

## **The 43rd NC Regiment During the War**

### **"Whiffs from My Old Camp Pipe"**

*by Leonidas L. Polk of the Weekly Ansonian (Polkton, NC)*

*Beginning April 1876*

While the constant drilling and discipline of the camp was doubtless fitting us for those stern duties and severe trials which our subsequent experiences brought us to realize, yet those huge boxes of delicacies, which came by car loads, almost daily, from the "dear ones at home" - the familiar faces of visiting friends, greeting us on the arrival of almost every train, bringing with them bed clothing, wearing apparel, and almost every conceivable article, necessary to make our tents as homelike as possible, to say nothing of the little tokens of affectionate remembrance, from the wife, the mother, sister, or child - these and other things innumerable, that seemed designed to rob soldier life of its dreaded hardships and sufferings, were little calculated to prepare the cleanly, proud and untried heroes of merry Camp Mangum for the wild scenes of trial, danger, suffering and death, which awaited them in the near future.

Commissary and Quarter Master Departments, supplied by an injudicious and improvident government, lavished upon the soldiery, with profligate profusion, all the most exacting could demand, in those early days of the war. Every attention and encouragement from the noble women the of State, was bestowed, yet that restiveness, even under these pleasant restraints, to characteristic of the Southern spirit, assorted its power, in the prevalent wish to leave Mangum, that had now grown monotonous and try a more active field. At last the long looked for "marching order" came. All was hurry, bustle and anxiety, and the baggage of the Regiment, which at a later period of the war, would have enriched a Division was packed and amid the huzzas of soldiers the train sped for Wilmington.

To those who know anything of the chivalric spirit for which the people of the old Cape Fear, have ever been noted, it is needless to mention the enthusiasm and hearty good cheer, with which they ever welcomed the salutes of the waving "Southern Cross."

At Camp Lamb, the Regiment was quartered, and at once began to feel that the activity and vigilance required in picketing along the coast, the additional camp duties imposed, the gradual submission of individual rights and privileges, to the constantly increasing demands of military service, was bringing it rapidly to the point where it would have its qualities for active service fully tested.

McClellan now threatened the Confederate Capitol and all the available troops in the State, were ordered to its defense. Daniel's Brigade was carried forward and quartered on the Richmond and Petersburg Turnpike, near the Old Factory, and became a

portion of that army, that was destined to astound the world by its prowess, its devotion, and its endurance.

The ominous lull which now hung heavily around the beleaguered walls of Richmond, and which followed the short but terrible struggle at Seven Pines, was soon to be broken by Gen's Jackson and Hill at Cold Harbor. Our Brigade and Division was held in reserve until McClellan was driven, crippled and discomfited from his stronghold and was pushing his way down the Chickahominy to his gun-boats on the James. We were then thrown on the north side of the river, on his flank and although near enough to receive our first salute from his guns, yet we did not become engaged.

The struggle over and our portion of the army again relapsed into repose. Our command resumed its position near the Old Factory and assisted in picketing the Appomattox and the James rivers until ordered to Drewry's Bluff, where we remained a portion of the winter in constructing fortifications. An advance on Goldsboro was threatened by the enemy and our command was ordered to that point and from thence to Kinston, where we went into regular quarters for the remainder of the winter. From this base we watched the movements of the enemy, keeping constantly a strong picket force on the Neuse and as low down as Core Creek. The Spring was unusually cold, rainy and disagreeable, camp duties close and constant, drilling heavy, sick list unusually lengthy, and furloughs sought by nearly all the boys. The Exemption Bill excited a deep interest and the matter of sending Negroes to aid in fortifying Wilmington caused many heated and animated discussions. Gen. DH Hill was in command of that department and by his vigilance and constant personal supervision of the condition of things in that quarter inspired the troops with entire confidence in our ability to perform whatever task he imposed.

It was plainly evident that he contemplated an early offensive movement, and it was looked for with all the anxiety, which characterized the uninitiated Southern soldier.

At Blount's Hall, which is about twenty five miles from Washington and twenty from Snow Hill, we rested and feasted. Some of the Anson boys came in from home, bringing several boxes filled with edibles; as one of them remarked, "Peculiarly adapted to the necessities of the soldier."

Anticipating the order to "fall in" and having no means of transportation except such as could be found in haversacks, and other little receptacles the boys were unusually generous dividing their sorghum cakes, ham, dried beef, sausages, eggs, pepper, &c. An old "bomb proof" from Union county arrived that day with a huge box, and not finding the one for whom a portion of it was intended he ventured to try his hand in selling its contents. "Eggs and butter at the whole sale sutler for sale, but here's your good "biled aigs" and butter for nothing - come and help yourselves; "without money and without price," said one of the boys, who had just turned out of a camp kettle six dozen boiled eggs on the ground, "Mister, what you ask for your sausages, by the yard?" "Want to

know if that soap will take a stain out of a man's character," "Guess he's a better fighter than a salesman - give him a rusty gun lets try him." These and many other such thrusts from the boys soon "closed up his shop," as one of them remarked. The day was spent in frolicking, eating and writing. One of the men and a good pensman wanted to write to his wife. He wrote a little for a friend, to pay for a sheet of paper; he borrowed from another an envelope, from another a pen and ink, and from another a knapsack for a writing desk. He began the letter by saying: I suppose you wonder what we are doing away down here in the woods! Well so do I, so does everybody, except Gen. Hill, but we intend to follow him until we ascertain if he leads us into the Atlantic." Rough, uncomfortable, trying, terrible as was the experience of the soldiers yet there was a mixture of wit, fun and gleefulness that went far to ameliorate their sufferings. We moved from Blount's Hall on the 27th, towards Washington, by way of Swift Creek Bridge, and on reaching it, found Gen. Pettigrew's Brigade, which had preceded us on the march on the South side of the River, while Gen. Garnett, of Va., with his Brigade of Infantry, and aided by Cavalry occupied the North side. Our forces were so disposed, as to command every cutlet from the place, by land, and our Batteries commanded the river.

Three Wooden Gun Boats of the enemy lay near the town and under the protection of the Block House, which was built on the eastern edge of the town and immediately on the North bank of the river. Gen Hill caused a thirty-pounder to be mounted within range of the town but for want of a good position, it was used with but little effect. Our Reg't was quartered near the house, and on the farm of W.B. Rodman.

The river being a mile wide, and the channel indicated by buoys at proper intervals, being near the centre, it was at once placed under the muzzles of guns planted on the bank immediately in front of the Rodman House, and in full view and range of the block house.

About three and a half miles below the town on the South bank was the point known as Fort Hill, where two beautiful breech-loading rifle cannons, were planted. These guns were remarkable for their long range as well as their accuracy, and were known as the "Whitworth guns," and were said to have been a present to the Confederacy by some friends in England.

Picketing. Skirmishing. Cannonading, running the blockage at night in small boats with muffled oars, fishing, foraging, conscripting what was known in those days as "Buffaloes" enjoying the unbounded hospitality of that True Southern man, friend to the Southern soldiers, Sam Cartrow, who lived about a mile from Belliview Cross Roads, living on hard tack and rancid bacon, throwing up defenses, &c, &c, made up the general outline of our daily routine. - But as the soldier was then only interested in executing the details, so he is now only interested in listening to details. Gen. Hill found that the buoys placed in the river, were the only security to the safe passage of the vessels, and hence their destruction became a matter of some importance, especially the one nearest the block house. But of course every gunner in that block house knew the exact distance to it, and how to range and charge the guns, so as to throw all over and around it, a fatal fire, hence its destruction was, to say the least of it, a very perilous undertaking. But what of

peril, what of danger, what of daring, was ever proposed if it could only promise to accomplish any good, that was not undertaken by Southern men? Gen. Hill offered as a reward, for its destruction by two men, a sixty day furlough. This was at once accepted by Wm. Eason and James M. Henry of Co. "I" from Anson County. Preparing a light canoe and arming themselves with a supply of pointed and sharp instruments, such as picks, axes, &c; they launched out in the darkness of midnight, on their hazardous undertaking, but they failed and lost the furlough.

