures sank down by the way and died of hunger; how many were shot or sabered by Wheeler’s men, how many to escape the troopers ran into the rivers and drowned, or hid in the swamps and starved will ever remain among the untold tragedies of the war. Many thousand slaves followed Sherman to Savannah; and as many followed the trail of his legions in the Carolinas. To them it was like the bondsmen going out of Egypt — they hungered in the wilderness, and many perished; but thousands reached a promised land of freedom at last. When they were driven back, as in some cases it was deemed necessary, their appeals and prayers made on their knees would have touched with pity a heart of stone.

On the 23rd, the column was formed to enter Milledgeville. Colonel Carman, commanding the brigade (lately Ruger’s), rode at the head. After
him came the brigade band, then Col. Hawley and the Third Wisconsin. A short distance behind that was Gen. Slocum and staff, followed by the One Hundred and Seventh New York and the other regiments of the brigade, next a part of the left wing. The band played “Marching Along,” and, as the head of the column neared the Capitol, changed to the exultant notes of “Yankee Doodle.” The inhabitants from doors and windows looked on silently. The keeper of the Capitol buildings came out and very graciously opened the gates of the park and gave the keys of the Capitol to Col. Hawley, after unlocking the doors.

Colonel Hawley was appointed post commander, and the Third Wisconsin was designated to act as provost guard of the city. General Sherman, in his “Memoirs,” said: “General Slocum had established a good provost guard and excellent order was maintained.” The flag of one of the regiments was hoisted on the Capitol; and as its folds were carried out to the breezes the band struck up the “Star Spangled Banner,” while cheers of the thousands of soldiers made Milledgeville ring. The day was cloudless, the air cool and bracing. The troops came in well closed up, marching in perfect step to martial music; and as the long column of blue-coats swept by with the irresistible tramp — tramp of veterans, their war-worn banners telling the story of numerous battles, their emblazoned State colors embracing nearly all the loyal States, and following each division its artillery, two guns abreast, mud-splashed, sullen dogs of war, their strong horses well-trained and well in hand, the people of Georgia’s capital saw in this pageant the power of the Union and the strength of its government, “terrible as an army with banners.” The colored people hailed with demonstrative delight the advent of the Union army. “Bress de Lawd! Tanks to Almighty Got, de Yanks is come,” theey cried, and wanted to hug the soldiers, often touching the dress of some of the officers, who marched nearest the sidewalks, as the afflicted of old touched the garments of the Great Master. “De Lawd bress de yanks! What fine gemmens dey all is.”

The troops passed through the city to their assigned camp-ground; and the Third Wisconsin were soon out as armed patrols, keeping orders, preventing pillage and destruction of private property. The regiment, as

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225 General Slocum had placed a provost guard through the city, with strict orders to arrest any one found pillaging and to protect all private property. Colonel Hawley, of the Third Wisconsin, was appointed commandant of the post and established his headquarters in the State House. The only property destroyed were the magazines, arsenals, depots, factories, and penitentiary (which last some lawless soldiers had fired and released the inmates for the benefit of Georgia society), and storehouses, with near two thousand bales of cotton. No private property was destroyed, and the people began to think the devil was not so black as he was painted, after all.” (Coningham’s “Sherman’s March Through the South,” P. 255.) EDITOR’S NOTE: CONYNGHAM, David Power, 1840-1883. Sherman’s March Through the South. 1865.
provost guard, took possession of the State arsenal, which was near by the Capitol, and in it were found an odd collection of obsolete arms — spears, short swords and hangers. The latter were seized upon by the butchers and ground sharp for use in cutting up beef. A lot of stuff in the way of war material was destroyed with the arsenal itself.

The legislature and state officers had scampered off as “the northern Attila and his horde” approached the city. There were abundant evidences that they stood not upon the order of their going. The “general file” was evidently undisposed of, and pending business had been tabled without the formality of a vote. To use the language of the army, the members “got up and got.”

One thing that the men found in lavish abundance was a kind of state scrip, an issue of paper money or bonds authorized by a law; and the treasury was crammed with it. The men were allowed to confiscate it, and used it as stake money in playing poker. It was less valuable than coffee grains, the usual “chips” of the board. There were heavy bets and fortunes won and lost. Some of the lads of the regiment found a large cotton manufactory in town where hundreds of girls worked at the looms, and having received no pay for months, they were in straits. The “boys” full of sympathy trudged back to the state treasury, got a bushel of the “money” and took it to the factory giving the girls $800 or $1,000 apiece, making them very happy — for a very short time.

There were jolly times during that occupation of a day. A number of officers from various commands, full of merry mischief, and, perhaps, a little mellow with such refreshments as the city afforded, met in the state capitol and held a session of the legislature of the state of Georgia. Its proceedings began with great dignity. Colonel Robinson — commanding one of the brigades — was elected Speaker. Colonel H. C. Rogers, of Slocum’s staff, was chief clerk. A strong force of sergeants-at-arms made much disorder in maintaining order. The house opened with a general drink, assumed to be the Georgia fashion. Colonels Watkins, Carman, Zulick, Ewing, Coggswell and Thompson, all of whom where sturdy old commanders of regiments or brigades, were names as committee on Federal relations, and retired to a spacious committee room where there were evidently refreshments. The sounds of song and laughter that came from that room testified to the zeal of the occupants. While the committee were deliberating, Gen. Kilpatrick who was a wag as well as a fighter, regaled the convention by an account of his great raid on a cellar. While he was speaking some one called out, “Mr. Speaker, I rise to a point or order. I believe it is always customary to treat the speaker.” Thereupon, the imperturbable cavalryman produced a flask from his pocket and said, “I beg to inform this honorable body that I am going to treat the speaker.” Suiting action to word he took a long drink amid roars of laughter. The committee on Federal relations soon returned with a set of
resolutions to the effect that the ordinance of secession was injudicious, indiscreet and ought to be discouraged, a farce and void, and that Sherman’s columns be appointed a committee of safety to play the devil with it, and restore the state of Georgia to her proper, practical relations in the Union. The rollicking fun, the speeches full of wit, mock gravity, the witty repartees and good humor of the occasion made it one of those episodes with which the soldier regales his life of hardship and danger, but to which no report can do justice. It was the talk of the army for days; and Gen. Sherman “enjoyed the joke” as heartily as the rest.

Milledgeville was tenderly treated by the Union army. The penitentiary was burned without orders; but the Third Wisconsin prevented much mischief that otherwise would have been done, strictly enforcing Gen. Slocum’s orders. A large amount of tobacco was seized, and several wagon loads taken along for future use. The average soldier can bear cold, heat, hunger, thirst, forced marches and loss of sleep with comparative cheerfulness; but when he is out of tobacco he is as “cross as a bear.”

The march was resumed on the 24th, and the columns of the left wing bore southeast to strike the railroad from Macon to Savannah, below Sandersville. General Sherman rode along through the division, wearing his slouched, black hat, black cloak with high collar nearly hiding his face, looking neither to the right or left, buried in deep thought, unheeding the remarks of the men, who queried loud enough for him to hear, whether “Uncle Billy knows where he is going?”

On the “left wing” moved by way of the road to Sandersville, through Hebron over Buffalo creek, where nine bridges had to be built over the marshy approaches and the stream itself. It was said a citizen had burned the bridges; and his plantation was laid waste. The remarks of some of the Georgians, as their plantations were gutted were full of a doleful humor in their fault-finding with the Confederate government. “Talk about splittin’ the Union,” said one, “Why yer’s Georgia split open from eend to eend, and d—it, my plantation is right enn the crack.”

After crossing the creek, Wheeler’s cavalry were found at the front. The Third regiment then marched in battle line for several miles. Next morning, as Sandersville was neared, the brigade left camp without breakfast. The Third, with other regiments, formed a line of battle. The Second Massachusetts and Thirteenth New Jersey were thrown out as skirmishers. The rebels were soon found in line behind a swamp. The Second advanced into the swamp, disappearing from sight in the brush. Presently, the pop-pop-pop of carbines was heard. Then a volley of musketry told that the cavalry were not doing all the shooting. The Thirteenth New Jersey swung around to the left; and soon our men in line saw the rebels scurrying to the rear. The skirmishers followed after, firing as they ran. The rebels then made a stand behind the crest of a
hill at the edge of a wood. A cloud of smoke arose, and there was a rattling fire. Our skirmishers were seen to drop to the ground, to avoid the bullets. In a moment they were up again and advancing. “Forward, double-quick, march,” says Hawley; and down the hill, through the swamp, the regiment moved on for five miles, keeping close up with the skirmish line into Sandersville. Wheeler then left the front, and took safe distance. When his dead were passed, the Indian recruits thought it a great waste of scalps that they were not allowed to disturb those of the slain.

The column then marched southward to Tenille, where it struck the railroad; and the brigade with other troops began the work of tearing up the track. The whole brigade was strung out, a man to a tie. At the word of command, — “He-oh-he” — the whole track for the brigade length was liften on end; then over it went, bottom side up. Instantly knocked to pieces, the ties were pile dup, “cob-house fashion,” stuffed with rails, and set on fire. The rails as they heated warped and twisted out of shape; and strong men took them by the ends and twisted them around a tree — “made doughnuts of them,” as the men expressed it. When cold the rail could not get away while the tree lasted. The regiment soon became famous in the corps as a destroyer of railroad track. It practiced the various methods and finally settled down upon the one which have the largest results in the shortest time.

Hard work it was. The troops were up at five; scant time was given for meals; and for fifteen miles working eastward the railroad was destroyed. It was near Tenille that the regiment burned vast lumber-yards of bridge timber, and railroad buildings, and here that the colored man amused Gen. Sherman by telling him that the “sojers hab sot fire to de well.” The darkey told the exact truth, as the General saw next day. A deep pit lined with plank with a pump at the bottom to raise water into the tank was the “well,” and the plank had been fired in the general destruction.

On the 27th, 28th and 29th the regiment bore eastward through Davisboro, Key West and Spear’s station to Bostwick destroying track and huge piles of lumber, ties, bridge timber, etc.; and on the 30th it crossed the Ogeechee river after a long hunt up stream to find hard banks.

The Third regiment, with its brigade, marched about an immense swamp on the 30th, making ten miles to advance three, and camped near Louisville. The whole left wing was there, and the camps made a great circle of light. While the country about here was partly swamp, there was good foraging; and the army was in the best of spirits. An Augusta paper, which found its way into camp, said, “Sherman’s army is 40,000 strong. His men are deserting rapidly. He is going just where we want him to go. His army will be captured and destroyed.” Brave fellows, these strategists of the sanctum. They lied about Sherman’s army with all the zeal of “Secesh” patriotism.

The path of the wing for the next three or four days was through Millen,
where some of our men saw the horrible prison-pen, in which many Union
soldiers had been confined, hardly less miserably than at Andersonville.
Sherman tried hard to reach this place in time to liberate the prisoners; but the
rebels had hurried them away. On the 4th, the march was through an
immense forest of tall pines, where the eye could see nothing but trunks of
trees, they stood so thickly; land level mostly, soil sandy, water scarce and
bad; and foraging, as can be judged, became very poor. There must be a fast
after the great feast. Surrounded by this wall of dense pines, with the day
hidden by their thick, interweaving tops of green, the bugle blast or musket
shot made strange echoes, dying in the far distance, making the woods seem
illimitable. It was a grand picture to see that slow moving column pass
through that solitude. The men seemed as pygmies beside those massive
pines, running up tall, straight, their branches so high — a lumberman’s
paradise. Screened from the sun’s rays, an occasional opening in the canopy
let in here and there a ray of sunlight, making the gun barrels to glisten, and
giving to the gaunt faces of the men a hue of ruddy bronze.

The night marches through these forests, when the rear of a column
came in to camp after dark, were stirring scenes. Thousands of pine torches
were lighted, and illumined the path, and the groups of horsemen, the
compact columns of troops and long rows of wagons. There was the mingling
of myriad noises, the shouting and picturesque profanity of the teamsters
“exhorting the impenitent mule,” the braying of mules, the neighing of horses,
the commands of officers, the blast of bugles, all caught up by the echoes till
Babel was out-Babeled in the confusion of all speech, animal and human.

But food grew scarcer. Houses and plantations were few and far
between. The rains poured down. It was hard pulling for the animals, and
hard lifting for the men at wagons and artillery wheels; the belts clasped
loosely around the shrunken waists; and there were no visions of pig,
chickens or sweet potatoes to gladden the eye when the night halt came. The
teamsters fed their mules grey moss for hay; but where was a like substitute
for the men? Luckily the foragers of Carman’s brigade struck somewhere an
oasis of plenty in this desert of scarcity; and never food tasted better.

On the 8th, the regiment marched through Springfield, a village of two
dozen houses and a rickety court house. The rebels had felled great pine
trees across the track, having a great deal of labor for their pains, as the lusty
black pioneers cut them out, hardly delaying the column. The march led into
the night, over corduroy roads and bridges, lighted by blazing pine torches.
The swamp on which the march led was as dense and dark as gloom itself.

In crossing these bridges many a “bummer” was called to mourn the
loss of his horse. Here the inspectors-general of the corps were stationed
with a detail, and every mounted men not a field officer or cavalryman was
relived of his mount without words, ceremony or chance for explanation.
Colonel Asmussen, who was corps inspector-general, had ordered to take all such captures for the use of the artillery and trains, and many a “bummer” was translated from the seventh heaven of an excellent mount to the mundane sphere of mud a foot deep — until he could steal another horse. This method of getting in the horses of the “bummers” for the benefit of the transportation of the army was practiced at all the crossings of the rivers, much to the grief of the “bummers.” All their scorn, wrath and indignation found inflection in speaking of Asmussen.

The direction of the movement was now southeastward and unmistakable bearing towards Savannah. It was no surprise, therefore, to find the enemy soon athwart the path. At a place called Harrison’s Plantation, or Monteith Swamp, a large rice plantation, some fifteen miles from Savannah, the division came up against two small forts and a considerable force of the enemy. General Jackson, the division commander — Williams now commanded the corps — at once deployed. The First brigade, Col. Selfridge, was put in the center, the Second, Col. Carman — in which was the Third regiment — was ordered to swing around and envelop the right. The Third brigade, Col. Robinson, was put in motion to reach around the left, thus surrounding the fort completely, and, as Gen. Pope would say, “bag the whole crowd.” The enemy kept blazing away with his gun from the fort, as valorous in his effort as he was poor in his shooting.