Our Regiment picketed from the Bridge which crossed at the town four miles down the river to Rodman's Point, which is in full view of Fort Hill and the town.

Occupying this as a stand point the scene was beautiful. To the left, and two miles diagonally across the river could be plainly seen, the town, the forts, the block house, the flag, and the sentinels as they moved with measured tread along their lines. To the right, a pretty little bay stretched itself away among the hills; and before us the Pamlico, stretching and widening as far as the eye could reach. One beautiful quiet evening, we sat on this lovely grass covered mound, whose base was nightly bathed in the spray from the waves which washed its sandy base, and where often, doubtless, in times gone by, young and wooing lovers, sought their quiet retreat. The last golden rays of the Sun were fading from the sky, and the gently splashing of the paddle, told us that our "fishing detail" were coming in, and soon their canoe drew up at our feet. Away down the river like huge monsters rising from the water, appeared five Gun Boats, which approached rapidly and cautiously, towards our little fort, until within long range, and formed a line. A moment of suspense and anxiety and suddenly the serenity and breathless silence is broken. A bright glaring flash reveals the locality of "old Black-sides" as our boys called one of the boats; and a whizzing, whirring, screaming sound, followed in the trail of the deadly missile. A moment more of silence and a ball of fire, burst upon the sight with meteor like flash - then comes the rumbling, crashing, deafening sound of the cannon, followed quickly by the report of the shell. Instantly a response comes from our fort and now the thundering chorus swells into terrific grandeur while the fiery tracts of the shells, in hyperbolic curves paints on the dark back ground in lightening colors a scene of inimitable, indescribable beauty. The gun boats withdrew and we again relapse into a sweet soothing calm, which settled over us as quietly as the gently dews that kissed the flowers.

Soon the eastern sky began to grow into a mellow brightness, and we felt grateful for the prospect - a Moon rise on water - and there certainly is nothing more beautiful.

Artillery firing during the day, almost incessant between our batteries and the block house. At night, the sharp crack of a rifle tells our pickets on both sides of the river, that they must be on the alert, some of the enemy are running the gauntlet in a tiny

craft. On the 10th, it was reported that the enemy were landing in heavy force, some distance below us, with a view of flanking us out of our position. Our Regiment was called out and after proceeding some distance, we were halted and turned back, as Gen. Pettigrew with the 11th and 26th Regiments, had met the enemy and driven him back. The roads were terrible from the constant and heavy hauling of supplies for the troops and artillery. An unusual amount of rain and the cold, chilly air with short rations and no tents, made it very disagreeable. Under the direction and charge of Lieut. Col. W.G. Lewis, whose skill as a Civil Engineer was established in the work we had done under him at Drewry's Bluff during our stay there in the Fall and Winter of 1862, we threw up a line of defense, across the Grist farm to protect our rear.

Exciting and exaggerated reports were constantly through our camps as to the movements of Gen. Garnett and his intentions, of the brilliant victory of Gen. Longstreet, at Suffolk and his capture of that place. Which of course, were at last nothing more than the fancy of the soldiers' fertile brain. We lost in 16 days around Washington, about forty men, a few horses, four guns, which were disabled, and the carriage of the 32 pounder, which was abandoned because of the terrible state of the roads and on the night of the 17th of April, we filed off in the direction of Kinston. The intense darkness of the night, the impassable roads, with the Baggage trains and artillery in front, made that march, one that the infantry and especially the rear guard, will never forget. At 2 o'clock we halted and slept in one of those low, marshy places peculiar to that section. The next day, our Brigade marches in the direction of Greenville, while Gen. Pettigrew goes towards Kinston. We passed through some as fine farming lands as can be found in the State, and reached Greenville in the afternoon. Our Command remained undisturbed until the 1st of May, save by occasional false alarms. The Federals in Washington after our withdrawal, gave the citizens the alternative of taking the oath, or to leave their lines in five days, allowing them to take with them almost anything except salt, and many of them came out, among them, two ladies, who left at eleven o'clock at night and by circuitous rout reached Greenville about noon on the following day. We received orders on the 1st of May and moved off in the direction of Kinston, passing many beautiful farms, where taste culture and comfort showed that the rude hand of War had not yet despoiled them with its blighting touch. We reached Kinston and relieved Gen. Pettigrew who is ordered to Virginia at once. Again we relapse into comparative quiet with nothing more severe than heavy picketing. The whole army and country is thrown into terrible excitement which soon yields to deep and universal sorrow at the mournful, painful intelligence of the death of the great and good Jackson. His short, but wonderful career, through a cruel mischance is ended, but it will be a lesson for military students for ages to come. It was not so much what he did, as the manner in which he did it, that will place him among the most renowned heroes and captains of all ages. A noble battle has been fought; the victory won, but the anxiety of the troops, aroused by this unlooked for national calamity is intensified by the perusal of the long list of the fallen brave. Stupendous events seem to hang in the near future. The news from the West, the call by Lincoln for 500,000 more men, the general and deep restlessness, which seems to follow the ominous calm indicates stirring times. We fall in on the morning of the 7th of May and march in the direction of Cole Creek. A portion of our Regiment (Co. I) is detailed to cross over of the refugees, who have been banished by the enemy. There were

seventy-nine in all, principally wives and children of Confederates. They greet us with the tiny Dixie Flag, which seemed to be in all their pockets and when they pass into the lines, they strike up in lively notes, the song which never failed to draw the cheers and yells of the rebels. Through mud and water and rain that literally poured down, we march 32 miles, without more than one hour's rest.

Hooker rests on the front of Washington, while recruits are daily added to his ranks. Grant draws gradually near Vicksburg, threatening its capture, and can only be prevented by the remote hope that Gen. Johnston will concentrate a force on his rear, and attack him, should Vicksburg fall, the Confederacy is cut in twain, and four States, which have been valuable allies, will be cut off, Richmond, Charleston, or Savannah, are but cities, and would be a lighter loss to us. Thus reasoned, and thus felt the troops. Our cavalry were being transferred to Virginia, and all feel that soon our Command would follow.

To be continued next month

Apologies from the Editor - I do not have a copy of the next edition (May 3, 1876) so we will have to pick up the 43rd's trail on the way to Gettysburg (May 10, 1876 edition). I will have return to the State Archives to obtain a copy to fill in the gap in a future edition

At early dawn the morning of the 1st of July, we were called hurriedly into ranks, and marched off in the direction of Gettysburg. A deep feeling of anxiety pervaded the minds of the troops for all were conscious of the near approach of the terrible struggle. Hearing in the forenoon, the distant booming of cannon, seemed to be summoning the hastening columns for the scene of carnage. We moved in quick time, until with in about four miles of the town, and the order "double quick" was passed along to the rear. Nearing the field of action we were filed to the right, through a skirt of timber, and as the head of our column merged into the open ground: our gallant Colonel, placing himself in the front, with that clear voice which was only to be heard by his faithful Regiment, to be obeyed, he threw it forward into line, as smoothly and beautifully, as it could have been done on the drill ground. We at once encountered a furious fire from the enemy's line, which was now in full view, but led by the officers, the men advanced steadily across the open fields, until checked by the deep Rail Road Cut, which had heretofore been undiscovered, as it was concealed by the growing crop of small grain. And now the din and roar of battle began in earnest, and subjected to a galling fire from the batteries and small arms of the enemy, from beyond the rail road, our men returned it, with true spirit and bravery. Changing front to the left our lines are ordered to charge, which was done in handsome style, although they faced a perfect storm of balls from the line in front, and a terrific enfilade fire from the batteries of the enemy. Rushing forward until near the outskirts of the town, our Brigade captured over eight hundred prisoners, with three stands of Colors, the larger portion of the 149th NY Reg't and its flag being in the number. Our Regiment had lost during the engagement of

the evening, 282 men and officers. The enemy's lines were broken and their scattered, routed forces, were flying in confusion up the heights beyond the town. Our Command was halted in full view of the heights, that ere long, were to be baptized in fire and blood and around whose storm girt wall, deeds of heroic valor and daring were to be performed which would inspire the harps of the minstrel and the song of the poet for ages to come. There, on its fire-crowned summit, the war-gods in wild revelry of blood, carnage, and death were to decide the fate of the Confederacy.

Torn and bleeding as were the ranks of our Brigade and Regiment, yet with the lion hearted Daniel, the cool and brave Kenan, the intrepid, daring and fearless Lewis, to lead them, they thought of the trying work before them with feelings of confidence. We occupied the town during the night and early on the morning of the 2d, we were ordered to support a battery on "Seminary Hill," where during the whole day we were exposed to a most terrific and incessant cannonading, which raged with terrible fury between the two armies. During the night, the line was ordered forward through a wheat field, and was occasionally saluted by the sharpshooters, but an order was received to march through the town, and our direction was changed.

After moving all night, we joined Gen. Ed. Johnson's Division on our extreme left; early on Friday morning the 3rd. The morning dawned on our army drawn up in line, and the incessant sound of the axes and the hum of busy active work to which we had listened for nights, told that the heights were crowned with breast works and defenses that must be carried at fearful cost. But with that determined valor for which the Southern soldier is distinguished, this, nor the fiery waves of destruction, which belched forth from all parts of their lines, deterred the troops, but with a coolness and bravery unsurpassed in the history of the world, they move forward to the conflict. Our portion of the line strained up the heights, over brushwood, rocks and cliffs, in the face of a murderous shower of lead from three lines of the enemy's works, while canister and shell and shot from hundreds of cannon, crashed through our ranks. The first line of works are carried, our beloved Colonel wounded and taken from the field by four men on a blanket, through a terrible fire and immediately our gallant Lt. Col. assumed the command. All through the day did this noble army throw itself as a living wave against the impregnable walls of the enemy and each time, as if inspired with renewed determination, by the depletion of its ranks All that men could do, was done nobly, the futile, unjust and unmanly attempt of certain men to cast reproach upon the brave sons of our State, to the contrary notwithstanding.

Like two mighty giants that had grappled in deadly conflict, bleeding, mangled and exhausted, the two armies desist and sullenly, Gen. Lee returned from the scene, and moved the main part of his army towards Hagerstown, MD, the 43rd NC, now under the Command of our gallant Lieut. Col. Lewis' Regiment was the rear guard to the whole army, until we reached that town. At the pass in the mountain, we were threatened by a demons ration from the enemy, but they were easily repulsed and holding our position until the whole army had passed through. The Regiment moved through the pass without

loss. The enemy's cavalry being on our flanks and watched every opportunity to make a successful dash into our Ambulance ordnance or wagon trains. It was in one of these that they that night succeeded in capturing Col. Kenan, who was being carried in an ambulance.

Fatigued, and worn out with the incessant toils of the three preceding days, we lie down in the mud and rain to sleep on the west side of the mountain. At Hagerstown, our troops were halted and throwing up hastily such defenses as our scanty means afforded, we lay in line two days. The enemy appeared on our front, but declining to engage us, we were marched to the Potomac near Williamsport, where we found nearly the whole wagon train of our army parked on the North side. The river had swollen to such height that the whole army and its equipage had to be transported on the ferry boats and the pontoon bridges. Our Regiment crossed the river at night, during one of the heaviest rain storms that we had ever witnessed. We were over an hour in the water, up to our necks, but our men, encouraged by the example of the officers, met these constant and trying demands on their physical and moral powers of endurance, with a fortitude that was wonderful. Reaching Darksville in the Valley, we lay in camp about a week, where we had to subsist chiefly on fresh mutton without salt, and but little, and frequently, no bread. This added to the exposure and labors of the past week, made fearful inroads upon the health of the army.

It ready seemed that our now depleted and skeleton Regiment, would be all reported on the sick list by the worst form of diarrhea, which spread through the ranks at an alarming rate. Out of a total of 600 in our Regiment not more than 450 answered at roll call. The first night, after leaving Darksville, we camped near a field, covered with the vines of the dewberry, which were loaded with ripe fruit, and orders were given to the Regiment, to eat as many as they desired. They were greatly relished by the half famished boys, and as a result only 15 of the men, were reported on the sick list next morning. The army was moved in the direction of Orange Court House, through Berryville, when our Regiment detached and posted on the mountain to protect the flanks from surprise of attack from the enemy.

Reaching the Court House we went into camp, where the work of repairing the damage to the army, by the campaign, was at once begun.

The most rigid camp discipline was at once established and Company, Regiment, and Brigade drills, were the order of the day. The details of the recent great campaign, the movements of Morgan, the "Second Marion", the fall of Vicksburg, and especially those articles in the Richmond papers, which endeavored to place the failure at Gettysburg, on the N.C. Troops, kept the camp alive with interesting discussions. Especially were those base and calumnious charges against Gen. Pettigrew's Brigade, composed of North Carolinians. That Brigade went into the fight over three thousand strong and came out with 835. Every field officer was either killed or wounded ex- one, and he was captured. The 26th Regiment, under the gallant and able hearted Harry Burgwyn, carried into the fight 800 men and lost on the field 549, of which the brave Colonel and thirteen others fell with its glorious flag in their hands. One Company (F)

from Caldwell county went in with 84 men and but one Corporal Hedspath, escaped. Company "K" from Anson, Capt. J.C. McLauchlin, went in with 90 men, and came out of first charge with only 45. Some of the officers and men having fallen within 15 feet of the muzzles of the enemy's guns. Sergeant William Smith of Anson, being among the number and fell after receiving the second wound. The 11th N.C. Regiment of that Brigade went in with 550 men and came out with 250; all its field officers either killed or wounded. The colors of the 26th Regiment, literally riddled with bullets, was taken by the fifteenth man, Corporal Thomas of Company "E" Chatham county, and the Orderly Sergeant of that Company and planted between the guns of the 5th Ohio Regiment, of the Iron Brigade, whose men caught them in their arms and dragged them over the works, to save them from harm. This glorious but terribly sad record of that splendid Brigade rendered yet more glorious by the fall of such men as Pender and Pettigrew, and the thousands of the noble men of our State, who scaled their devotion to the cause with their lives, on that exsanguine field, together with the heroic conduct of the thousands who dared Death, with unsurpassed brave brand the base calumny that vainly sought to traduce the fair fame of the NC troops, with that contempt and scorn it so richly deserved. Whether these gross misrepresentations the base conduct of certain old Secession papers in North Carolina proclaiming through reconstruction candidates, the falsehood that our State was recreant to her trust, the rumored determination of Gen. Lee to resign his Command - the fall of Vicksburg - the capture of Morgan, and all the influences brought to bear on our troops, whether this, and all these discouraging surroundings, shook the fealty of the North Carolina troops let the record of desertions of which we heard so much, the long list of her dead and wounded on every battlefield from Big Bethel to Appomattox and the number which surrendered to Gen. Grant, answer.

The duties of camp life, to troops who were constantly anticipating something to turn up were borne with more patience than by those who had nothing to engage their minds save the dull routine of drill and guard duty. At Orange, we drilled hard, but the hope that some friend from home, would arrive with the ever welcome box, gave the boys' stomachs the powers of endurance, if not relish for the rancid bacon and hard tack. Under the indefatigable Christian labors of our faithful and zealous Chaplain, Rev. E. W. Thompson, assisted occasionally by our Corps Chaplain Rev. Dr. Lacy, a great religious interest was engendered among the troops, and the meetings were largely attended. On the night of the 12th, September, we were aroused with orders to cook rations and be ready to march at any moment. Heavy cannonading down the Rapidan. At daybreak, we were marched to Raccoon Ford, 12 miles below Orange C.H. to find that the enemy, which had made a heavy demonstration against our line at that point, had entirely withdrawn. It was thought it was made with the view of keeping Gen. Lee from sending reinforcements to Gens. Bragg and Beauregard. Nothing now divided our picket line and that of the enemy, but the Rapidan river, a very small stream, and of course, the vigilance of the two armies was much more earnest. On the 16th, our Division was called out to witness the execution of a young man whom it was said, was from Caswell county, and belonged to the 2d NC Regiment. It was said that he had fought twenty one battles and that his desertion was owing to the influence of a widowed and afflicted mother, and of course, the sympathies of the troops were touched by the story.