The Third brigade was put in motion to wheel around the right, through some woods, and close in from that flank. These movements were soon executed; but the Third found it unpleasant marching through the rice swamps and canals waist-deep in mud. Leading his regiment by the flank, Col. Hawley sent out Lieut. Kleven with Company H as skirmishers. Finding the Confederates in confusion and attempting to escape with their artillery, the skirmishers pushed forward. Sergeant Haughawout, of Company H, a tall, active, brave soldier, distanced his comrades and captured three prisoners in one of the forts. Just at this time the Third brigade came into the fort from the other side to claim the honor of the capture; but on the matter being disputed the prisoners themselves, at division headquarters, acknowledged Sergt. Haughawout to be the first man in the fort and the one who took them prisoners. The Thirty-first Wisconsin and Sixty-first Ohio were the disputants for this capture; and they no doubt hastened the flight of the rebels as they charged in on the right, losing several in killed and wounded. Captain Wilson S. Buck, of the Third, here received a severe wound in the foot from a random shot fired by our First brigade.

The rebels ran for dear life, and the Third regiment chased them as well

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as it could, somewhat clogged with muddy shoes and wet clothing. It was a
comical sight to see; but the ousted garrison of that little fort could beat our
boys on a foot race under such circumstances; and somewhat blown with the
chase the latter were obliged to give it up after a run of two miles. The force
thus put to flight was Col. Stevenson and his Fortieth North Carolina regiment
and some men of the Tenth and Thirty-sixth North Carolina. They had the
swamps to thank for their escape. The “left wing” then pushed toward
Savannah, marched ten miles, and the Third tore up the track of the railroad
for some distance. The march was upon a smooth, well-built turnpike, leading
straight to the city. On either side of it were rice fields or dense swamps, and
most of the land under water, nowhere offering a suitable ground for a camp.
Suddenly bombshells began to fly before the troops; and they hastened to get
off the road where they were exposed into the swamp. Volunteers were
called to go out and reconnoiter. Three of the Third stepped out of the ranks;
and were sent out, (Dec. 11th) to see what was ahead. They soon returned
reporting strong works well mounted, and that the approaches were all
through swamps three feet deep.

So ended, as far as the Third Wisconsin was concerned, the famous
“March to the Sea.” It made great renown for Sherman, but he never
regarded it as anything great or wonderful, merely, as he says, “the shift of
base,” “the transfer of a strong army, which had no opponent, and had
finished its then work, from the interior to a point on the sea coast, from which
it could achieve other important results.” He “considered this march as a
means to an end, and not as an essential act of war.” The Third Wisconsin
had its full share of the hardship, hard work, skirmishing and discomfort of this
campaign, yet regarded it as by all odds, the most care-free, rollicking, happy-
go-lucky of all its varied experiences and vicissitudes.
CHAPTER XXXI

ARGYLE ISLAND.

BUT another phase of somewhat exciting experience remained for the Third Wisconsin in the operations about Savannah. On reaching the sea Gen. Sherman surrounded Savannah on the land side, his left wing resting on the Savannah river and extended thence to the Ogeechee. The weather was now raw and chilly, with a harsh wind blowing from the sea. On the 11th of December, the day of arrival, Gen. Slocum directed that Col. Hawley, with his regiment, cross over to Argyle Island, a large rice plantation between two channels of the Savannah river, there to secure all the rice and supplies, and thence to make a reconnoisance [sic] across to the South Carolina side. The regiment was at once started; but the crossing was slow, as only two small skiffs could be found.

A company of the One Hundred and Fiftieth New York, under Capt. Gildersleeve (afterwards famous as the crack marksman of the American Rifle Team), captured the steamer Ida, having on board Col. Lynch, of Gen. Hardee’s staff, bearing dispatches to the gunboats up the river. With unfortunate want of foresight, this valuable capture had been burned, and thus the movement to the Island was slow and tedious. Only two companies were got over that day; but the passage was resumed at daybreak. Early in the morning, while the regiment was thus engaged in crossing, six or eight men at a time, three vessels were seen coming down the river, rounding a bend, on their way to Savannah. The tall reeds hid their hulks from view, so that their character could not be determined. As they came round the point of an island in one of the several channels, they came out in full view of the camp of the brigade. Captain Winegar, of Battery M, First New York Artillery, had his guns planted on the Georgia shore, so that he could sweep the river for a length of about a mile. The steamers proved to be two gunboats, part of Commodore Tatnall’s “mosquito fleet,” the “Sampson,” the “Macon,” and an armed tender, the “Resolute,” returning from a cruise up the river. As they came in sight and range Winegar surprised them with a few shots from his battery, just as the officers were sitting down to breakfast. They soon replied, sending 32-pound shells dangerously close to the heads of the men on shore. The troops were paraded on the Georgia side, the Third Wisconsin on each side. It looked now as if, to its fighting with Lee’s veterans, its service against rebel fortifications, armies, guerillas in Tennessee, New York rioters, etc., was to be added a tussle with gunboats. The interchange of compliments lasted

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227 EDITOR’S NOTE — there are two chapters “thirty one” in the original text, which badly suffered from a lack of adequate editing.
some minutes, when the gunboats prudently decided to retire up the river. In
turning about in some haste and confusion in the narrow channel, one of the
gunboats ran into the shore of Argyle Island and ran aground. Captain
Barrager’s company and some others of the regiment were at this time on the
island; and as soon as the gunboats hove in sight they ran up opposite, and
from behind a dike began peppering the gunboats, compelling the crew to
keep will under cover. While the Resolute drifted down near the shore of the
island her crew lowered two boats and were putting in the luggage of the
officers, preparing to leave her. The Wisconsin men rushed forward
determined to capture her. One of Company F’s men waded out into the
water, parted the reeds, and called out to the crews just as they were pulling
away, to turn back. “Row, men, row,” ordered the executive officer. “Turn
back, Cap, turn back,” yelled the soldier in the reeds. “Row, men, row hard,”
ordered the officer in a low voice. The soldier then fired, wounding the officer
in the shoulder; and as the shore was by this time lines with blue-coats, the
crew gave up, cursing each other roundly for the mistakes and mishaps which
had brought them disaster. A number of the Third Wisconsin men ruches into
the water neck-deep, clambered on board the vessel and took possession of
her, breakfast and all. She was at once towed to the Georgia side and found
to contain a considerable quantity of hard bread, bacon, coffee, etc., all of
which came welcome to the brigade bill of fare. It was with reference to this
episode and the capture of the dispatch boat by the One Hundred and Fiftieth
New York, that Gen. Sherman, in his first letter to the Secretary of War, says:
“We have already captured two boats on the Savannah river, and prevented
their gunboats from coming down.”

The regiment was put on the island as soon as possible; and set three
rice mills in operation, threshing out several hundred bushels of rice daily.
Meanwhile, small parties were sent over into South Carolina to the adjacent
plantations. They made a rich capture, under the circumstances — four
horses, fifteen mules, two barrels of hulled rice. One who has never hulled
rice by manual labor — rubbing, or beating it until the thin, brown, tenacious
cuticle is cleaned away from the berry — has no idea of the amount of
physical force that is represented in two barrels of hulled rice. Some bacon
also made this haul a rich one. A rebel newspaper of late date captured,
which gave the cheerful news that Sherman’s army was starving in the
swamps about Savannah. Wheeler’s cavalry soon appeared; and the old
occupation of skirmishing began. The rebel force increased, and their
sharpshooters soon got behind the dikes on the opposite shore and seriously
annoyed operations about the mill. Col. Hawley sent Capt. Hinkley over on
the morning of the 15th with two companies (D and E) to drive the
sharpshooters off. Hinkley crossed under fire, charged in single file along a
dike to a mill some distance inland, where the rebel force was posted. The
enemy gave a harmless volley and ran. As there appeared to be considerable force there, Col. Hawley went over with Companies I, F and C and pushed the enemy further back; but, as their force was evidently increasing, he deemed it prudent to withdraw. Next day the enemy brought a section of a battery to the plantation opposite and began shelling the camp of the Third, and with one shot set on fire a building near by.

Company E was sent along shore to fire across the river at them. Well sheltered behind dikes, thrown up all over the island to control the flowage and keep back the tide, Hinkley’s men soon compelled the artillery to get out of the way; but the sharpshooters infested the dikes across the channel, and it was not easy to dislodge them. One man, John Furlong,228 Company E, was here killed. Mr. John Hook,229 a young soldier, one of the recruits of 1864, who was severely wounded at New Hope Church, but back to duty as soon as possible, thus writes of this experience: “The most bedraggled, chilly, uncomfortable lot of fellows were Company E, when relieved by a company of the Second Massachusetts. As the rebel battery was only about 250 yards away, the lads of the company made it interesting for the rebels, in spite of chattering teeth.” Many of the recruits of 1864 were veterans230 in service; and those of Company E, though they had not passed their twentieth birthday anniversary, stood this hard service without wincing. But to stand or kneel in cold water, with a raw wind blowing, and their exercise marksmanship, while dodging bullets was a duty in which they were glad to have the relief frequent.

At high tide a rebel gun-boat from Savannah made daily visits up stream and threw monster shells on the island and into the camps of the brigade on the Georgia shore. The business of rice threshing was thus pursued with difficulty. The rice had to be hulled after threshing, which was done in small mortars. Many men were employed in this work; and the regiment had scores of hungry visitors from the regiments on the Georgia shore. Providentially a large barge laden with supplies of rice, beans and sugar was loosened from its mooring in Savannah and swept up by the tide. Its capture was a God-send to the hungry brigade; which had crossed over to the island and encamped near the Third. The threshing, hulling and boiling of rice was a laborious task; and all the able-bodied negroes on the shore were sent over to assist. The boiled rice was eaten without salting, as salt was lacking. The men tried gun power for a substitute; but one experiment satisfied them that

228 ED. NOTE. John Furlong, of Theresa, Wisconsin, was killed in action 20 Dec 1864 at Argyle Island.

229 ED. NOTE. Corporal John C. Hook, of Wausau, Wisconsin, was wounded 25 May 1864 at New Hope Church, and was mustered out on 18 July 1865.

230 ED. NOTE. Corporal John C. Hook was one of the veterans.
gun powder in no form was good to be taken into the system. Picket duty on the island was not agreeable service. Posted along the dikes, standing much more than shoe deep in cold water, with a heavy fog covering land and water, and much of the time a fine, drizzling rain, the service was as unpleasant as could be chosen for a night’s entertainment; but it was borne with a jolly, good nature, and many a hope was expressed by the boys that “Uncle Billy would soon take them out of the wet.”

On this island the negroes were the most hideous looking that the regiment had met in its travels. Their great splay feet and hands, ill-shaped bodies, over-balancing weight of lip and nose marked them as the unmixed descendants of a breed as low in intelligence as can be found. They did not speak English, but an unintelligible jargon that the men characterized as “plantation Latin.” The care-free nature of these people was shown in their nightly gatherings, when they would join in a chant in unintelligible gibberish, not wanting in melody, while in their excitement they became wild in gesticulation. When the gunboats threw shells upon the island their terror was comical. They dived under the houses, seeming to think that if out of sight they were safe.²³¹

The epicurean reputation of the regiment, with its three rice mills, and its captures by land and sea, brought over to the island many officers, among them Gen. A. S. Williams, commanding the corps, Gen. N. I. Jackson, commanding the division and many of their staff, who were sumptuously dines on boiled rice, bacon and rebel whisky.

On the 19th, by command of Gen. Slocum, Col. Carman threw the Third Wisconsin, the Second Massachusetts and Thirteenth New Jersey regiments, under Col. Hawley, to the South Carolina shore. Landing without opposition they advanced to Issard’s plantation, and skirmished into a good position. The enemy charged with cavalry against them but were repulsed. The position held was good for defense, but quite difficult to advance from, as the rice fields were overflowed with water to the depth of eighteen inches.²³² The enemy displayed such strong force that the brigade could not reach the causeway or great road leading out of Savannah into South Carolina. From

²³¹ ED. NOTE. It is very disheartening to see that what today would justly be labeled blatant racism was acceptable enough that in 1891, when this book was published, it could still appear on the pages of such a text as this.

²³² In order the more effectually to check the Federal advance, the rice fields were flooded to the depth of some eighteen inches. Movements were therefore by the flanks and along the dams, and the Confederates strongly and effectually resisted all approaches in these directions. We had also burnt the plantation bridges across the canals. — Jones’ Siege of Savannah. [EDITOR’S NOTE: Jones, Charles Colcock, 1831-1893. The Siege of Savannah in December, 1864, and the Confederate operations in Georgia and the third military district of South Carolina during General Sherman’s march from Atlanta to the sea. Albany, Georgia: J. Munsell, 1874.]
the position of the Third regiment this road could plainly be seen, and large trains of wagons pouring in and out of the city. The troops on Argyle island thought that there was a good opportunity lost in not getting possession of this “Union Causeway,” as it is called, being the great road that leads out of Savannah, and the one by which Hardee made his escape. Had that been seized and held, as Sherman intended, all the troops in Savannah would have been compelled to surrender. Sherman wrote to Halleck, “I moved as quickly as possible to close up Union Causeway; but intervening obstacles were such that, before I could get troops on the road, Hardee had skipped out.” It appears that Gen. Sherman had intended to cut off this avenue of retreat; but the iron-clad gun boats in the river prevented, as it was thought the use of the pontoons, and there were not sufficient boats to place troops on the Carolina side. Geary’s (white star) division had been sent over to Hutchinson’s island, which is below Argyle in the river.

The brigade was ordered back to the Georgia side. But great guns from the ships had been sent up and sixty-four-pounders placed in position on Slocum’s front for the siege [sic] of the city. On the 21st, the unexpected news came that Savannah was evacuated. It was joyously received, for to say the truth, the troops did not enjoy a siege, when as besiegers they must operate in swamps and water three feet deep. The recrossing of the river was made in the face of a high wind, which became so strong that a part of the Third could not cross until dark. The Confederates were pressing on all sides closely; and it seemed for a while that the companies were in a desperate case. Here Lieut.-Col. Stevenson, in command of this part of the regiment, was slightly wounded in the arm. The faithful Second Massachusetts came to the aid of the Third without orders; and placed themselves where they could cover the flanks; seeing which the enemy drew back after dark, and the Third Wisconsin men then crossed in the night. The next day the brigade worked all day in crossing in small boats from the island to the Georgia shore. The wind was high, and flat boats could not be used. The Second Massachusetts tried it, and were drifted for a mile against another island. Crossing in skiffs was a slow, laborious business.

Fort McAlister [Fort McAllister, is south of Savannah on a loop of the Ogeechee River] had been carried by assault on the 13th, far around to the right and south of Savannah. This opened communication with the fleet; and soon supplies and tons of mail matter came in for the army. None but the soldier knows the pleasure experienced, when these bulky mail bags were opened and their contents distributed in camp.

The enemy having evacuated on the morning of the 21st, Savannah was in Sherman’s hands. The brigade moved at once towards the city. Geary’s (white star) division of the Twentieth corps marched in and occupied. The Third Wisconsin, with its brigade, encamped near the river, two miles out of
the city, in a grove of live-oaks festooned with moss, and gave themselves up to rest and jollity.

The movement of Carman’s brigade to the South Carolina shore, and the object Sherman had in view in sending it there, finds record as follows in Van Horne’s\textsuperscript{233} history of the Army of the Cumberland: “Pending the opening of the Ogeechee and the coming of the siege guns, there was some activity on the left bank of the army, and Gen. Slocum was urged to throw one of his corps in South Carolina, to close Gen. Hardee’s only avenue of escape. On the 15\textsuperscript{th} Col. Hawley crossed to the South Carolina shore from Argyle Island, with five companies, drove the enemy from Izzard’s Plantation, and made a reconnoissance \textit{[sic]} of the country two miles further. Being isolated, he thought it prudent to return, and in doing this he was vigorously pressed by the enemy, but recrossed to the Island in safety. Upon his return he was reinforced by the Second Massachusetts, and on the next day the remainder of the brigade, Col. Carman commanding, and a section of artillery, crossed to the island and took position on the eastern point near the South Carolina shore. During the night Col. Carman received orders from Gen. Williams to cross to South Carolina and take position near the river, threatening the Savannah and Charleston road. This was not accomplished immediately, for want of small boats, and barges could not be used on account of the low tide. In the meantime Gen. Wheeler appeared on the opposite shore, and opened with his light guns upon Carman’s troops, the latter responding during the 17\textsuperscript{th} and 18\textsuperscript{th}, but made no more effort to cross.

In view of these revelations, Gen. Sherman abandoned the idea of closing the road to Charleston by operating from his left flank, as the enemy held the river opposite the city with iron-clad gunboats, and could, as was conjectured, destroy pontoons between Hutchinson’s Island and the Carolina shore, and isolate any force sent from that flank. Upon the abandonment of this movement Gen. Slocum was ordered to get the siege guns into position and make preparation for an assault. The approaches to the city were upon the narrow causeways, which were commanded by artillery; but, nevertheless, the reconnoissance \textit{[sic]} from the left wing had convinced Slocum and his subordinate commanders that their front could be carried.”

\textsuperscript{233} \textit{ED. NOTE.} Van Horne, Thomas Budd, d. 1895. \textit{History of the Army of the Cumberland: its organization, campaigns and battles, written at the request of Major General H. Thomas chiefly from his private military journal and official and other documents furnished by him. Illustrated with campaign and battle maps compiled by Edward Ruger.} Cincinnati: R. Clarke & Co., 1875.
OUR regiment enjoyed a rest until January 17th in Savannah. Soon after the encampment here in the southwest suburbs of the city, the rainy season set in, which somewhat marred the pleasure of camp life. Stores came on from the North, but it was some time before shoes and blankets could be obtained. But rations were abundant; and a host of able-bodied colored men were got together, placed on rice scows and set to fishing oysters on the beds of the coast. Bounteous rations of oysters, a wagon load to a company, followed and were delicious food.

On Christmas day, Gen. Sherman reviewed his army. Of this Mr. Goodhue writes: “It was a beautiful day, bright and sunny; and a cool, invigorating atmosphere. The usually, dull chocolate-colored waters of the river sparkled and gleamed in the bright sunshine. Old Savannah, humid and musty from its aqueous surroundings, with its dark, red brick, old fashioned houses and their moss-covered roofs; its handsome streets lines with noble live, oaks, [sic] never looked more charming. The main thoroughfare is Bull street, a broad road bisecting the city from north to south. At its head is Bay street, which crosses Bull street and runs parallel with the river bank and at an elevation of fifty feet more or less above the water. The review was on Bull street. Along the center of the street grew a row of live oaks, grand, stately, old trees, and beneath them a broad walk stretches the entire length, on which, stationed at intervals were the bands of the army, playing alternately as the troops marched by. The troops entered the city from the south, marched up the east side of Bull street, carrying arms at a ‘right shoulder’; arriving at Bay street they wheeled to the left a full half-wheel, then bringing their guns to a ‘shoulder’ marched south on the west side of Bull street passing the reviewing stand a few blocks below Bay street. The First division had repaired to some extent its individual belongings, had removed the soil and stain of the long march, had restored arms to a cleanly, polish, furbished up their accoutrements [sic] and shoes, as best could be done, looking fresh, neat and soldierly. At a quick step, with flying banners they swept by the beloved general; and contrary to all rules of military discipline gave him cheer after cheer, which he smilingly acknowledged. For several hours the stream of troops filled the broad, handsome avenue, marching one column north and one south, all moving, swaying to cadence step, in unison to the martial music that filled the air with joy and gladness to the Union Cause.”

One of the incidents of this season of rest, was the pleasant resumption of Christian usage in attending church. The men thronged in the city churches on the Sabbath. On one occasion after the clergyman had finished his prayer,
a soldier standing in the aisle spoke out, “One thing you have forgotten, sir. You have not prayed for the President of the United States. You will please do so.” The surprised clergyman looked at the man, at the assembled host of blue-coats; and he concluded that prayer for enemies was a Christian duty, and meekly complied with the request. Sherman’s men were bound to have “Old Abe” prayed for.

But the army must be up and seeking an enemy; and Sherman prepared his command for as difficult and dismal a march as ever falls to the lot of soldiers. He weeded out of his army its sick, wounded, its soft recruits, and with the choicest of his men and animals in point of physical condition, was to “mow a wide swath” through the Carolinas. In the readjustment of the command, Col. Hawley was place in command of the brigade, Col. Cogswell of the Second Massachusetts, brevetted [sic] a brigadier, was put in the command of the Third brigade, Lieut.-Col. Stevenson led the Third Wisconsin, Major Parks was serving upon Slocum’s staff as provost marshal of the corps, Captain Ralph Van Brunt was appointed on the brigade staff as inspector general and served in that capacity to the close of the war, Capt. Silas E. Gardner was at corps headquarters commanding the escort and scouts — a service in which he had proved efficient before the march to the sea. During the rest at Savannah large details of men had worked in building roads across Hutchinson’s island into South Carolina; and the great movement, after due preparations began. Major Warham Parks, provost marshal of the Twentieth corps,234 had thrown upon him the duty of caring for the colored people, who had followed the left wing of the army to Savannah. He gathered up all that were hanging around the troops and tents of the soldiers and the wagon camps and took them out to the large rice plantations in the rear, and there set them to feeding themselves from the captured rice. They did so, and lived well until communication was opened with the fleet, when they were mostly sent to Front Royal.

The First division of the Twentieth corps left Savannah on the morning of the 16th of January, 1865. A bridge of rice barges had been built across the river to Hutchinson’s island,235 thence across the north channel to the South Carolina shore, where a road had been built to connect with the turnpike to

234 ED. NOTE. It is difficult to understand why with some people mentioned in the text Bryant tells who they are and what they did (three times in only a few pages) while with others he mentions their names without any information as to who he is talking about.

235 ED. NOTE. Hutchinson Island is located in the middle of the Savannah River, immediately north of the City of Savannah, in modern times it is crossed by U. S. Highway 17, and lies between Savannah and Beaufort County, South Carolina.
Purysburg. 236 As the Third Wisconsin looked across the broad river 237 and broad rice fields the fine forests could be seen in the distance. Many Carolina newspapers had been received in Savannah in which Sherman’s command had read its own obituary. Its soldiers read that they were “low-born hinds and mercenary mud-sills from northern workshops,” “the scum and dregs,” etc., etc. “The rope was for those who were captured, a bloody grave for all who should attempt the passage of South Carolina” as Georgia had been passed, devastated and humbled. The men had good notice that they were unwelcome visitors.

As the troops marched across the bridge, the gunboats of the navy — Goldsborough’s fleet had anchored just below the bridge, the bows of some of their vessels fairly projecting over the heads of the passing column. “How are you, soldiers?” “Good-bye and God speed you” sang out the tars as they looked over the ships sides, “Good bye, Jack” shouted thousands of voices in return, “Follow us up the coast with bullets and hardtack.”

The route of the Twentieth corps took it across the river here and up the left bank to Purysburg, famous in Revolutionary history as the place of Rendezvous of Lincoln and Moultrie’s men in their siege of Savannah in 1780. Here the division encamped on the bank of the river. The entire command, it must be acknowledged, had breathed out threatenings [sic] and slaughter against the Palmetto state, and determined that she should feel the strong hand of invasion when they entered upon her soil. Always an arrogant and quarrelsome sister, she had led off in the Secession movement; and now, the army proposed to cry havoc and let slip the dogs of war, within her borders. But the elements interposed to cool the bodies if not the wrath of the invaders. The rains poured; and an unprecedented flood soon overflowed the camp knee deep. Picket duty had to be done in canoes and scows. The pontoon bridges were washed away at Savannah, with Slocum’s command astride the river. Transports came up and supplied the troops, whose position was wretchedness itself. By the 25th there was a little running off and the next morning the Third Wisconsin led the advance up the river. The enemy had obstructed the way by felling trees; and these had to be chopped off under the water, and moved out of the path. The day was raw and cold and mud knee

236 ED. NOTE. Modern Purrysburg lies a very short distance up the Savannah River from there Interstate 95 crossed it, on the eastern shore, in South Carolina.

237 ED. NOTE. It isn’t clear which river Bryant has in mind here, but there is a Broad River in Beaufort County, South Carolina, a very wide river (about 2 miles across) flowing into Port Royal Sound in an area of vast flat tidal expanses — in which vicinity the editor lived for some four years.
deep. The march continued on up the river to Sister’s Ferry, where the rest of the left wing came up to cross. The transports, under convoy of the U. S. gunboat “Pawnee” brought up loads for the wagons of ammunition and other supplies. Here letters were written and mailed for home preparatory to a final plunge into the depths of South Carolina. The men were amazed when they found that 300 wagons could be loaded from the cargo of one transport. Thence north through Robertsville, the regiment, kept at the front a great deal, was soon pushing out of the way a cloud of scattered cavalry, commanded by Gen. Wade Hampton, who had been sent from the Army of Virginia “to stay the progress of the invader” and “to punish the insolent attempt to invade the glorious State of South Carolina.” Here the Third skirmished through Robertsville, suffering a loss of three men wounded. By February 1st the several columns were well under way, on various roads leading north. Captain Haskins was detailed with a party of active men from the regiment to secure mounts for themselves and forage for the regiment. At first their mount was an amusing menagerie of mules and rack-a-bone horses; but soon they had “swapped” until they were a find body of horsemen. A detail from the Second Massachusetts joined with them and together they were good for any squadron of the enemy’s cavalry; and, as the old housewives say, they were “good providers.” The march went on, generally ten miles a day. Much of the road had to be “corduroyed;” and the strokes of axes, the splashing of logs were constant sounds at the head of a column. Mud, mud, mud! Through the slimy swamps of the Coosawhatchie, the home of the alligator and the water snake, the troops and the great rains pushed their way. For long distances the roads would be under water to the depth of from twelve to eighteen inches; and all were happy even at that, if the bottom would bear up the artillery and wagon wheels. But when the wheels cut through and churned water and soft sandy soil into a soupy “sposh” there were trials and tribulations for the live-long day. Then, it was “corduroying.” Large details of infantry would join the pioneer corps, cut down timber into portable lengths, “tote” it to the road way, building sometimes three miles in a day; and at night march back over it to find ground hard enough to camp upon. In the dense, swampy region the army lived on half army rations as forage was out of the question.

The men were cheerful, kept well closed up. The sick clung to the ranks, dreading to be sent to the ambulances. The drank swamp water the

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238 **Ed. Note.** Sister’s Ferry — about 40 miles upriver from Savannah, probably at the location where state highway 119 now crosses the Savannah River between Springfield, Georgia, and Garnett, South Carolina.

239 **Ed. Note.** 29 January 1865.
color of sherry wine, some times boiling it and filling canteens with boiled water for the day’s march, but often neglecting that precaution. When Lawtonville was reached and passed the land seemed to lift out of the waters, and then forage improved. For a short streak of country, corn, pigs, sweet potatoes and “blades” were found in considerable quantities. But as a swampy stretch was entered again as the Salkehatchie and its tributaries were reached, the bill of fare was reduced in the same ratio that the labors of the men in advancing seemed to increase. The men lived on forage, a varied fare from mush to boiled rice and sorghum to savory pig or fowl. By February 6th the regiment, in its division, had passed Beaufort bridge, and then bore north into the swamps of the Salkehatchie, just as a new rainstorm was prepared to make the marshes more impassable. The rebel cavalry had gathered on the north side to keep the Yankees in the swamp, but by swimming, wading, wallowing, the drenched and muddy veterans emerged like hippopotami from the depths of ooze and brushed away the enemy. Of the experiences and spirit of the men under such disagreeable duty, Major George Ward Nichols, who served on Gen. Sherman’s staff, thus records in his diary:

“A wagon painfully toiling along the road suddenly careens, or is submerged in a quicksand; every effort of the mules or horses to ‘pull out’ only buries the unfortunate vehicle deeper in the mire, and very soon the animals have dug for themselves a pit, out of which many are never extricated alive. The driver sees at once that it is useless to whip or swear, so he dismounts. Then the train guard, who have been resting on their muskets watching the proceedings, quietly stack their weapons and at once plunging into the mud a dozen of them are at work with shoulders at the wheels and body of the wagon, and finally they lift it out of the hole upon firmer ground. One or two wagons ‘stuck’ in this way show at once that the road must be corduroyed. Then, with many a jest and unmeasured flow of good humor, the men wade into the neighboring swamp, cut down and split the trees and soon bridge over these impassable places.

“A few rods further on the head of the column arrives at a creek, which in ordinary seasons is ten feet wide, and has a four inches of water [sic] running over a hard sandy bottom. Now the water is four or six feet deep, and spreads out to a width of sixty feet encroaching upon the softer earth. A bridge must be built. Into the water dash the men without a moment’s hesitation for they know the work must be done at once. Waist deep, throat deep, not a dry spot about them.