On the 19th, September, the enemy made a demonstration against us, in force, at Mortons Ford, on the Rapidan, and our Command is moved to that point. The camps are in full view across the open lands and plains of the Rapidan, and their pieces are well posted on the river. In the afternoon a line was indicated for the construction of defenses, and with no stone, nor logs of wood, and with nothing with which to work except our bayonets and hands, in the open fields, we toiled without rest or sleep, during the whole night and all of the following day. And it was often astonishing to see the amount of work that could be accomplished, without, comparatively anything with which to work.

Drilling and picketing, the duty - poor fresh beef and flour the diet, and construction of shanties, the amusement. At the suggestion of the Chaplain, a Christian Association was organized in the Regiment, which was very regular and prompt in the duties imposed by its rules. Our boys could not resist the temptation of crossing the river to get beans and corn, and they soon began to exchange friendly greetings with the enemy's pickets and papers, and having friendly chats. The cool winds from mountains, which rose up grandly to view beyond Culpeper C.H., and the biting frosts, made the "bunking" rather unpleasant, and sleeping rather difficult, where there was only two light blankets for four men. The political situation in NC was anxiously viewed by the troops, as one of the most prominent Secession and War papers of the South, was daily endeavoring to sow seeds of discord among the troops aided by tricky and designing men, who hoped thereby to gain prominence and position. A review of our Corps, by Gen. Lee, and an order curtailing furloughs to Commissioned officers, indicated some movement which was decided by orders issued on the 7th, Oct., to cook rations for three days and be ready to march without baggage, on the 8th. Meade's Army was occupying the Rapidan, for over 20 miles as his front, and Culpeper C.H. was his base. We marched up and camped near Orange C.H. on the night of 8th and moved off on the 9th in a Northerly direction.

On the morning of the 9th of Oct., the head of our column was moved in the direction of the mountains and those who had surmised that a demonstration was to be made against Meade, who was resting in comparative quiet on the Railroad, around Culpeper C.H., now were satisfied, that such was the intention of Gen. Lee. The fine bracing air of this mountain region enabled the troops, to hold up remarkably well on the steady march. But it was agreed by all that it added nothing to the pleasure of a "deep wade" through those cold clear streams, which rushed down from the slopes of the mountains.

It was a sight not to be forgotten when one standing at a Ford of these rivers, could look back, and as far as he could see, the whole line had prepared for the plunge, by appearing in partial dishabille. Crossing the Rapidan at an old mill, we passed on over the Robertson river, and bivouacked for the night 8 miles from Madison C.H..

Passing Madison and wading Hazle river, we now come to the inevitable and unmistakable foot-print of the enemy, as seen in the general devastation that everywhere greeted the eye.

Near the village of Jefferson, our advanced cavalry, and a heavy running skirmish ensued, which ended after nightfall beyond the celebrated Warrenton Springs on Hedgeman river.. At Jefferson, the enemy had constructed a barricade across the principal street, of tables, bedsteads, bureaus, chair, wagons, &c, which were of as much service as the one proved to be that the Pennsylvania Militia constructed near Chambersburg, by building a rail fence across the road.

We passed the rains of the splendid buildings at the Springs, just at dark, but enough was seen to justify the popularity in days gone of this splendid resort for the fashionable and wealthy. The next day we pass the town of Warrenton, where the admiration and devotion of the noble and heroic Virginia women, to our trusted leaders Lee and Stuart, was exemplified by the daughters and matrons of town crowding around and clinging to them. Reaching a piece of wood, 4 miles S.E. of the town, about 4 o'clock pm, we were ordered into camp to cook rations. Our Brigade was already noted in the skill in capturing wild game, but its success within an hour from the time we halted excelled anything it had yet accomplished, over the capture of a red fox in an open field, at Summerville Ford. Without firing a gun, they very soon had a wild turkey, an opossum, several mountain partridges and rabbits.

When surrounded by a regiment of yelling rebels, they seemed to be utterly helpless.

Moving out before day, pass Gen. Battle's Brigade and catch some of the eloquent appeals as he addressed his men, there in the hazy mists of the early morning and very soon, the crack of the sharpshooters rifles told us that his stirring sentences had a purpose in them. The day was consumed in a running fight, in which we killed, wounded, and captured several of the enemy. By circuitous and obscure routes, often passing for miles through fields, and roads, cut out by our pioneer corps, we at last, on approaching Bristoe Station, on the Manassas Gap Railroad, found by the roar of musketry and artillery that we were in close proximity to the body of the enemy. Moving at a rapid rate for about three miles we were halted just after the battle closed, in which Cooke's and Kirkland's Brigades had been engaged and lost about four hundred men..

Resting here for a day or two, on what was said to be the farm of our beloved old corps Commander, Gen. Ewell, we began to move back along the Railroad, completely destroying the ties, bridges, and trestles, and crooking the rails in such a manner as to render them useless. This work was very heavy and laborious, but it was done cheerfully by the troops as they fancied it would at least give respite, until it could be repaired.

The ties and timbers, which were nearly all oak, we would pile up and then fire them and lay across as many rails as could be conveniently, and when these become heated, their weight would cause them to bend. Frequently the men would take the rails and bend them around trees. The work of destruction, was as complete as soldiers could make it, which means that it could not have been improved by any other class of men,

with the same means. Our cavalry, in their frequent engagements and captured a large number of the enemy and prisoners passed our Corps during a heavy rain, and few of those who witnessed the ludicrous figure of a Yankee Assistant Surgeon, perched on a horse, with stirrup-leathers about half the proper length, and clinging to the mane of the rough trotting animal, while he would occasionally touch the saddle, and heard the racy and pithy "shelling" from our boys, will fail to remember it. It was evidently his first ride on horseback. On the morning of the 19th of October we recrossed the Rappahannock river at Brandy Station, during a pelting of rain and hail, driven into our faces by a violent, and bitter cold wind.

One of our Brigades was cut off by a large force of the enemy, and had either to contend with overwhelming numbers, surrender, or take the chances of swimming the river. Many of the brave fellows chose the latter alternative, and some of them escaped while others benumbed with cold and exhausted sank to rise no more. One Captain from our State, begged his men to follow him, as he leaped into the chilly waters, but finding on reaching the South side of the stream, that nearly all of his men declined to take the risk, he boldly plunged in again, and went back, as he said to share their fate. Wet, cold, hungry and tired, we stop a portion of the day on the once magnificent farm of John Minor Botts; now a picture of barren desolation. We bivouacked on a small stream called Mountain River until the 22d, when we went into camp at Kelly's Ford on the Rappahannock, six miles below Brandy Station; where we received our baggage on the 28th, allowing us for the first time since leaving Morton's Ford on the 8th, a change of clothing.

Fortunately the "hazy Indian Summer days" favored our scanty supply of blankets and clothing and the constant and heavy picketing, which was required. On the 7th of Nov., the enemy appeared suddenly on our front, in heavy force and made at once a vigorous attack. The loss was considerable on both sides, and our army was withdrawn and marched back to our old quarters on the Rapidan; reaching them during a fierce snow storm, and just one month from the time we had left them. But we found quite a change..

The Blue Ridge in full view, instead of presenting that hazy hue, so pleasing to the eye, and which is one of its charming features during Spring and Summer, is now glistening with the dazzling whiteness of its snowy crown, while the balmy breeze is changed into the cold piercing wind, which sweeps down on our exposed position, with merciless fury.

We had only been in camp a few days when the enemy, by way of showing us his ability to work greeted us with a long whistle from a locomotive at Culpeper, thereby surprising us, by the fact that he had repaired the whole road in almost as short time as we were in destroying it.