‘Thus these good, brave soldiers endure every hardship shrink at no exposure of life or limb; not only without grumbling, but with a good humor and merriment which no hardship dampens and no risk discourages. Old officers of the army, who have served in Florida and Mexico, continually remark this
peculiar feature of Sherman’s army. It does not belong to any particular corps or regiment, but all the soldiers share it alike, and at all times.” (Story of the Great March, p. 230.)

By the 7th of February, Slocum with his corps had risen out of the muck of the Salkehatchie and struck the Charleston and Augusta railroad at Grahamsville. Here the First brigade had a brisk skirmish with Hampton’s cavalry, who seemed to amount to a little more in opposition than a legion of musquitoes, [sic] the fiery editorials to the contrary notwithstanding. Sherman then made feint on Augusta. The Twentieth corps turned westward, destroyed many miles of railroad, and caused the enemy to concentrate at the place last named. At Graham’s station, Col. Hawley and Gen. Slocum had a discussion on the best, most rapid method of destroying track. It ended in a bet of a moderate libation. Hawley called on the Third who was in bivouac near by, distributed the men along the track, about a man to a tie. The, “Ready-hee-oh-he!” the ties were on end in an instant for many rods at a turn. The Colonel won the bet; and the men had the compliments of Gen. Slocum in a fine ration of “commissary,” to wash down their mush and sorghum.

On the 10th, the regiment was encamped near the site of the military post “Ninety-six” from which Gen. Greene commenced his retreat through the Carolinas in the Revolutionary war. His march northeastward lay a little farther west than that pursued by the left wing of Sherman’s army. At Blackville the Twentieth corps turned north in two columns, to penetrate the swamps and cross the South and North forks of the Edisto. Here constant rain added to the general nastiness, but by the 12th the passage of the North Edisto was forced after a sharp skirmish. The next day the regiment was on the skirmish line all day, the excitement of which was fatiguing enough. On the 14th, the troops marched in a rain so cold that the trees were covered with sleet; on the 15th, marched till midnight and encamped near Lexington, resumed march in the morning bearing northeast towards Columbia. Progress was delayed by the rebels burning a long bridge over a swamp. Here the Fourteenth corps had passed so near that the forage had disappeared, and dinnerless and supperless the men sank down to rest. Approaching Columbia, the Twentieth corps bore to the left some four miles up to the Saluda river and the next day crossed over to the Broad river some 14 miles above Columbia. The river was wide, banks good, and thirty-two


241 In the October, 1887, number of the Century Gen. Slocum gives instructions in the art of destroying railroads, and there is a representation of the regiment in the act of upsetting the track. [EDITOR’S NOTE: The complete text to Slocum’s verbose instructions may be found at the end of this chapter, supplied by the editor.]
boats were used to span the stream. Now, out of swamps in high, hilly country with rich plantations all about, marching and forage were good.

On the 22d of February the First division was up in the region of the “High Hills of Santee,” where, Marion’s cavalry in Revolutionary days operated against Tarleton’s British Horse. Orders were here given to issue no more rations of coffee; and corn was parched and corn coffee introduced as a substitute. At a cross-roads on the march the Third Wisconsin fell out of column and formed line of battle till all the wagon trains had passed by. While here Gen. Sherman passed with his staff; and he was quite chatty with the men as he rode along; and it was noticed that a map stuck out of his pocket. He pitched his camp close by the regiment for the night. He was very simple in his habits. His tent flaps were of the ordinary size giving merely shelter from rain. His staff and orderlies did not number to exceed twenty-five persons. No banners, or colors to indicate headquarters were visible; but bayonet or saber barred any attempt to approach unless on business.

After the supper hour he could be seen walking back and forth before his tent smoking his cigar and talking in a brusque, emphatic way; but he never seemed to enjoy his cigar. He puffed it daintily, taking a whiff, blowing it quickly from his mouth and then swinging his hand far out as if to hold the cigar at a distance. He was shrewd in many ways, asking his soldiers questions in an innocent way, yet with a purpose in them. Overtaking a man carrying a heavy load, he asked: “Well, my man where did you get that meat; shoot it?” “Yes sir,” replied the soldier. “Do the men have to shoot to get their fresh meat?” “Yes sir.” Next day twenty rounds more of ammunition were issued to the men, thus lightening the loads of all the ammunition wagons; this issue to be used in filling the boxes of those who had reduced their stock below regulation quantity to be carried on the person.

Some soldiers were straggling on the march. Sherman came along followed by an orderly. Overtaking the stragglers he urbanely inquired if they could tell him if a certain division had passed, knowing well that the division he had mentioned was behind him. The soldiers didn’t know if it had or not; “Well,” said Sherman, “you men must be stragglers then from the division that has passed over the road,” and he walked them ahead of him, until he could turn them over to the provost guard. The men had removed their badges to prevent identification, but Uncle Billy was “a hard man to fool.”

As the column approached Winnsboro, Gen. Geary’s division had the advance. He found that the Fourteenth corps, which was marching farther to the left on a parallel road, had suffered its bummers to get ahead and sack the town. He at once surrounded it with a strong skirmish line and closed in, capturing the Fourteenth corps foragers and relieving them of their booty, “because they had no business to forage ahead of their corps and deplete a region that naturally belonged to his command.” The amenities were not
always observed by these foragers, and they sometimes robbed other parties, when that seemed the shortest way to rations in time for the supper of the command. Winnsboro was found occupied by many people who had fled to that place for safety thinking it out of the path of the army. The South Carolinians generally fled as the army approached. He expected small mercy from the invader; and it was noticed that the men, often the whole family had discovered much more frequently than was the case in Georgia. At Winnsboro, the Twentieth corps saved the town from a conflagration set by the foragers of the Fourteenth corps, presumably. Large numbers of refugees had sought seclusion here thinking the place too far in the interior for Sherman's army to pass.

Passing through Winnsboro, and bearing northeastward, the Twentieth and Fourteenth corps and Kilpatrick's cavalry were the left and westward wing of the swarm of Yankee locusts that passed through the original hot-bed of secession. The foragers were now as busy as bees about a honey-pot. The camps used to roar when they came in. Sometimes they appeared with their wardrobe replenished by odd-looking raiment, old continental uniforms worn by militia companies of peaceful times and old chapeaus or cocked hats. They had pillow-cases and bed-ticks stuffed with poultry; and every grotesque and incongruous spectacle afforded amusement. It must be said, however, that in the Twentieth corps, at least, a forager did not get a second detail for that day, when he exhibited any evidence of pillage, other than of food for the army. In this region many foragers were captured and murdered, while prisoners, in cold blood. On several occasions they were found with throats cut from ear to ear, and the legend, “Death to foragers” pinned upon their clothes. In one place twenty-one corpses were found thus mutilated. But the marching columns were never in a more complete uniform — of mud. Without soap, day in and day out, without change or wash they straggled on. Lucky was the soldier, who found time by some early halt to boil out his clothes, so that he might be the only inhabitant of his shirt. The company inspection, on the 27th, showed the Third Wisconsin — and it was a tidy regiment comparatively — to be in a ragged state. Some were nearly barefoot; some had one leg to their trowsers; some had tied patches on with strings; and some, with an invention born of old mother necessity, had stuck patches on with pitch; while some had only fragments of shirts. The service had been hard on clothing; for with marching in mud, standing about fires, carrying logs,
lifting wagons out of quagmires, day after day, garments fell away piece-meal.

There was much desolation left in the track of the army. The inhabitants in many instances had fled; and so it was that their property was taken and their homes destroyed. They resorted much to hiding their treasures and their food; but the foragers and bummars became expert in discovering the hidden valuables and probed with their ramrods wherever they saw signs that earth had been disturbed. The inhabitants looked on in mute helplessness, while their earthly possessions, all save their lands, were swept away. It was a severe remedy; and it was applied more by the lawlessness of the bummimg element than by the better men of the army. No brave, generous soldier, of the sort in which true heroes in war are found, could rejoice in desolating homes or burning the roof over helpless women and children. That mush of this was done on the great march, and that standing chimneys were left as monuments to indicate the path of the army is too true. The rebel cavalry that hovered about, just enough to annoy and not enough to hinder, provoked some devastation that otherwise would not have happened. And it is well proved that Wheeler’s bummars.” The Southern newspapers complained bitterly of outrages, plunder and robbery committed by Wheeler’s men, both in Georgia and South Carolina. They stole horses, broke into houses, shot down beef cattle, taking a small part and leaving the rest for buzzards. They robbed citizens and even tried to rob ladies of the horses on which they were riding. They robbed the stores of Columbia, South Carolina; long before a Union soldier had entered the town. They entered houses and took the carpets, blankets and furniture — whatever they wanted or could use. It is unpleasant to record these incidents showing the demoralization and cruelty of war. But such disorder and desolation inevitably follow a civil war; and the destruction, that left its path where the armies moved in the great rebellion, is but an added historic illustration of the dreadful wickedness and guilt of those who will plunge a community into needless, causeless civil strife.

On the 23rd of February, the brigade, in its march, passed army headquarters; and the brigade band played, colors were unfurled and a marching salute given to the general. A pontoon bridge of thirty-two boats had been laid in the night across the broad Wateree river; and at 7 A. M. the brigade crossed, the bridge swaying under the treat of the men, who had to step firmly and wide apart. The banks were steep and the men held the artillery back with long drag-ropes in descending, and pulled them up in ascending. Once on the high banks of the eastern side, a dark stream of infantry could be seen pouring down the opposite bank and across the river, while the crests and slopes were dotted and spotted thickly with the busy, moving masses of infantry, artillery, horsemen, pack-mules, wagons, ambulances, all concentrating and awaiting their turn to cross. The crossing
was a tedious labor owing to the steepness and height of the banks.

Resumed march the 24th in the rain. The gloom was somewhat lightened by accounts given in a rebel newspaper that some one got hold of, that gave a dispatch from Lee, “The enemy has captured and holds two lines of our works at Petersburg.” The foraging was now good; and men and mules both cheerful.

On the 27th, the brigade, in its order, crossed Hanging Rock Creek, near an old battle ground of the Revolution. Hanging Rock is historic ground. Here a battle was fought between Col. Sumpter and some British troops. August 1, 1780; and in December following, Gen. Morgan captured a force of loyalists near the same place at Rugely’s mills.

At night, while marching through the pine forests, the blaze of pine knot fires, burning by the thousands, lit up the scene. At day-break the expiring brands were kicked together, fresh fuel added; blue coats or coats once blue were seen in all directions; bugle answered bugle in the various camps; the roll of drums near and far sounded the reveille, as the army rose to its feet.

It was almost a daily adventure on the march for some sudden halt to occur. Shots would be heard ahead; foragers would come scampering in; a staff officer would come galloping back splattering mud in myriad faces; a battery would gallop forward. “Third Wisconsin,” “Second Massachusetts,” or some other regiment of the brigade, “forward as skirmishers.” Then the voice of Stevenson bringing his command into compact order, and away to the front. Soon the banging of artillery, the snapping of skirmish fire; and as the column swept on the rebel cavalry could be seen cantering away in the distance.

The corps headed for Cheraw, on the Great Pedee river, where the Confederacy had rebuilt Harper’s Ferry, setting up the machinery taken from that arsenal on the Potomac. At Chesterfield the column turned east toward Cheraw, hearing much cannonade ahead and thinking a battle was on. Crossing Thompson’s Creek a skirmish was had with the enemy.

While nearing Cheraw a tremendous explosion was heard. Some

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244 The scouts who had to find the roads were in constant peril. Captain Gardner’s company of scouts had many a brush with the cavalry and many a thrilling adventure. Near Hanging Rock, on a march from Winnsboro to Cheraw, Capt. Gardner was out hunting for a good road for the corps to move upon, when he fell in with Gen. Butler’s cavalry so suddenly and the cavalry in such large force that part of his men were captured, and others escaped by crawling into a copse of brush. The captain got away in this manner; but in straying back to camp in the rain and darkness he came upon a burning house, in the yard of which were several of his men lying dead. They had been surprised, captured and shot as bummers. He had many hair-breadth escapes in this march.

245 “March 3. This morning Jackson’s division of the 20th corps gained the bridge which crossing Thompson’s Creek opens the road direct to Cheraw. A bridge above was taken from the rebels by Hawley’s brigade, of the same division. When I say taken I mean what was left of it.” The bridge was on fire when taken. — (Nichol’s Story of the Great March.)
careless, mischief-loving soldier had touched off a vast pile of powder, knocking the town nearly crazy. Immense stores were found here, and many valuable private treasures sent up from Charleston for safety.

General Hardee now closed in front, had become so threatening that Sherman deemed it best to draw his columns nearer together. The 20th corps was sent across the Great Pedee, at Cheraw, and all the columns converged on Fayetteville, North Carolina.

The route taken by the corps passed through a pitch pine and turpentine region. But little else was produced, and foragers went far and came in light. The black pines along the road had been scarped [sic] of their bark by pitch gatherers, to cause pitch to run, and were coated with pitch about the tree. The troops in passing, set these trees on fire by hundreds and thousands along the route. The men were obliged to march, oftentimes where the heat of these burning trees was so intense as to scorch their faces; and the manes and tails of the horses were singed. The air became so dense with smoke that it shut out the sun, so pungent that it stung the tongue and filled the eyes with tears. The air was thick with an oily soot, griming faces and hands to a jet black, very difficult to wash off, and impossible to do so without soap. At one place a great turpentine distillery was set on fire by the men to see it burn. It was stored with crude turpentine in barrels, the heads of which were knocked in. By the side of the distillery was a huge pile of resin. The match was applied and in a moment a flame roaring like a cataract was leaping high in air. The turpentine ran down the hillside into an adjoining pond, covering its surface. The fire followed the stream of liquid that flowed from the building, and soon spread over the turpentine floating on the pond. Emitting a soft, vaporous steam and beautiful blue, almost green-colored flames. “Fo’ God, day’s sot de pond afire,” exclaimed the wondering colored men.

The grandeur of the scene was increased by the dark night, in which the conflagration “burnt a hole.” About the camps stood the dark, tall pines in bold relief of yellow green, against the inky blackness of the sky. It was a picture that the powerful artist would delight to behold.

The First division marched through Gum Swamp, a marsh hole like the rest, in which corduroy roads had to be laid, and after several days of this kind of hard work, Hawley’s brigade marched ahead of the division and set to building a bridge 300 feet long over a marsh-bordered tributary of the Little Pedee. At the bridge was an immense pile of resin, and the men used it for fuel. The bridge was built in the same manner that Caesar built bridges in Gaul. They were convex when built but as the trains passed over the posts on which they rested gradually settled in the soft earth, and they were concave and under water when the last wagons passed over. When the bridge was done torrents of rain fell; and the brigade marched in pitchy darkness till 10 P. M., and then bivouacked, every one drenched to the skin;
and the men were in the spirit of the “army in Flanders” — the swore terribly. On the 9th of March, the troops crossed Juniper Creek on the burning bridge of which a spirited picture is given in the October, 1887, number of the Century magazine, illustrating an article by Gen. H. W. Slocum. [page 934 — MWH]

March 10th, the march was resumed in a steady downpour of rain, over a road of quicksand in which the animals sank almost before they suspected the treacherous footing. The army was now as black as negroes, and all efforts to clean off were abandoned. The legion of mud-waders rejoiced at night, because they saw once more a clear sky. The First division had the lead in the next day’s march, and at about 2 P. M. struck a plank road leading to Fayetteville, and about 50 feet wide. Marching on it was a pleasure. At evening the Third Wisconsin found itself in camp about two miles from Fayetteville, where communication was opened with the outer world, and after their forty days’ of isolation, hardship and exposure to try a constitution of iron.

A gunboat came up the Cape Fear river bringing the mail; and once more the soldiers felt the exhilarating — or as the old woman said on the summits of Massanuttons — the “liftin’ effects of coffee, for they had been for many days without it. They had marched rather floundered more than 400 miles in forty marching days over roads that had much of the way been corduroyed, through swamps of the most dismal gloom, and in forests and rain, bridging great rivers as they must pass them. They had lived on a varied diet ranging from nothing to fatness. They were as lean and spare as Arabs, but for the most part in excellent health; and, as Sherman always declared, “the best soldiers on the planet.”
CHAPTER XXXIV.\textsuperscript{246}
AVERASBORO.

The Third Wisconsin was on the move northeastward up the east bank of Cape Fear river on the 15\textsuperscript{th} [ED. NOTE. 15 March 1865]. After an eleven-mile march, partly on an old plank road, the regiment encamped in the grave yard of Bluff church. At 7:30 P. M., just as the supper had been disposed of and the men were preparing their places for bivouac between the grave mounds, or lying on the broad, flat stones, on which were chiseled the names and virtues of the long-since departed, an orderly dashed in. A minute later the order “Fall in,” caused an uprising in that cemetery. “Hawley’s brigade must go to the support of Kilpatrick who is hard pressed.” In less than two minutes the brigade was on the road. The night was the blackness of darkness, and the road, a by-road evidently, was soon bottomless. There were no torches, and, as the negroes would say, “de rain done po’ down.” Floundering on, mud knee deep, with occasional improvement by wading waist-deep in mud and water, the brigade got over five miles. Men had their shoes sucked off by that mud embracing the feed so fondly. Some stumbled and lost their guns and were thankful that they were not trampled under by the on-moving column and buried alive “for good and all.” At about midnight the brigade came up to the place where the cavalry were in line. Kilpatrick had run into more rebels than he could handle. He expert fighters had dismounted, thrown up barricades of rails, poles, logs, etc., and were waiting for the infantry.

Hardee, the Confederate general, in retreating from Fayetteville had halted on a narrow neck of land between Cape Fear river and South or Black river, a little eastward, and had been ordered by Johnston to retard Sherman’s column there as long as possible while Johnston was concentrating his forces to confront our wings and prevent the junction with Grant. Johnston was collecting Hardee’s troops from South Carolina, part of Hood’s relics of the Nashville battle, and Hoke’s division from Lee’s army, together with divers small commands picked up here and there, intending to watch his chance, attack one of Sherman’s corps or wings and cripple him by a bold, quick blow. Against this force put out by Hardee in this narrow neck, Kilpatrick had suddenly been brought up standing. The enemy had thrown up some works on a little rise of ground which must be approached by wading a deep creek and crossing an open swamp. Reaching this place, Hawley placed his brigade behind the barricades; and the cavalry moved further to the right. At 3 A. M., Hawley roused his sleepers and ordered an advance. Encased in an

\textsuperscript{246} ED. NOTE. There is no chapter numbered XXXIII.
armor of mud, and brigade started anew the old occupation of skirmishing. The line was at once advanced and the enemy fell back about a mile. Sherman came up and with Slocum and Kilpatrick looked over the ground. Sherman said to Kilpatrick, says to a by-stander, “Kilpatrick, I want you to move your cavalry around to the left and develop the enemy’s line.” “How do you propose that I shall do it?” Asked Kilpatrick. Sherman replied in his crisp way, “Move your men to the left and charge the enemy. Develop their line — make a d——d big time. You know how. You know how.” Kilpatrick did so; and the other brigades of William’s division soon came up, and later the entire corps. Hawley’s brigade was here relieved and put farther to the right, and formed in line of battle on the right of the Third division. A general advance was ordered. The Third brigade of William’s division struck the enemy in flank and soon routed him. Hawley’s brigade was then ordered forward through a deep swamp covered with undergrowth and briers. The enemy were crowded back about three miles during the day, and at 5 o’clock were in a line of works across the road to Averasboro and along south of the Smithfield road which here ran nearly east and west. In the fighting of the day Hawley’s brigade had captured many prisoners. The Third regiment, with other regiments of the brigade, here closed up to their main line, getting within 100 yards of it, and there lay down under a slight rise of ground of which mention had been made. Geo. B. Bennet,247 of Company I, incautiously raised his leg so as to expose it, and in an instant it was knocked off by a cannon ball. The slightest exposure of body brought on a volley. Along this line the musketry fire often rose nearly to the dignity of a battle. In this fight the Union loss, all in the Twentieth corps, was twelve officers and fifteen men killed, and 477 officers and men wounded. The Second Massachusetts lost the gallant Captain Grafton,248 one of its highly cultured officers, who, several times wounded in previous battles, fell at the very close of the rebellion, nobly doing his duty. It was the second wound he received that day, which ended his life.

The loss of the Third Wisconsin in this engagement was five men killed or died of wounds and twenty-fours wounded.[see list at end of chapter] The other regiments of the brigade suffered in like proportion.

Colonel Hawley, in his report of the operations from Savannah to Goldsboro, thus speaks of the affair at Averasboro, “March 15, marched

247 ED. NOTE. George B. Bennett of Shullsburg enlisted on 19 Apr 1861. His remarks in the rolls read: Veteran, Corporal, Sergeant, prisoner 25 May 1862; wounded 15 May 1864 and 16 March 1865; discharged 12 June 1865 — wounds.

248 ED. NOTE. James Ingersoll Grafton, born Boston, MA (16 Jun 1841); son of Maj. Joseph Grafton & Maria Gurley; Harvard (dng) 2ndLt (1 Nov 1861); 1st Lt (21 Jul 1862); Capt (9 Nov 62); wounded in the head at Cedar Mountain (9 Aug 62); wounded above the knee and ankle bone of right leg at Chancellorsville (1863); killed at Averasboro, NC (16 Mar 1865).
eleven miles northeast to Bluff Church, and encamped. At 7:30 P. M. received orders to report with my command to Brevet Maj. Gen. Kilpatrick, five miles in advance, moved forward and reported to him, and was assigned position in center of his cavalry command, with my left resting on the main road and about three-fourths of a mile from the enemy’s works. March 16, under the direction of Brevet Maj. Gen. Kilpatrick, and in conjunction with his cavalry, I moved forward and engaged the enemy at day light, throwing forward a strong skirmish line. The enemy being found strongly entrenched and with artillery, I deemed it prudent to await arrival of more troops before pressing them too hard. The advance brigade of Gen. Ward’s division came up at 9 o’clock A. M., and under the direction of the major general commanding the left wing, I was relieved by the Third brigade of that division, and on the arrival of the other two brigades of this division, took a position on the right of the Third division with brig. Gen. Robinson on my right. In this position an irregular fight was kept up during the entire day, steadily driving the enemy from his chosen position until night set in and closed the contest.”

The march up to this time had been toward Raleigh. But Sherman, satisfied that all the odds and ends of Confederate armies outside of Richmond were gathering in his front, and expecting to fight a great battle with them somewhere, now turned his columns eastward toward Goldsboro. His object was to have Slocum hold Johnston’s army as long as he could facing west, while the right wing was brought up from the east to connect with Schofield now approaching Goldsboro, and to strike Johnston in rear. He rode with Slocum, the 18th, on the march to join Howard on the right, thinking that the enemy had retired out of the way. Sherman was now led to believe that Johnston had retreated on Smithfield; and he gave orders for the two columns to move on Goldsboro — Gen. Howard on the new Goldsboro road, by Falling Creek Church, further to the right so as to give the direct road to Slocum. Schofield — in whose corps Gen. Ruger was commanding a division — was coming from Newbern, N. C., and Terry from Wilmington to meet him. Together their forces amounted to about 35,000 men.

On the 17th, the Third Wisconsin was up at 3 A. M., and soon had its meagre breakfast out of the way. When it was found that the enemy had gone, the regiments advanced into their works and there waited some hours for the Fourteenth corps to move ahead. Five miles of swamp marsh and of wading and wallowing in the quagmires and mud brought the brigade to the bank of South river, which was forded next morning at 5 A. M., giving an opportunity to rinse off old accumulations of mud and make room for the new. Then a swamp had to be waded and nine more streams forded, and the regiment halted and went to building corduroy. The poor wounded of Averasboro were suffering terribly as they jolted along over the corduroy, every jolt adding to their tortures and eliciting groans; for they were carried in
the springless army wagons, no ambulances being available on that route.

Among the captures in this affair were 200 men of a brigade of South Carolina heavy artillery, whose commander, Col. Rhett, had been captured the day before. His command had been the garrison of Fort Sumter for some time after its reduction by Beauregard. When Charleston was evacuated, this artillery brigade took the field as infantry; and at Averasboro, it was nearly destroyed. The chief weight of the charge on the enemy’s right, made by Case’s brigade of cavalry, sent there by Sherman’s suggestion, fell upon these Carolinians. They lost over a hundred left dead on the field. Three field guns which they defended were captured, and the survivors of these men who garrisoned Sumter, fled in confusion and fear. So, in the little battle of Averasboro, Sumter was in a measure avenged.

At 5 o’clock the Fourteenth corps was up and dispositions were made to ride over General Hardee rough-shod in the morning; but he decamped in the night. The enemy left 108 unburied dead on the field and 68 severely wounded for our surgeons to care for. Their wounds were carefully dressed; medicines were left with them, a supply of food, and a rebel officer and several men, all prisoners, were placed in charge of their unfortunate comrades.

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**KILLED OR DIED OF WOUNDS AT AVERASBORO, MARCH 16TH, 1865.**


In addition to these losses, James Thomas had received a severe wound in the leg on January 27th, and Nicholas Holthausen was wounded in the arm January 29th. Corporal William H. Cook, Company D, was captured while serving in the Quartermaster’s department, February 23rd, and John Spies and Jacob M. Case, on like service, were captured March 9th.
CHAPTER XXXV.
BENTONVILLE.

The Third Wisconsin was up at dawn next morning with the other regiments of the brigade at work in mud and swamp, building “corduroy” for the passage of the trains and artillery over the quagmires in which the Cape Fear river region abounds. Old soldiers of that campaign remember this region as one of the most difficult to traverse, and these days as among the most wearisome of their service. The incessant rains, the deep mud had made the country almost impassable; and to corduroy the roads was the only means by which progress could be made. The Fourteenth corps had gone on ahead; and a great deal of cannonade was heard at the front. General Johnston had got together some 14,000 men, as he numbers them, at Bentonville, and had planned to strike the head of one of Sherman’s columns hoping to smash it before succor could be got across from the right wing, or even the whole of Slocum’s column be brought up.

General Carlin’s division of Davis’ (14th) corps was leading the advance, on the 19th, and crowding back Dibrell’s cavalry. As the division came to a place in the road leading to Goldsboro, about two miles south of Bentonville, a little village south of the Goldsboro road and on Mill Creek, they found the enemy in force with breastworks across the road. Hoke’s division (Confederate) had placed them there and occupied them. On his right Steward, with his own and some of the troops of Lee’s corps of Hood’s army, were drawn up and entrenched. Further to the right the Confederates had placed two divisions of Cheatham’s corps; and in the rear of these in reserve was the division of Taliaferro, our old adversary at Cedar Mountain. Here the Confederates awaited the coming of Slocum’s column. As Davis’ corps approached, Gen. H. C. Hobart’s brigade was deployed and advanced in line of battle; and in the road was moving a four-gun battery. Looking across an open field on the left, Davis saw that there were troops in line but could not judge as to their number; and he ordered Buell’s brigade of Carlin’s division to make a detour to the left around the open field and take the enemy in the flank. Another of Carlin’s brigades was deployed on Hobart’s right. Carlin then advanced with these two brigades; but they were met with a fire that had another sound than that of carbines. Slocum then came upon the ground and ordered Morgan’s division (14th corps) to deploy forward on the right. This movement was executed; and the brigades of Mitchell and Vandever were thrown forward and Fearing’s brigade was put in second line, on the right and south of the road on which our troops were advancing. The line was in the woods and the right rested on a swamp. The Third brigade of Miles’ division was deployed on Hobart’s right. It was not about two o’clock; and Slocum
sent a staff officer to hasten up the divisions of Williams’ corps. Buell’s brigade was pushing slowly to the left, through marsh and thicket, when a crash of muskets on its left told that itself was taken in the flank. Taliaferro’s division had beaten it in the flanking game by extending and striking it on its left flank. Bates’ rebel division attacked it in front at the same moment. Buell was soon routed and sent back in confusion. Stewart’s rebel division then swung around upon Davis’ left and struck hard at Hobart, who dealt a terrific fire to the advancing enemy. His regiments slowly retreated forming new lines as they fell back till their left was swung back about a mile. The enemy then made a rush and captured the battery. Miles, on Hobart’s right, was now pushed back in the same alignment with Hobart. General Davis rode to the right, had Fearing’s brigade, which was in the second line, move to the left of Mitchell’s brigade changing his front so as to be parallel with the road, and then to charge headlong upon the enemy, who were chasing Carlin southeast toward Averasboro. Fearing was a descendant of Gen. Israel Putnam of revolutionary fame. He made a gallant charge, crushed into the Confederate center, swept all before him at the point of the bayonet, and, though wounded, kept on with his men and drove the rebel center upon its right into the swamp.