Our subsequent experience taught us that he had provided at convenient points, with in his lines, duplicates of all the bridges, &c, on the important roads, so that in case of destruction by our forces, they could be readily replaced. The Rapidan was now the dividing line between the two armies, and the heavy picket duty and constant heavy labor on fortifications, with the cold and rain, made soldier life anything but pleasant. It was during this unusually rough weather, that Gen. Lee, in his noble, self-sacrificing nature gave the example to refuse the proffered hospitalities of a friend in Orange. His tent, surrounded by those of his staff, he had pitched in an old field, just below the Court House, where he remained during the rigors of winter.

On Thursday, the 26th of Nov., we were ordered out in the breast works where we remained until the evening of the next day. On that morning we discovered their line passing a point several miles from us by the glistening of their polished guns in the sunshine, which could be easily seen, when the distance is so great that a man cannot be distinguished. They crossed near the junction of the Rapidan and Rappahannock river, and we were moved down about four miles, when our Brigade and Regiment being in front, we struck his flank on the Turnpike leading from Orange to Fredericksburg. Our Division at once threw out a very heavy picket force and under cover of vigorous sharp shooting, our line lay until after midnight within easy musket range of his main force. Meanwhile Hill's corps and the remainder of ours, obtained a good position covering his front and we were silently withdrawn and at early dawn took our position in line - having held a very critical one and having lost several good men.

We at once began to construct a line of breastworks. The enemy were about a mile from us, and in full view, and like us, were busy constructing defenses. About midway between the two lines ran a small branch called Mine Run and the ground on either side being cleared, it will at once be seen to what exposure the sharp shooters were subjected. Our respective lines from their proximity were much annoyed by the fire from the sharp shooters - and on the second day, having some of the Command in position both sides began to test the skill of their gunners in securing the proper range.

Gen. Johnson's Division on Friday attacked Meade, on his flank and quite a spirited engagement ensued. Our line worked in the ditches, continuously day and night, from Saturday morning until Tuesday night. A heavy rain fell during the whole of the day Saturday and Sunday, the skies brightened up and the cold piercing wind swept over our position and continued during our whole stay, with unabated fury and with increasing intensity in cold. The ground would freeze as fast as exposed by our rude implements in the ditches, and with all our most active and laborious exertions, was simply impossible to keep from suffering in the cold, which hitherto in our experience was unprecedented. As a means of comfort which aided us to take any sleep, we were compelled to build fires in the ditches and after warming the ground would remove the fire, and "pack" as many together as the capacity of the ditch could allow. Every means was resorted to by the different details, as they would give place to others in the works, to keep comfortable, but still during our stay at Mine Run our men suffered more from cold than at any other time

during the whole war. Our troops worked willingly for all felt confident that Gen. Meade intended to test our ability to stop his onward movement to Richmond. During the four days an incessant fire was kept up by both sides, both by small arms and artillery, and with considerable effect on both sides. Perhaps at no time or place during the whole war was there such an instance of the powers of endurance as was here exhibited. On Tuesday some of our men, who were wounded on Saturday were found alive on the field, although they had during that time no food and the ground was frozen. From their proximity to the enemy's line and from their exposed position, no assistance could be rendered, without incurring the risk of what must have been certain death.

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From the restlessness along their line on the night of Tuesday, it was evident that daylight would develop something. It was plain to see that Gen. Lee apprehended an attack, as our line of sharpshooters was strengthened, and other necessary precautions adopted

But at early dawn our scouts reported that Meade had abandoned his position and was again on his return to his old position on the North of the Rapidan. Immediately we gave pursuit and although marching rapidly we were unable to strike him. There was not a neater and cleaner retreat made the whole war, perhaps, than by Meade on this occasion, for our Division being one of the first in the pursuit, we were unable to find anything abandoned by him, except one caisson, that had, by the breaking in of a small bridge, tumbled into the water. We were marched back to our old camp, almost exhausted, by hard incessant labor and loss of sleep.

The constant speculations by the troops, in regard to our future, were now freely indulged. It was a very critical position of our armies in Tennessee, and the West, the indications in the Confederate Congress, for the repeal of the Substitute law - the territory of the South virtually in the hands of the enemy, excepting part of Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida, the tax on their resources must of necessity be very exhaustive and should the Campaigns of Longstreet and Hardee fail, the meat crop would be lost and our supplies at an end. Truly the outlook was anything but encouraging.

The rigor of Winter was now up on us in all its bitter severity. Snow, rain, sleet, mud, and those piercing winds which to the troops of a milder climate, were peculiarly trying, made it, necessary for us to resort to every means, to find comfort by an effort to supply, in the construction of our Winter Quarters, what we so greatly lacked in clothing, shoes, and blankets. In this condition, and with heavy details constantly on picket and fatigue duty, with none of the "ardent" accessible, except an occasional blockade canteen, which was readily cleaned out, at the rate of \$50 per quart, the 25<sup>th</sup> day of December

came and went, with but little to distinguish it from any other day, so to remind us of the hilarious, convivial and happy Christmas home-scenes in the “halcyon days of yore.”

We now occupied a position nearly opposite to Sommerville Ford and near the Plank Road, and the ingenuity and perseverance of the troops was displayed in the variety of styles of the different shanties erected as they vainly hoped for their winter homes. Having no transportation for extra baggage, our tools for procuring fuel, or for constructing shanties, consisted principally of large knives, small hatchets, occasionally worn in the belt. With these alone we have seen “a mess” in one day construct miniature houses that would excite the admiration of the whole camp. But in this instance, as in all preceding ones in the experience of our Brigade, especially, were our hopes blasted in one short hour.

Nearly all the shanties were completed and the men were delighted with the prospect of being allowed for once to enjoy the labor expended for their safety and comfort. It had been noticeable fact with our Brigade, that since its arrival in Wilmington in 1862, up to that time, it perhaps had done as much hard work, on fortifications as any one the army, and yet they had never fired a gun at the enemy from behind a single one of them, and they had time and again began to build comfortable quarters, but had never in a single instance, been allowed to complete them. So, in this instance when the men would indulge in congratulations, that they would at any rate, occupy their new homes until the rigors of winter had somewhat abated, others would shake their heads and say “too good to be true.” But Gen. Hoke was ordered to North Carolina, and it was said, was allowed to select two Regiments, in addition to his own Brigade, to take with him and the 43<sup>rd</sup> NC Regiment and the 21<sup>st</sup> Georgia Regiment were added to his command. And when it was made known that our destination was Eastern North Carolina, the cozy bunk and shanty were abandoned without a murmur.

The annoyance experienced by irregular mails, the ever welcome box from home, with the prospect of better, or more plentiful army rations, made the “tar-heels” welcome the change with delight.

Our rations had consisted of a scanty supply of fresh beef with frequently no salt, and hard tack, and generally a half pound of rancid bacon per week to the man. But the true and good soldier rarely complained; and was ever ready to speak in defense of the government and officers, when assailed by the croakers and growlers. IT is an incontrovertible fact that the men in the army who were ever ready to growl and complain, were almost invariably, worthless as soldiers, or were noted for hard living at home. The brave, chivalrous, refined, lofty Southern gentlemen, whether in the ranks or in official position, under the most trying privations, and suffering was over generous, obedient, and magnanimous, and could evince that manly fortitude in camp, or on the march, that would surely signal in his bearing in battle. But we had croakers in the army, croakers in the Confederate Congress, croakers in the Legislature, and an innumerable host of croakers at home, and they “have plied their vocation” with unremitting zeal and fidelity, to the constant disturbance of quiet and peace ever since.

Once again, on the old familiar camp ground near Kinston, and each in his turn watched eagerly for the time to arrive for his furlough home. These were now generously allowed, and many were the dollars saved by it to the troops, for soon after our arrival, the Currency & Tax Bills, were passed by the Confederate Congress, and pickled pork in one day, advanced in price from one dollar and twenty-five cents per pound, to two dollars and fifty cents, and everything else in about the same ratio.