At the sound of the fighting, Gen. Williams hurried his corps forward. Robinson was first to arrive with the Third brigade of the First division. He was formed across the road at or near the Morris house, connecting with Fearing’s left and Carlin’s right. Hawley’s brigade came upon the field at 2:30 P. M., and was sent to the left, north of the road, will out to prevent flank attack, and in rear of Carlin’s division, which had been rallied. Here the regiment fell to work building a breastwork with a ravine in front. The artillery of the Twentieth corps was planted in rear of this place on higher ground. While this work was busying the regiment, the enemy made a fierce assault, and Carlin’s division was crowded back again. Col. Hawley sent the Thirteenth New Jersey across the ravine to the right, where it did most excellent work, eliciting warm praise from Col. Hawley. When this rush happened, the brigade was led at double-quick some distance to the rear of its former position to support three batteries that opened upon the advancing enemy with good range. General Williams ordered the guns to be double-shotted. The gunners came to the regiments and begged for bullets which they wrapped in rags and put into their guns on top of the canister. The First brigade came in at double-quick and formed on the right of Hawley, between it and the Third brigade, Coggswell came up at about four o’clock and formed on the right of Hawley, between him and Robinson’s brigade. Hawley was then sent back to the left to hold his position on the flank. The line by this time was well formed. There had been some little confusion in getting into position. But when the brigadiers knew where they were wanted, all was cool and orderly. The rebels made repeated assaults on the line thus formed, and
were each time repulsed. Hoke butted hard against Morgan on the right, and
was hurled back. Morgan returned the charge, and there captured the colors
of the Fortieth North Carolina — the same that “got away” from the little fort
at Harrison’s Plantation. Bate on the enemy’s right attacked again and again;
but each time was sent reeling backward. The Confederates pressed hard
upon Coggswell, but he stood his ground stubbornly in the old Second
Massachusetts way. An interval between him and Morgan was too wide and
the enemy penetrated it. Mitchell and Vandever at once charged front to rear
and routed these intruders. Time and again the enemy hurled his forces
against this line.

Robinson’s brigade, when it first came upon the field, had been thrown
forward nearly upon the line first held by Hobart in his advance, and here it
fought for a considerable time unsupported. Here the Thirty-first Wisconsin
behaved gallantly, slowly retiring under great pressure, until it came into the
general line, where it held its own, repulsing all assaults on its front.

Among the severely wounded of the Thirty-first Wisconsin in this
engagement was Mr. A. C. Parkinson, now a prominent, well-known citizen
of Wisconsin, who has since been adjutant general of the state, and at the
present writing is president of the State Agricultural Society.

Colonel Hawley thus reports: “I moved my brigade as rapidly as possible
up to that point, where I found two divisions of the Fourteenth corps engaged
with the enemy. I was placed in position by the major general commanding
the left wing directly in rear of those troops, my right resting in the main road.
In a few moments information was received that the enemy were moving upon
our left flank and by direction of Brevet Major General Williams I moved my
brigade about one-fourth of a mile to the left forming a line and entrenching
to protect our left flank. The left of the Fourteenth corps giving away and
coming back in some confusion over the field, I changed front forming a line
across the open field to oppose the enemy’s advance, but finding the enemy
moving upon the left again, I immediately moved back into my works, where
I remained until march 22nd.”

The Third Wisconsin suffered no loss in this engagement, as the full
force of the attack did not strike its front. At 7 P. M. it moved forward near the
position which Carlin’s division had occupied; and here it remained for the
night.

The credit of resisting these desperate assaults of this army, combined
of the forces of Hoke, Hardee, Cheatham, led by such able soldiers as those
named — Bate, McLaws, Taliaferro, Stephen D. Lee, and containing also
veterans of Cleburne’s division, and from the army of northern Virginia, —

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249 ED. NOTE. Alfred C. Parkinson, of Fayette, Wisconsin, enlisted 20 Aug 1862. He was
a Corporal, and was wounded at Bentonville, and discharged 22 May 1865 because of wounds.
belongs to Gen. Slocum and to his fine corps commanders, Davis and Williams, and their corps. As was said in the army, it was “Slocum’s fight”; and to him Sherman gave the laurels. It was a desperate contest; and at one time there was danger, so furious was the assault, before the troops could be got up and in line, and owing to temporary confusion in getting the troops into good position as they came up. The Confederate attack was made by troops of every command known to be in the South — Hokes’ Cheatham’s, Stephen D. Lee’s, Wade Hampton’s, Wheeler’s, Butler’s, Hardee’s — and prisoners were taken from all of them. They were led by Gen. Johnston, a skillful and brave commander. Their attacks were furious, and for a time things looked worse than the men in the ranks realized; but as soon as the Union line was straightened out and the troops saw what was wanted of them, matters at once brightened. “Slocum’s battle” was an added laurel to him and more renown to the splendid record of the Twentieth and Fourteenth corps.

Slocum sent a dispatch to Gen. Sherman at 8 P. M. after the fighting was over, telling him of the battle of the day. Sherman called out to Gen. Logan who was near, “John Logan, John Logan, Slocum has run up against Jo. Johnston. Send Hazen to him at once.” Hazen’s division was nearest to Slocum, and was started out so promptly as to reach there at dawn; but they found the left wing all up and in good shape; and the enemy in his entrenchments with no stomach for further offensive battle. Logan, with his Fifteenth Corps, at once started for the field and came up on the right, at noon; and Sherman came with him. There was skirmishing all next day, and some heavy cannonade on the right; but it was not Sherman’s desire to bring on a general battle, until he had first established his communications with Goldsboro. There he expected to meet Schofield, on the way up from Newbern and Terry from Wilmington, with 35,000 more men; and then he should seek “Jo. Johnston” wherever found, fight a great battle and end the war.

Sherman remained here until Johnston retreated. He admits in his “Memoirs” that he was in error in not overwhelming and crushing Johnston then and there on the 21st, but it is a blessing that he so erred. What need of fighting any more battles, when the Confederacy was in the throes of its dying agony; what need that more precious lives be lost? Those splendid veterans, who had fought through the war, made that long march with such courage and fortitude, who had waded and corduroyed the Carolinas with such contempt for toil, danger, discomfort, should not be called to death or life-long maiming to fight a needless battle, just as the dawn-light of peace was ending the long, dark night of war.

It was providential that Sherman erred.

On the 21st, communication was opened with Schofield across the Neusse river. Supplies were reached; and the poor, barefooted fellows in the
Third Wisconsin shouted for joy. Shoes were soon to be issued. The next
day the regiment remained in line; and heard heavy firing far to the right. But
it was nearly the last sound of hostile cannon those veterans were ever to
hear. What would have been their satisfaction had they known then and
there, that it was the last time they would ever confront in full battle line an
armed enemy? That night Johnston retreated; and the Twentieth corps
resumed its march, crossing the Neuse and proceeding along the river’s bank.
In passing the camps of the Twenty-fourth corps were stationed, the Third
Wisconsin was moving past a negro regiment. The sable soldiers stood by
the road side, and the wags in the Third, who were always chaffing on the
march, thought to have some fun in joking the colored troops about their color.
The witty colored men stoutly asserted, “We uns is whiter dan you uns, fer a
fac.” Our boys had to acknowledge the dark impeachment. What with
marching in black mus, washing in swamp water or not at all, without soap for
two months, their fuel pitch-pine knots, their journey through smoking forests
and clouds of greasy soot, their clothes in rags, and dirt, and soot grimed into
skin and sealed there with pitch, they were in no condition to discuss a point
of color with a negro regiment; and they owned up that the black soldiers had
the best of the joke in fact and in wit.

With light steps and lighter hearts the Twentieth corps reached
Goldsboro next day and marched in review before Sherman, Schofield and
others, and went into camp two miles north of town.
Far from days of feasting were the first three days at Goldsboro. The men were not allowed to forage, and there was some hitch in the commissary department. A detail from the command had to march to Kinston, thirty miles and back, to guard a supply train; and not until the 27th was a full ration issued. What epicures then! To sit down and eat from a cracker box a nice, clean “hardtack,” with no pitch or swamp much on it; to have coffee with brown sugar sweetening, and some bacon or delicious side-pork as salty as the sea! What banquets these corduroy-builders had three times a day on full rations! A regular camp was laid out, the routine of camp life resumed, and drills were daily had for the benefit of the later recruits. It was one of those expectant periods, when, on the eve of great events, troops wait with intense excitement. Rumors came thick and fast. On the 6th of April came news of the evacuation of Richmond. Then it was thought Lee would escape and join Johnston. There was great rejoicing, and the cheering in all the camps was continuous.

The army was here reorganized. The Fourteenth and Twentieth corps, with Gen. Slocum in command, was designated “The Army of Georgia.” Gen. Mower was placed in command of the Twentieth corps, and brave, old “Pap” Williams came back to his division. The brigade commanders united in sending Gen. Williams a letter thanking him for returning to the “Red Star” division to stay with it during the war. Sherman admits the injustice of this act, and his explanation for putting in Mower, the “ever rash,” does not disguise the favoritism of which it is hard for generals to divest themselves.

On the 9th of April, Lieut. A. S. Fitch, of the One Hundred and Seventh New York, came up in charge of a large number of recruits and convalescents, from Blair’s Landing, on the Pocotaligo river, S. C., among whom were ninety-eight of the Third Wisconsin. They had marched from Wilmington, a distance of ninety miles, through a country of dense, pine forests, with few houses or settlements; had suffered for rations; and had been annoyed by the enemy’s cavalry. Starting out with three days rations, they found none on the way, and subsisted for the last two days of the journey on dry, hard corn, which they parched or roasted on the ear. They were tired and hungry when they reached camp, and rejoined to be with the command once more.

General Sherman supposed that he must fight a grand battle with Johnston; and on the 10th of April, he put his forces in motion for Raleigh, distant fifty miles northwest. The left wing under Slocum was “the exposed flank,” and skirmishing began some six miles out, and continued during the
day, and the brigade moved in line of battle; but the column kept right on. The regiment encamped near Boone Hill, after a twelve mile march. The next day brought the regiment near Smithfield, on the east bank of the Neuse river. The march was a hard one on account of the heat, which now began to be intense. On the 12th, while on the march, a staff officer galloped back, spreading the news that Lee had surrendered. “You are the man we’ve been looking for, for four years,” cried the joyous soldiers. They cheered and cheered. Then they yelled and hugged one another; and the word went through the lines, “We must push Jo. Johnston now.”

Crossing the Neuse at Smithfield, the corps pushed on towards Raleigh, entering that city on the 13th, after a march in which several men had fallen with sunstroke. The rebels were reported retreating on Danville; and Gen. Sherman’s orders were issued for a march in pursuit. Before the troops were on the way, the movement was arrested by a flag of truce from Johnston; and there was delay. The story of the negotiation and final surrender of Johnston’s army is general history.

The army entered Raleigh looking shabby and dirty from its long march through the Carolinas, and the recent short battle campaign from Fayetteville to Goldsboro. The men were much in need of clothing, caps, hats and shoes. A good pair of shoes could hardly be found, while socks were a reminiscence of earlier days, consequently it was a complete transformation scene, when the men donned the new clothing recently sent from the north. Instead of butternut trowsers, gray slouched hats and black frock coats, with the tails “sawed off,” picked up somewhere in the Carolinas, the men came out again in uniform, with closely cropped hair, cleanly shaved faces, arms and accoutrements cleaned and polished, looking as fresh, smart and tidy as militia. The newly issued “pup” tents were again erected and the camps had the order, regularity and neatness of by-gone days. The men revelled in rest, cleanliness and wholesome rations, properly cooked, and best of all, were allowed plenty of time to eat their food. There was every prospect that the strain of nerves and strength in bloody, arduous war was to cease; and none rejoiced at this prospect more heartily than the veteran soldier who had fought and marched from the valley of the Mississippi to the Atlantic coast, be he northern or southern born.

On the 19th, orders were read that Johnston had surrendered everything from the Potomac to the Rio Grande; and that the troops would, in a few days, start for home. Peace had come to a war-weary land. There was universal rejoicing, but among none was it deeper or more heartfelt than among the war-worn veterans, who gave vent to their joy at Raleigh, North Carolina.

But gloom and wrath glowered when the news of Lincoln’s assassination came. It was at first proposed to burn Raleigh to ashes, but the guards were strengthened and the better second thought soon came. Then came reports
that the negotiations for the capitulation of Johnston’s army had fallen through, and preparations were made for a movement on the enemy. The Third Wisconsin had the lead in a march of thirteen miles, on the 25th, toward Holly Springs, southwest of Raleigh, and a large detail was made to “forage liberally on the country.” On the 28th the corps retraced steps to Raleigh.

Colonel Hawley received his commission as brevet brigadier general, in honorary but meagre recognition of his most faithful service. On the 29th, the glad news came that the corps was to start for Washington; and the next morning the regiment started with its corps, on the most joyous march of its service. What cared the men that it was a march of 320 miles? They were going home — and what was meant to those campaigners by the word “home”? It never had a sweeter, holier significance to any mortal man than to those toilers through the swamps and forests of the Carolinas.

On the 30th, the march was taken up, the bands playing “Home again,” and “We are homeward bound,” and the troops in the most joyous spirits. In nine days Richmond was reached — 170 miles, an average of nearly nineteen miles a day. On the way people thronged on the roadside to see the army pass. All pronounced themselves glad the war was over; and the kindliest feeling was expressed. Every night some of Lee’s men, on their homeward journey, came into camp; and were fed most generously by the Union soldiers, who in fact lived on half-rations, because they made to liberal contribution from their haversacks to the many visiting Confederates to feed them and give them a few meals on their journey. The forager’s occupation was now gone. Not a “bummer” left the ranks, not a house or field was invaded, nor goose or chicken disturbed. When the state line between North Carolina and Virginia was reached, a cracker box was set up with the words, “State line” written on it; and the bands of the Twentieth corps played, “Carry me back to ole Virginia.”

On the 9th the regiment encamped near Richmond; and had a general cleaning up, for a grand march through Richmond on the 11th. They passed “Libby Prison,” “Castle Thunder,” and through the principal streets, past all the places of historic interest, then marched out north of the city four miles and encamped. The march northward led over the fortifications and battlefield at Spottsylvanias Court House. There, on the bright, sunny morning of May 13th, the troops saw evidences of the terrible carnage of the year before. There were zig-zagging earthworks, fences gone, trees shot-riddled; but most ghastly of all were the thousands of unburied skeletons indicating where the battles had raged. Lying thickly as they fell before some breastwork, they told the story of desperate charges, and the men of the western armies looked on aghast when they saw how battles were fought between the Army of the Potomac and the Army of Northern Virginia. The men were somewhat horrified at seeing some of the army surgeons gathering up skulls by the
bagfull on that ghastly field. Over 800 skeletons lay in one pine grove in an area of a few acres, said to be at a point where Hancock’s corps had charged upon the rebels in their works, driving them out, and capturing them by thousands, nearly crushing Lee, on the 12th of May, just a year and a day before.

And now, far to the left in the distance, was seen the Blue Ridge; and the Potomac veterans returned from their long, circuitous march, gazed upon the blue, low-lying hills as upon an old neighbor’s face. Soon the familiar ground of the Wilderness appeared, and on the 15th the regiment stacked arms for its dinner halt on its old line of battle at Chancellorsville, where two years and thirteen days before it was thrown athwart the path of Jackson’s victorious host. On this field there were many unburied and many half-buried dead. A writer, who, as a member of the Seventieth Indiana, formerly Col. Benjamin Harrison’s regiment, passed over the fields of Spottsylvania and Chancellorsville, in the same march homeward, thus describes the spectacle:

“Our way led us through the Spottsylvania battleground. Everywhere were visible the terrible signs of the struggle — trees mowed down by artillery, lowly mounds with nothing to testify whose was the last resting place, and sadder still, unburied remains. Bones lay by the road side; and in a yard, where a woman stood and discoursed about the struggle to inquirers, lay two skulls. In a thicket near by, where the appalling stillness seems never to have been broken, except by owl, or bat, or raven, lie hundreds of skeletons. Some had collected, as they lay wounded, such sticks as were within reach, and had striven to erect a barrier to protect them from further injury. Some had taken the straps from their knapsacks to bind a severed artery, and now the leather lying loosely about the bone told pathetically of the vain effort.

“Some of us visited the Wilderness battleground (in the field of Chancellorsville) and saw there the same sad scenes. The commingled bones of horse and rider, all the possessions of the soldier, from the envelope with its fond address in a woman’s hand to the broken gun, lie scattered over the ground. Knapsacks placed together by companies before they made the charge, and for which the owners never returned, remain in decaying heaps. An old, gray-headed man leaned upon his hoe handle trying to quiet his trembling head as he said, ‘Ah, sir, there are thousands of both sides lying unburied in the Wilderness.’”

The corps marched down the same road by which it retired from the ill-fated battlefield; and crossed the Rappahannock at United States Ford, the same place where on the 6th of May, two years before, it had retreated in sullen chagrin. The pride and elation of the last march were compensation for all the mortification of the first. On the 16th, old Hartwood church was passed, the desolate house of worship that had survived the ravages of war in a region where every fence, unoccupied building and almost every tree showed marks
of military spoilation. The 17th found the hastening column on the north bank of Kettle Run, where nearly two hears previously the regiment occupied for a night the same ground, on its way to Gettysburg, that was now selected for the night’s encampment. Next day the regiment moved through brentsville, where in Pope’s retreat it had hurriedly marched on the 31st of August to get around from behind Lee’s victorious army. It was a satisfaction to the veterans to make the march once more over ground associated in their minds with disaster and flight. Again Broad Run and Bull Run were forded, and on the 19th of may, the regiment was in camp at Forth Worth [sic], opposite Washington. On the 20th, a regular camp was laid out, and Governor Lewis, then the executive of Wisconsin, visited the regiment and made a speech to the men.

Preparations were made for the grand review; and the unwonted exercise of blacking shoes, polishing arms and cleaning up was resumed. On the 23d the regiment moved up near the Long Bridge and there bivouacked; reveille sounded at 3 o’clock next morning; and the brigade soon crossed the bridge and moved down Maryland avenue. At 9 A. M. it passed in review around the Capitol up Pennsylvania avenue. The scene was inspiring, and the pageant a fitting close of the great war. Near the Capitol a great banner hung, bearing the legend, “We Welcome the Heroes of the Country. Honor to the Brave.” On the Capitol steps and surrounding it were the children of the schools. Pennsylvania avenue was a dense mass of human beings from the Capitol upwards, with a space kept open for the columns to pass in review. A banner inscribed, “We Welcome our Western Boys — Shiloh, Vicksburg, Atlanta, Stone River, Savannah, Raleigh,” was cheered by the soldiers as they passed under it. The battle-flags of the regiments, tattered and in shreds, were applauded by the thousands as they passed and the excellent marching elicited applause. The colors of the Third regiment were soon festooned with so many bouquets and garlands that the color-bearer could not hold up the burden and was forced to unload. The banners that bore the names of Antietam, Chancellorsville, Gettysburg, and those of the Atlanta campaign, were specially honored with garlands, as were those that bore the name of Vicksburg. Gen. Sherman rode at the head, dressed in his best. When he reached the Treasury building and looked back down the avenue, upon his compact column, with its glittering muskets, looking like a solid mass of steel, moving in perfect step, he declared it “the most magnificent army in existence — sixty-five thousand men, in splendid physique, who had just completed a march of nearly 2,000 miles in a hostile country, in good drill, and who realized that they were being closely scrutinized by thousands of their fellow-countrymen and by foreigners. Division after division passed, each commander of an army corps or division coming on the stand during the passing of his command, to be presented to the President, cabinet and
spectators. The steadiness and firmness of the tread, the careful dress on the
guides, the uniform intervals between the companies, all eyes directly to the
front, and the tattered, bullet-riven flags, festooned with flowers, all attracted
universal notice. Many good people, up to that time, had looked upon our
Western army as a sort of mob; but the world then saw and recognized the
fact, that it was an army in the proper sense, well organized, well commanded
and disciplined; and there was no wonder that it had swept through the South
like a tornado. For six hours and a half that strong treat of the ‘Army of the
West’ resounded upon Pennsylvania avenue.”

“Some little scenes enlivened the day,” says Gen. Sherman, from whom
the last sentences are quoted, “and called for the laughter and cheers of the
crowd. Each division was followed by six ambulances, as representative of
its baggage train. Some of the division commanders had added by way of
variety, goats, milch cows and pack mules whose loads consisted of game
cocks, poultry, hams, etc.; and some of them had families of freed slaves
along with them, the women leading their children. Each division was
preceded by its corps of black pioneers armed with picks and spades. These
marched abreast in double ranks keeping perfect dress and step, and added
much to the interest of the occasion. On the whole, the grand review was a
splendid success, and was a fitting conclusion to the campaign and the war.”

The newspapers the next day praised the Twentieth corps for its
excellent marching, and it was some comfort to the mud-waders of the
Carolinas to know that they could show off with the best in the evolutions of
a gala parade. The “Red Star” division received some compliments that may
yet be pleasant reading to the veterans, and are quoted here. The “boys”
themselves thought that they had stepped off in very good style in the grand
review, and were glad that Ruger had been so exacting with them four years
before.

The New York *Times*, of May 25th, thus spoke of the First division as it
passed in that historic review:

“The First division (of the 20th corps) led by the veteran Williams, who numbers more
battles than he does years, albeit he is not young, with Shields in the valley, with Banks at
Front Royal, with Slocum at and after Antietam, with hooker at Chancellorsville and Meade
at Gettysburg, again with Hooker at Lookout Mountain, Resaca, Peach Tree Creek; often
commanding the corps, and as often yielding it up to superior rank. — Williams is the type
of the true, valorous, persistent soldier. In this division I find such veteran regiments as the
Fifth Connecticut; then the Third Wisconsin and Second Massachusetts inevitably together,
of course, for they have been brothers-in-arms through all the fortunes of war, ever since
Ruger and Gordon, now wearing their hard earned stars, were their first colonels.”

The New York *Herald’s* account of the grand review said of the First
division of our corps:

“The vast collection of stout men in blue clothes, with glistening guns, new flags and
red stars, which comprises the First division of Joe Hooker’s old corps, came steadily down
the street with "Pap" Williams at its head, and passed the magnates at the reviewing stands carrying off the palm for best appearance in all the two days show. Alpheus S. Williams, a grand old son of the state of Michigan, who wrestled manfully in the Mexican war, led the (Red Star Division.) Almost everyone in the old army of the Potomac knows him, for he fought on all its famous fields prior to September, 1863. He has passed all the military grades; has commanded corps, divisions or brigades as occasion required, and has no blot on his record in any capacity. Nor has the First Division over which he puffs with considerable pride, as old tried friends at Chancellorsville, Gettysburg, and in Hooker’s fights between Chattanooga and Atlanta will attest. None of the participants in the last great review of volunteers can be found to beat in marching or appearance the old ‘Red Star Division.’ I saw soldiers who have traveled and fought in cold, head and storm for four years and more, follow down the sidewalk, as they followed in militia musters when they were boys, admiring the men who wore ‘Red Stars.’ Their lines were as straight as the front of a wave, and their solid tramp resembled the regular strokes of a beetle. Major General Williams was cheered and loaded down with bouquets till he had no hands to wave his acknowledgments. He accepted these honors and I will be bound placed them to the credit of the division which followed [Selfridge, Hawley and Robinson — brigadiers now for gallant and meritorious service under Slocum and Sherman, who are not wont to advance officers in rank on mere application. There were about 4,800 muskets in the First Division."

The New York Tribune, in its report of the grand review was pleased to say: “The Twentieth corps has fought most gallantly in all the battles in which it has been engaged; and in discipline and drill has well earned the reputation of being the crack corps of Sherman’s army.” The great soldier of all, the dying Grant, wrote in his “Personal memoirs,” penned when death was daily expected to end his pain, “Sherman’s army was not so well dressed as the Army of the Potomac, but their marching could not be excelled. They gave the appearance of men who had been thoroughly drilled to endure hardships, either by long and continuous marches or through exposure to any climate, without the ordinary shelter of a camp.”

After passing in review the regiment marched out some few miles northeast of Washington, near Fort Bunker Hill, north of the Baltimore and Ohio railroad track, in the vicinity of Bladensburg.

There was great eagerness to be mustered out and impatience at the delay. The veterans who had endured so patiently the hardships of an eventful service, now, that their work was done, the Union re-established on firmer foundations than ever, the great cause of dissension between the two sections eradicated, and a new era of peaceful development opened, desired to lay aside their arms and enjoy the liberty of the citizen, and devote their energies to enterprises of their own. On the march from Raleigh each had beguiled the hours by forming plans, building castles in the air, perhaps, regarding his future pursuits. With but little interest they laid out their camp, and irksome enough were the dull duties of camp, the five roll calls a day, the drills that were ordered, and the policing, guard mount and other drudgery so
necessary to good military organization. “I want to go home,” was on every lip. Never did military discipline seem so galling. The men began to hate the sight of blue uniforms, and a shoulder strap was their abomination. They never wanted again to see a drum or hear a reveille; and their feeling found vent in the old saw, “There’s no use of fifing after the war is over.”

The men were also close observers of political events. They saw by the movement of troops towards the Rio Grande, on the boundary between Texas and Mexico, that the government meant to expel the French from Mexican territory. During the war, when we had our hands full at home, the Emperor Napoleon and the Austrian emperor had sent an army into that country and set up an empire. To this movement the Confederacy had given encouragement; and our people naturally regarded the invasion of Mexico as a part of their contract of enlistment, and were quite apprehensive that they might be selected for a campaign in Mexico; but this was not to be.

The work of dissolution of the great armies went on. Gen. Hawley published his farewell order to the brigade on the 6th of June. The next day the Twentieth corps was broken up. Then came the parting of friends in other regiments. Between the Second Massachusetts and the Third Wisconsin the separation was the parting of brothers in arms and comrades tried and true. The following communications expressed the feeling, so far as words could express it, which existed between the two regiments:

Second Massachusetts Infantry
Camp Slocum, Washington, D. C.,
June 4, 1865.

We, the undersigned, officers of the Second Massachusetts Infantry, wish to express to the officers of the Third Wisconsin Infantry our heartfelt regret that the fortunes of the service are about to separate our respective organizations.

From the campaign of 1862, in the Shenandoah Valley to the present glorious close of this bloody war, we have fought and marched side by side with you in almost every rebellious state. To have been brigaded together for so long a time is in itself remarkable; no less so is it that between our two regiments there should always have existed such strong feelings of friendship and mutual regard, untinged by the slightest shadow of jealousy.

As we recall now, some of the hard positions we have been in, we cannot help remembering how often our anxiety was lessened by the knowledge that the old Third Wisconsin was close at hand to support us. We know that you have had the same thoughts about us. Nothing in this whole war will be pleasanter for us to look back upon than this feeling of mutual respect and reliance. It not only elevated the tone of both our regiments, but we honestly believe, it went a great way toward making our brigade and division what they are now acknowledged to be - among the very best organizations of the army.

We assure you that in our own State, wherever the Second Massachusetts is known, its brother regiment is also famous. Whenever any of us have been at home, among the first inquiries would be, “How is the Third Wisconsin?” It has been with pride that we have
answered, “It is the same staunch regiment that fought at Antietam and Chancellorsville.”

These are not compliments but expressions of plain, honest feelings. We have been knit together by deeds not words; deeds, which, as time goes on, we shall look back upon with continually increasing pride.

Together we have shared dangers and hardships, victories and defeats; and it is hard now for us to part; but in the natural order of things, the war being over, you go towards your homes in the west, we stay near ours in the east. Let us not, however, though separated by thousands of miles, forget these old associations. Let us rather cherish them with the fondest recollections: let it be a story to hand down to our children and children’s children, how the Second Massachusetts and Third Wisconsin fought shoulder to shoulder through the great rebellion, and achieved together glory and renown. We ask you to accept this testimonial as a slight evidence of our affection and esteem. We bid you farewell, and God bless you, one and all.

To the officers of the Second Massachusetts Veteran Volunteer Infantry:

The undersigned, officers of the Third Wisconsin Veteran Volunteer Infantry, tender their heartfelt thanks for your friendly communication of the 4th inst. It was with mingled feelings of pride and pleasure, not, however, unmixed with pain, that we perused it - pride at being thus associated with a regiment, which by patient endurance, good discipline, and unflinching bravery, has won for itself so honorable a name as the Second Massachusetts; pleasure at the thought that, even amid the stirring scenes of active war, the finer attributes of humanity are not forgotten, and that friendship, one of the noblest sentiments of the soul, still asserts her claims; pain at the recollection of the many gallant and brave, whose names have been associated with yours in the great struggle now happily terminated, but who have given their lives for a country they loved so well.