Rev. E. W. Thompson, our beloved and indefatigable Chaplain, whose name can never be mentioned by a member of our Regiment except with emotions of the sincerest esteem, if not affection, was untiring in his fidelity to the religious duties of his position. He rarely omitted an opportunity for Divine service, even if presented three times per day. In the camp, or bivouac, on the march, and especially in the hospital, or field infirmary, were his valuable, faithful services appreciated, and we but declare what we believe to have been the universal sentiment of the Regiment, when we say that no more faithful, zealous and efficient Chaplain could have been found in the army of Northern Virginia. Quite a number of our men were detailed to work on the Ironclad Ram, which was being constructed at Kinston, while others were engaged in removing obstructions from the river, strengthening fortifications &c. Reports came in that a large Cavalry force of the enemy were concentrating at little Washington with an ultimate design on Raleigh. Gen. Grant is placed in command of the army of the Potomac, and has his eye fixed on the prize for which Scott, McDowell, McClellan, Hooker, Burnside, and Meade, sacrificed their laurels, while it is said that Sherman, by a daring move in threatening Mobile, from three different routes. The near future is pregnant with stupendous events.

The Mail trains on the W & W RR were now taken by the Government, we learned, to transport troops and supplies to Richmond, whether for the purpose of preparing that city for siege by Grant, or to strengthen Gen. Lee in an advance upon him on the Rapidan, were questions discussed with interest in the camp.

Very unexpectedly, on the 15<sup>th</sup> of March, quite a squall from the North, brought upon us hail, snow and ice, and caught us badly prepared for it. Lieut. Col. Lewis had left for his home, with a view to matrimony. W.W. Holden had been declared a candidate against Gov. Vance, and the latter had promised to visit the "tar heels" in their camps in the army of Northern Virginia. A general transfer and movement of Commands is - all in the direction of Richmond, gave the troops an abundance of material for wise camp sayings and prognostications. A Lodge of F.A.M. was organized, called "Vance Brothers Lodge No. 2", and here, many who entered its mystic folds found a pleasant diversion from the dull routine of camp life. Balls and parties were almost of nightly occurrence in Kinston - the Gun-boat was almost ready, for what we thought, was to be a formidable attack on the enemy, on our coast.

On the morning of the 23d, we arose to find the ground covered with snow about four inches in depth, and Gen. Hoke to afford the troops some amusement sent to a

Virginia Brigade, camping near by, a challenge to battle. The Brigade fell into line with Regimental colors flying, and was advanced in line of battle until we struck their line near their quarters, well posted. Then came the tug of War, and it raged furiously for 30 minutes, when we were forced to fall back. The enemy captured several of our men, while many of us lost our hats, which to this day have been held as “legitimate spoils of war”.

On the afternoon of the same day, Gen. Hoke received a notice from the Virginia commander, that he was coming with his Brigade at once, and capture our whole camp and confiscate our pots and kettles. Immediate preparations were made to receive them and soon they burst from the woods upon us like an avalanche. The struggle was desperate but short, for now they realized the fact that every cock fights best on his own dung hill. As soon as their line gave way our boys rushed upon the color bearers of three Regiments, and seized them and the panic was perfect. Pursuing them with “might and main,” many of them to escape, plunged through ice and water waist deep. Never was a snow ball frolic enjoyed more by a crowd of wild village boys. Bleeding hands, torn clothes, black eyes and swollen noses were some of the marks left by this memorable struggle.

State politics were now lively discussed in camp, and the feeling against Holden was almost universal and very decided. Having been the recognized and boasted leader of Secession in the State, and one of its advocates with out regard to consequences, he very naturally and justly drew upon his head, the anathemas of all men who had the least pride of honor or consistency. A meeting of the Brigade was called and invitation given Governor Vance to address us, but being pressed with prior engagements he failed to comply. The announcement of candidates throughout the State for the various county offices created in tense interest, and meetings were held in many Regiments and Companies to express their preferences. Such a meeting was held on the 8<sup>th</sup> day of April in our Regiment by the three Anson Companies and Lieut. L.L. Polk was nominated for the House of Commons and was elected in August. Religious exercises were constant and unremitting by our devoted Chaplain, and every man in the Regiment who desired it, was supplied with a Bible. Early on the morning of the 14<sup>th</sup> day of April we received order to pack up all surplus baggage and be ready to march. At 2PM we took the train and reached Tarboro at 2AM, and spent the remainder of the night in a very disagreeable swampy place, covered partially with water. During the day Lieut. Col. Lewis came to us and joined by Gen. Ransom and Kemper’s Brigades, marched through the patriotic town, headed by the Band of the 1<sup>st</sup> NC Battalion and marched about twelve miles in the direction of Williamston. On Saturday, after a very laborious day marching, in which , on account of the very muddy condition of the roads, we were allowed to rest ten minutes in in every hour, we reached Rawl’s Mills, below Williamston, where a portion of the 26<sup>th</sup> NC Regiment, under Col. Burguoyne fought the enemy on the 2d of Nov 1862. On Sunday, we move through the dilapidated town of Jamesville, and arrive at the enemy’s out post near Plymouth, in the afternoon and captured nine out of eleven pickets, the remaining two being chased in the very borders of the town by one of Gen. Hoke’s Couriers. The garrison was principally at church, and was not aware of our proximity

until they were aroused by the firing. Immediately we formed a line of battle and the gunners began to feel for us with their 32 pounders.

The firing between and guns and the Fort was kept up at intervals the whole of Sunday night and Monday. Gen. Hoke and some of his officers spent the day in reconnoitering the position of the enemy, making plans for the attack. Just before sundown on Monday, we were ordered up and moved around the west side of the town and about one mile from it. Our left rested on the Roanoke River and our right was supported by the Virginia Brigade and Capt. Graham's Battery. The upper? Fort for the protection of the town was about 300 yards outside of the line of earth works and was garrisoned by a Captain and 72 men with two 32 pounders and several other guns besides small arms. On one side the Fort was protected for several hundred yards by an almost impassible swamp covered with brush and logs, cut down and tumbled in every manner that could impede our advance.

Our advance on the Fort was through an open level field over a half mile when we would at that time be subjected to an unobstructed fire from the point of starting.

Our line was formed in the edge of a swamp, where the mud and water was about knee deep and under cover of the trees. Our sharp shooters were formed on the edge of the opening and at the command, "Forward - double quick!" Our line burst from its cover with the suddenness of an avalanche and simultaneous with it, came the gallant Graham with his splendid battery, thundering across the field. He advanced at a full gallop under a heavy artillery fire until he reached the desired point which was about 400 yards from the Fort when he halted and immediately opened in gallant and effective style. Our line pressed forward under a galling fire until they reached the stockade, which was now about dark, and immediately surrounded it, as with a cordon of fire. Fifteen of the sharp shooters made opening through the heavy sharpened cedars that had been fastened around the fort to prevent an entrance, and under a murderous fire from the fort and through a shower of hand grenades they actually sealed it. The gallant and lion hearted Capt. Hal Macon, fell at the door and many others were wounded.

The large body of Infantry in the works around the town, had to stand and witness the struggle, without rendering any aid, as by coming to the rescue, they would have exposed their flank to Gen. M..W. Ransom, who was so posted as to strike them effectively. By midnight Gen. Hoke had completely surrounded the Fort and three Yankee Gun Boats, steamed up the river and began to feel for us.

The swollen condition by the recent heavy rains, enabled the to get as near as two hundred yards of our line, and our Regiment being between the river and fort, got the full benefit of their one hundred pounders, but fortunate for us, they could not lower their guns sufficiently and their shell, shot and canister passed just above our line.

The Ram, "Roanoke" (*newsletter editor's note - was the Ram "Albemarle" not "Roanoke"*) which had been built to aid in this work, was far up the river, with a large fort two miles above us on the bank of the river, in which was mounted a two hundred

pounder especially to pay its compliments to the Ram whenever it attempted a passage, and the river was studded with torpedoes, but it was high enough to let her pass without disturbing them, although the enemy had made every preparation to prevent the passage of the Ram, and had the banks lined with pickets, yet by closing her port holes and obscuring all the lights, she had passed the range of the big gun and was speeding her way to our relief below the fort before she was discovered. And it being too late to communicate the danger to the gun boats that were playing upon us so furiously, before they were aware of it, she put on a strong head of steam and threw open her port holes in front and opened a terrible fire upon them. They steamed off with all possible speed for the Sound, but the Roanoke kept her speed and fire, and overtook one just below the town and ran her iron snout clear through her hull and drew back to let her sink. Never in the history of the war were troops prouder to hear guns open, for we knew that our deliverer had come. Gen. Hoke now demanded a surrender of the Fort, and after a parley of about fifteen minutes the fort and garrison was surrendered.