That "every rose has its thorn" was never more apparent to us than now. While in the toil and suffering of our active campaigns, we have looked forward with unmixed joy to the time when the angel of peace should once more spread her wings over the land, and we should return home to enjoy the sweets of social and civil life, but now that the hour is at hand when we must say farewell to those with whom we have been associated in the service of our common country, when we must join the parting hand with you, our companions and brothers in arms, our joy is mingled with sadness and our smiles with tears.

We accept your communication, not only as a manifestation of personal regard, but also as a fraternal greeting from the east to the west, which rising superior to local jealousies and factional strife, and remembering only the mingled dust of our dead on many battlefields, and the common country for which they sacrificed their all, proclaims us, in heart and in country, one and inseparable.

In parting, we assure you that, highly as we prize this expression of sentiment toward us, and sacredly as we will preserve it as the highest honor yet received, it is not needed to secure remembrance. The ineffaceable pictures of the past deeply engraven in our hearts, and lit up by the eternal flame of friendship will ever keep the Second Massachusetts Veteran Volunteer Infantry prominent among our pleasing memories in the future.

Wishing you all success and happiness and Heaven’s best blessing, we bid you farewell. We are, brothers, yours fraternally,

In publishing these letters the Wisconsin State Journal of June 15, 1865, said:

“The Second Massachusetts and the Third Wisconsin have fought in the same brigade, side by side, throughout the war. Among the earliest regiments in the field, they first saw active service under Banks in the Shenandoah valley. When Stonewall Jackson with his usual force of ‘forty thousand men’ fell upon Banks, these two regiments covered the rear, and bore the brunt of the fighting. They stood together at Cedar Mountain under the withering cross-fire of the enemy when the noble Crane laid down his life for his country. They fought at Antietam, Chancellorsville and Gettysburg. Subsequently, transferred to the west, they formed a part of that invincible column which, under Sherman, hewed its way through the central mountain fastnesses of the south, and poured an irresistible torrent through Georgia and the Carolinas. Both regiments were among those that re-enlisted for the war.

We remember a conversation had, about a year ago, with an officer of the Third, respecting the comparative merits of eastern and western troops. He had served in the Army of the Potomac and at the west, and had therefore large opportunities for seeing and judging upon the subject.

He spoke particularly of the Second Massachusetts as a specimen of New England troops, and said that when the Third Wisconsin was first brigades with them, our Wisconsin boys conceived a strong antipathy against them. The Massachusetts men were fitted up in the height of military style. They had the finest tents and wagons in the service; their uniforms were of the best material; they wore white gloves on parade; and our Wisconsin boys looked upon them as a set of dandies and counter-jumpers who would take to their heels at the first approach of actual danger. Be and by the hour of trial came. Stonewall Jackson launched his thunderbolts upon Banks’ little army. And lo! While most of the troops were hastening out of harm’s way there were the brawny boys of the Third, and those white-gloved fellows of the Second Massachusetts, side by side, hanging stubbornly to the rear, their hearts swollen with rage, covering the retreat, contesting every inch of ground and chastening the exultant foe with terrible punishment from their well-aimed muskets. After that, said the officer, there was no further distrust or contempt on either side between the Third Wisconsin and Second Massachusetts, but mutual good-will, affection and pride in each other, which only increased as they became better acquainted under yet severer trials.

The parting of officers and men with the other regiments of the brigade was scarcely less kindly. The One Hundred and Seventh New York, One Hundred and Fiftieth New York and Thirteenth New Jersey were to be mustered out in a day or two; and to those war-worn regiments, with ranks thinned, but with records of most gallant service from first to last, the benison of the Third Wisconsin was genuine and hearty.

By the 9th of June it was lonesome enough on the camp ground of the brigade. The Second Massachusetts, the One Hundred and Fiftieth New York and Thirteenth new Jersey had started for home. The One Hundred and Seventh new York had gone before. The Third Wisconsin was alone. The Twenty-first Wisconsin, about 400 strong, were transferred to it for the purpose of muster-out, and a number from the Twenty-second and the Twenty-sixth Wisconsin.
On the 11th of June the regiment took cars by the Baltimore and Ohio railroad for Louisville, Ky. At Parkersburg, Va., the steamer “Nevada,” was boarded; and on that the regiment proceeded down the Ohio. The Ohio side of the river was lined with people who cheered the troops as they glided along. Some of the Ohio troops, on an accompanying boat, jumped overboard and swam ashore, so eager were they to go to their homes.

There were a number of well-merited promotions: Lieutenant-Colonel Stevenson was breveted colonel; Major Warham Parks, lieutenant-colonel; Captains Van Brunt and Woodford as majors, for their gallant and meritorious service in the Georgia and Carolina campaigns. There were a large number of non-commissioned officers who richly deserved commissions, and a few of these received a late recognition. Edwin F. Proctor, George H. Cutter, John R. Amidon, Sidney I. Thompson, George W. Norton, Wilber F. Haughawout, David Clark, Algie S. Hill, Herman Buchner, Edward V. Moran, Elon G. Beers, George N. Faucett and Lewis Colby were commissioned second lieutenants in the spring of 1865.

The Third Wisconsin reached Louisville on the 16th and encamped in a beech tree grove, three miles southeast of the city, on the Crittenden place. Here there was much speculation and conjecture as to destination. The troops sent to Louisville had been formed into a provisional division under Gen. Williams, who had served in the Mexican war, and the Second brigade was under Gen. Hawley, also an old Mexican campaigner; and it was thought probably that they were intended to be sent to the Rio Grande, and to the support of Juarez in Mexico if necessary, to expel the French army under Bazaine, or “Benzine,” as the soldiers very generally called him.

The paymaster came June 29th and paid off the troops, just four years after the first muster in of the regiment.

On the 4th of July, the regiment made its last march in review. The day was very hot and it extinguished any vestige of willingness in any mind to go to Mexico. General Sherman was here present and took the last look of the last armed remnant of his once magnificent army.

On the 18th of July, the regiment was mustered out of the service at Louisville, broke camp on the 21st, marched through Louisville, crossed the Ohio river and took cars for Madison, Wisconsin, arriving there on the 24th. “But not the six hundred” — not the 978 officers and men who had marched away so eagerly from the camp at Fond du Lac in July of four years before. Of the original 37 officers only six — Hawley, Stevenson, Parks, Van brunt, Daniels and Meeker — were in commission and mustered out with the regiment. [Errata - 1stLt Edwin J. Meeker was actually promoted to Captain in the U. S. Signal Corps on 3 Mar 1863, and mustered out on 25 Nov 1865. — Editor’s Note from errata at end of original text, with supplemental information from the roster of Wisconsin Volunteers.] Of the original enlisted
members mustered at Fond du Lac, only 194 had followed the fortunes of the regiment and stood in its last parade. Of the others hundreds had been discharged for disability, broken down by the hardships of the service, and a larger number than so came back lay sleeping in humble but honorable graves the soldier’s last sleep. Their widely-scattered graves — in the valley of the Shenandoah, under the bold crests of Maryland heights, along the banks of Antietam, at Chancellorsville and the dark forests of the Wilderness, on the Rappahannock by Beverly Ford, amid the rocks of Gettysburg, in the hilly regions of middle Tennessee, at Resaca by the Oostenaula, in the forests around New Hope Church, in the woods by Pine Mountain and Kenesaw, on the banks of Peach Tree Creek, by the trenches before Atlanta, in the swamps about Savannah, in the dismal regions of North Carolina — marked the path of honor and duty, the true path of glory, which the brave old regiment had trodden in so many parts of the theatre of the great civil war, from its beginning to its close. In announcing its arrival the Wisconsin State Journal of the 25th, gave a lengthy account of the career of the regiment. Among other things it said: “The veteran Third, the oldest of the Wisconsin regiments in the service since the Second went out, arrived here about dark Sunday evening, with 830 men. The regiment as mustered out numbered more than any other from the state — 34 officers and 1260 men. After the review at Washington 288 men whose terms of service expired before the 1st of October, were mustered out, and 491 men from the Twenty-first, 300 from the Twenty-second, and 62 from the Twenty-sixth regiments, whose terms of service did not expire with those organizations, were transferred to the regiment swelling it to the number of 1594 on paper, of whom 985 were present at Washington, June 10th. Some 200 of the regiment were at home on furlough, and the rest who did not accompany it are in hospital or detached.

The history of the Third differs from that of any other regiment of the state, except the Twenty-sixth, in that it has fought in some of the most important battles of the Potomac and western armies, in all of which it has acquitted itself most nobly, and those, who have been so fortunate as to survive all the perils to which the regiment has been exposed, have in their recollections an experience of surpassing interest. The regiment was organized at Fond du Lac in June, 1861, by Col. C. S. Hamilton, ably assisted by Lieut. Col. Thos. H. Ruger and Maj. Bertine Pinkney, a trio of field officers unexcelled, and the admirable drill soon acquired, the gallant and efficient service of the regiment since, the fact that four generals have come from its ranks — Hamilton, Ruger, Hawley and Bertram, — and that it has furnished many officers for new organizations, scarcely a regiment having been formed since the call of 1862, which had not one or more officers from the Third, have shown the advantage which it possessed in having men of military training
and experience at the head in the outset.”

The flags of the regiment were deposited in the state capitol; and then
the Third Wisconsin Veteran Volunteer Infantry broke ranks — forever.

A few weeks later, August 10th, the last regiment of Gen. Williams’
command was mustered out. He and his staff officers departed, leaving in
that grove of stately beeches, where his headquarters had been located, a
spear-tipped, lancewood staff, with a large white flag drooping from it, having
a red star in the center — the flag of the First Division, Twentieth corps. The
superb organization had ceased to exist, and there was none to bear its
banner. The other regiments which had followed it in so many eventful
campaigns, like the Third Wisconsin, whose story has been in these pages
but imperfectly told, lived only in history.
ENDNOTES

Endnote 1: There has been much acrimonious discussion and no little contrariety of statement as to the responsibility for this battle. General Pope stoutly and always insists that he never ordered nor expected it. General Banks produces the order conveyed to him by Col. Marshall of Pope’s staff, which is given above [“They were verbal and Banks’ adjutant took them down in these words: . . . . .”].

This and Gen. Robert’s conduct on the field led Banks to conclude, as he avers, that he was sent out there to fight. On the other hand, Pope says in his report, “General Roberts, as well as General Banks, was fully advised of my wishes, and that I desired General Banks merely to keep the enemy in check by occupying a strong position in his front, until the whole of the disposable forces under my command should be concentrated in the neighborhood. General Roberts reported to me that he had conferred fully with General Banks, and urgently represented to him my purposes, but that General Banks, contrary to his suggestions and to my wishes, had left the strong position which he had taken up and had advanced at least a mile to assault the enemy, believing that they were not in considerable force, and that he would be able to crush their advance, before their main body could come up from the direction of Rapidan.”

General Gordon, who is very severe in his judgments against General Banks — having much of the West Pointer’s lack of confidence in a “political general” — makes a very strong case in proof that Pope’s intentions, which were evidently clear and definite, were clearly conveyed to banks, and that he understood them well. General Roberts testified before the McDowell Court of Inquiry, that he told Banks where to take positions and to “hold them, if attacked.” “I told him,” said Roberts, “that General Pope wanted him to hold the enemy in check until Sigel’s forces could be brought up, and all his other forces united to fight Jackson.” It needs no military judgment to see after the event, that it was on our side a miserably managed battle, most impudently precipitated.

Endnote 2: A knowledge of the art of building railroads is certainly of more value to a country than that of the best means of destroying them; but at this particular time the destruction seemed necessary, and the time may again come when such work will be necessary. Lest the most effectual and expeditious method of destroying railroad tracks should become one of the lost arts, I will here give a few rules for the guidance of officers who may in future be charged with this important duty. It should be remembered that these rules are the result of long experience and close observation. A detail of men to do the work should be made on the evening before operations are to commence. The number to be detailed being, of course, dependent upon the amount of work to be done. I estimate that one thousand men can easily destroy about five miles of track per day, and do it thoroughly. Before going out in the morning the men should be supplied with a good breakfast, for it has been discovered that soldiers are more efficient at this work, as well as on the battle-field, when their stomachs are full than when they are empty. The question as to the food to be given the men for breakfast is not important, but I suggest roast turkeys, chickens, fresh eggs, and coffee, for the reason that in an enemy’s country such a breakfast will cause no unpleasantness between the commissary and the soldiers, inasmuch as the commissary will only be required to provide the coffee. In fact it has been
discovered that an army moving through a hostile but fertile country, having an efficient corps of foragers (vulgarly known in our army as bummers), requires but few articles of food, such as hard-tack, coffee, salt, pepper, and sugar. Your detail should be divided into three sections of about equal numbers. I will suppose the detail to consist of three thousand men. The first thing to be done is to reverse the relative positions of the ties and iron rails, placing the ties up and the rails under them. To do this, Section No. 1, consisting of one thousand men, is distributed along one side of the track, one man at the end of each tie. At a given signal each man seizes a tie, lifts it gently till it assumes a vertical position, and then at another signal pushes it forward so that when it falls the ties will be over the rails. Then each man loosens his tie from the rail. This done, Section No. 1 moves forward to another portion of the road, and Section No. 2 advances and is distributed along the portion of the road recently occupied by Section no. 1. The duty of the second section is to collect the ties, place them in piles about thirty ties each — place the rails on the top of these piles, the center of each rail being over the center of the pile, and then set fire to the ties. Section No. 2 then follows No. 1. As soon as the rails have sufficiently heated Section No. 3 takes the place of No. 2, and upon this devolves the most important duty, viz., the effectual destruction of the rail. This section should be in command of an efficient officer who will see that the work is not slighted. Unless closely watched, soldiers will content themselves with simply bending the rails around trees. This should never be permitted. A rail which is simply bent can easily be restored to its original shape. No rail should be regarded as properly treated till it has assumed the shape of a doughnut; it must not only be bent but twisted. To do the twisting Poe’s railroad hooks are necessary, for it had been found that the soldiers will not seize the hot iron barehanded. This, however, is the only think looking towards the destruction of property which I ever knew a man in Sherman’s army to decline doing. With Poe’s hooks a double twist can be given to a rail which precludes all hope of restoring it to its former shape except by recasting. — H. W. S. [Henry Warner Slocum]