Before light, the lines were rearranged and disposed in such manner that while a great portion of it was exposed during the day to a raking fire from the Infantry behind the works and forts in the town, yet it allowed no new disposition or change on the part of the enemy.

Early on Wednesday morning our Brigade was formed on the West side of the town while Gen. Ransom's was on the East side, and the advance was one of danger and death from the moment we started, being through fair open level ground for nearly a mile. But the Stars and Stripes floated defiantly from Fort Williams and it must be lowered and all felt that they must be men in the emergency. For some reason they gave most of their attention to the line of Gen. Ransom, for it was found when he reached the line that 335 of his noble Brigade had fallen. As we neared the works and rapidly concentrated our fire, from contracting lines the enemy broke for the fort and about 2600, were hurled and packed within its walls. In a moment it was surrounded and Gen. Hoke sent a flag of truce and called for a parley with the commandant Gen. Weitzel, who soon appeared outside the fort and was conducted to our gallant leader, who sat composedly and smiling on his "crapped-eared" black and surrounded by his brave and excited followers.

Gen. Weitzel approached Gen. Hoke, evidently under great embarrassment, his manner, tone and words, betokened confusion and great excitement. Gen. Hoke sat on his "old black" with the same calm, composed manner, and same pleasant mien which always characterized him in moments of trial.

After a hasty introduction, every word of which was eagerly caught by the victorious and self reliant and proud Confederates, who stood all around them. Gen. Hoke demanded the unconditional surrender of all the forces and munitions of war. "In whose name do you demand it?" asked Gen. Weitzel and Gen Hoke, straightening his tall frame in his saddle, and with an eye flashing fire, he said in a clear determined tone, emphasized by a wave of the right had; "In the name of the Confederate States of America." Gen. Weitzel protested that he could not surrender with honor or with the

approval of his government, since that government would not overlook the fact that he had surrendered a force and strong garrison without damage. Gen. Hoke promptly replied with a tone of sarcasm, that, if to be damaged was what he desired, he could readily be gratified, but that the dictates of humanity and discretion alike demanded that he should spare further effusion of blood, or loss of life, but intimated to him in plain terms, that if we were compelled to assault the fort, which was now completely surrounded, the responsibility of the terrible consequences must rest on his head, and granting Gen. Weitzel a few minutes, asked for in which to make up his final answer, Gen. Hoke turned and called out: "Captain Graham, bring your battery into position."

In less time than it takes to pen the words, that splendid officer and his gallant men, had the mouths of their guns bearing on the fort and within a few paces of it. The Ram, Roanoke, had also come into position, at the mouth of the street, where it was in full view of the fort, and every man placed himself firmly in his position and clenched his gun with excitement and determination. The long, anxious moments of suspense having expired, those guns of Capt. Graham's opened simultaneously, and trimmed the top of the fort, but before it could be repeated, and just as we were listening for the order to assault the fort, the "Stars and Stripes" began to descend from their defiant position, and the white flag began to take the position. Then one long, wild, prolonged shout, went up from our army and never was a flag of truce more eagerly and heartily greeted during the war. The door of the fort was thrown open, and the Rebs rushed in to see the spoils of their capture. Twenty-six hundred men and officers were packed in the fort, who were soon relieved of their arms and accouterments and marched out. Guns, wagons and teams, forage supplies, ordnance stores, and sutlers stores, all fell into our hands and never were the spoils more speedily divided and more earnestly enjoyed.

The best citizens, who had long been under the iron rule of military law and oppression, hurried to and fro through the streets and manifested their joy, in various ways. We can never forget the welcome given us by our old friend Charles Latham and family, when soon after the battle we were allowed to go to his house, to learn the fate of his family. The splendid residence was in the ground covered by Ransom's Brigade in the charge and was perforated by balls, while one or two of the enemy lay dead in the yard. We were soon marched out of town and quartered near a splendid spring. None can know how much the rest and sleep and many good things captured, were enjoyed by our army, except those who have experienced it.

On the evening of the 20th, our worthy Chaplain proposed to the companies "I" and "D" to hold a meeting of Thanksgiving, for mercies shown to them in the battle, neither of the companies, although in the hottest of the fight, having lost a man. The meeting was well attended by the Brigade. On the 22<sup>nd</sup>, the prisoners were marched off in the direction of Weldon under the charge of the 35<sup>th</sup> NC Regiment. Dusty, dry and warm, it must have been peculiarly severe on these men, who had so long been on the comparatively light duty of lying in the garrison. On the 23d the boys employed themselves in fixing up their little presents for the dear ones at home, and at night, the

gratifying intelligence had spread throughout the camp, that Gen. Hoke's splendid services had been rewarded by a Major General's Commission, and it was at once resolved that the troops would give him a serenade at his Head Quarters. With bands of music, we all soon assembled, and amid the wildest enthusiasm we called him out. His speech was modest and free from bombast or egotism. Several speeches were made and the occasion passed off most pleasantly. We remained in camp, until Monday the 25<sup>th</sup>, when we were marched out at 11 o'clock am, in the direction of Jamesville. We met a portion of Gen. Martin's Brigade on its way to Plymouth. It was said that one of our officers had packed up a wagon load of "goodies" and started it towards Tarboro, and it was met by these troops, who "charged" it and appropriated the entire load.

On the morning of the 26<sup>th</sup>, April, we left camp at early dawn, and took the direction of Washington.

The roads were dry, sandy and hot and the dust was almost unbearable. We remember that late in the afternoon we came to a swamp about three fourths of mile wide and had it to wade. We lay down that night with orders to be ready at 3 AM and accordingly, we scrambled up in the dark and daylight found us in sight of Washington. Our Regiment was deployed as skirmishers and advanced to a semi circular ridge, which borders a large swamp in front of the town, and which had all the timber and brush cut down. And our position while it had the advantage of a good view of the town and all the fortifications defending its approach, it had also the disadvantage of being in full view of their gunners and was the line upon which the enemy had almost daily placed their targets for Artillery practice. And the remarkable accuracy with which they threw their shells, was satisfactory evidence that they had been well drilled. By means of shingles, and our bayonets, the boys were not long burrowing into the ground after our line was established. Each man remained in his pit, as closely as possible, for whenever one showed himself, it was the signal for a shot, as they seemed constantly to have their guns trained on us. Lieut. Threadgill of Co. "I" was in a pit at the root of a small persimmon tree, against which stood one of their practice targets. He raised up to reconnoiter his position and in an instant the flash of a gun warned him to lie down, and the missile cut the tree off about three feet from the ground. This, at a distance of three fourths of a mile, and was but a fair specimen of the kind of shooting we had to endure during the whole day. We remained in our cramped positions in these pits, exposed to the direct rays of the Sun during the day, and were not relieved until the next morning. At intervals, during the night, a brass band occupying some point where their excellent music, could be distinctly heard by us, regaled our weary moments with their favorite national airs. Our places were taken on the morning of the 27<sup>th</sup> by a squadron of dismounted Cavalry - who were evidently not much pleased with the position. The position was on the ruin of a once beautiful farm, but its beauty and glory had departed, at the approach of the ruthless invader and despoiler.

The whole Command was moved off in the direction of Greenville. We passed the beautiful little village of Pactolas, Greenville, and Hookerton, through a lovely

farming country. At the latter place some of the disabled boys applied to the keeper of the public house for quarters, which were denied them, and they were referred to a citizen whose name was Smith. This family were refugees from one of the coast counties, and proved to be a whole souled Southern man, and gentleman - which was more than could have been truthfully said for the "land shark" in charge of the so called Hotel.

We reached the Neuse, some distance below Kinston, early on the morning of the 3d of May, where a pontoon bridge had been thrown across. After a march of twenty five miles, we bivouacked on the upper Trent road. We reached Deep Gully that evening, found the enemy's pickets and drove them two miles, and fell back. A heavy detachment remained near this old picket post, under the charge of Maj. Glover of the 21<sup>st</sup> Ga. Regiment. The troops were marched rapidly in the direction of Pollocksvile, and being without rations, a wagon loaded with two barrels of "hard tack", was dispatched to meet us and but little time was consumed in appropriating their contents. It was now evidently the purpose of Gen. Hoke to make a bold demonstration against New Bern, and taking with him a food force, he approached rapidly, but cautiously that town on the the South, cutting the Railroad leading to Morehead City. Ready on the morning of the 6<sup>th</sup>, we were aroused by the heavy booming of his guns in the direction of New Bern, and the orders to move, which were momentarily expected, came at noon, but not to go to New Bern, but to Kinston. This was unlooked for, by the whole Command, as it was well known that Washington had been evacuated and no danger from that point was apprehended, but when we reached Kinston on the 7<sup>th</sup>, and found a long train of flat cars in waiting, it was not difficult to conjecture our destination.

About dark, we moved off, with the train literally packed with the troops and the weather now being warm, it was a very disagreeable ride. About 10 o'clock on Sunday morning, we arrived at Weldon, where we were allowed a short time to rest and cook rations. In the meantime, the wildest and most exaggerated rumors were flying as to the danger of Petersburg. The heavy force that was traveling the Weldon & Petersburg Railroad, &c.

The Sabbath in the army was not known as such, and especially on occasions of such pressing importance, as then demanded our services. We pushed on, when at Jarrett's we struck "fresh trail" of the enemy.

Their Cavalry had tapped the railroad at this point - tore up the track - twisting the rails by means of a machine they had for the purposed, and burned many of the dwellings. We remember distinctly, as we approached the place we saw a group of women standing around the smouldering ruins of a once magnificent residence, and the only visible thing saved from the wreck was a bedstead, upon which some of them sat, as they poured out their wail of anguish.

The next day we marched 20 miles, which brought us to Stony Creek, where the enemy in his work of devastation and ruin had left the road and consequently we here met a train from Petersburg. The whole of that 20 miles was one continued scene of bleak desolation - as complete a wreck as the most malignant could desire.

We were carried almost with the speed of the wind into Petersburg where we arrived about Sunset, to find the whole square in front of Jarratt's Hotel covered with men, women, and children, black and white - all wild with excitement over the apparently reliable report that Gilmore with his corps of negro troops, was rapidly approaching the city, and was only 4 miles down the Appomattox.

The citizens, anticipating our almost famish condition, had provided themselves with baskets, dishes, buckets, trays, &c., loaded with good things for us to eat, and hastily filling our haversacks, we hastened off and after marching and counter-marching until late at night, we were halted in the trenches on Jordan's farm, where we remained until 3PM the next day, passed through Petersburg, and took the turnpike in the direction of Richmond, and on reaching Dunlap's farm were turned back and camped for the night on the bank of Swift Creek.

Our command having camped near this place for a considerable time during the Summer of 1862, the citizens would call on our officers and retail all the wild rumors, with which the very air seemed to be loaded. To them, Butler's proximity was very uncomfortable, and rendered them painfully restless.

We remained quiet during the whole of the 11<sup>th</sup>, but we could distinctly hear heavy cannonading in the direction of Richmond.

The next day, we moved in that direction, and camped at night on the field where the fighting had occurred the day before.

From the explosion of a shell or some other cause, the woods had caught on fire, and the heart sickening sight of the charred bodies of the slain were all around us that night.

Our officers were taxed heavily, as we had comparatively but a handful of men with which to protect Petersburg and Richmond, and all the miles of

defenses around and between them. It was now raining and had been all night, but we were hurried off to the Bluff - thence to Richmond on a boat and ordered out to the breastworks, where it was reported, there was imminent danger of their falling into the hands of a large force of Cavalry.

Through some mistake we took the wrong road, and through mud, often knee-deep until near midnight, worn out, wet and hungry, we lay down in the open field to sleep as best we could. The next day we were marched and counter-marched all day along the fortifications and at night were ordered to Richmond to guard a provision train to Orange Court House, but the order on our arrival was countermanded and we were marched at a double quick, through rain and mud, across the James, and up the Chesterfield road where we threw out a very strong picket force and remained for the night.

We had now been on the march, in the fight, on picket or other hard and active duty for 30 days and our Command was well nigh exhausted. Since our arrival at Petersburg five days before, our duty had been awfully severe and our time for sleep and our rations had been scant enough to prostrate men who were idle. But the situation was now drawing to a crisis, for we could hear of arrivals of troops and Gen. Beauregard was concentrating his forces on the south side of the James, where he was being confronted by a heavy force under Butler. The yankee gunboats too were cautiously feeling their way up the river, for the purpose, evidently of cooperating with Butler's land forces.

On Sunday, the 15<sup>th</sup> of May, the enemy had advanced his position until he held a position of the breastworks that had been constructed in connection with the Drewry's Bluff defenses, and his whole line was parallel to and confronting our forces, who now occupied the line of works from the James to a point considerably beyond the Pike. An animated fire was kept up at points along the line during the whole day, and late in the afternoon, it became so warm on the right of our line, that we all thought a general engagement was imminent. It was just at this time that President Jefferson Davis and Gen. Braxton Bragg, rode along our line and were met by the gallant Gen. Beauregard. They had a somewhat protracted conference and the effect on the troops was not calculated to inspire confidence. For we well knew that should Mr. Davis and Gen. Bragg agree in any line of policy, that conflicted with the views of Beauregard, the latter, by virtue of his subordinate rank, would have to yield, but we all felt that we preferred to risk Gen. Beauregard in an emergency; and brave apprehensions were produced by the appearance of these two most needful men in the Confederacy, in our minds, and in council with our leader. Our line now extended from Guinea Station through Richmond with its ends resting on Petersburg with its left threatened by Grant and its right by Butler. It was evidently the purpose of the enemy to turn our right with Butler's forces, take possession of the Danville & Petersburg Roads and remove the obstructions from the James; and then secure a position on the rear of our Capitol, while Grant should pass its front. The audacity of Butler and apparent reluctance of Beauregard to attack him, could be attributed to nothing, but our small force, and while all felt assured of the issue when it was made, yet the situation was felt to be indeed critical for all knew that success to Butler was irretrievable defeat to us, and most probably the fall of Richmond. By Sunday night, Butler had entrenched himself strongly, and the two armies now watched each other as two giant foes in the ring, each seeming anxious to catch an opportunity to strike with advantage the first blow. Our Regiment, for some reason unknown to us, was placed in the Division of Maj. Gen. Robert Ransom, which now occupied the left of our line.

On Monday morning, the 16<sup>th</sup>, we were ordered to leave all baggage canteens, &c. and to march as quietly as possible - no one being allowed to talk. The enemy now occupied position, nearly parallel to our line of works and generally about three hundred yards from them.

Long before daylight, we were taken by the flank around our works and next to the James, and filed in between the two lines of works and formed our line immediately on their front, under cover of the densest fog we had ever seen. Our sharpshooters were

properly disposed and our reinforcements, were brought up and the strict orders given them as to their duty, as our support in the charge. Especially was this case with a Virginia Brigade that was placed immediately in our rear. The officers in our hearing, passed along their line cheering and encouraging the men, and telling them if the line in front falters, run right over them, &c. Just after light, the signal was given for us to move forward. The ground had been cleared, partially, and was covered with brush, logs, &c and the fog was so dense as to obscure everything around us. We could not see whether we were aligned on the right or left, and of course could tell nothing of the position of the enemy or our proximity to them. We rushed forward through the impenetrable mist and the sharpshooters in many places found that they had passed through the line of the enemy's sharpshooters, and were on the works, before they were aware of it. The firing from their breastworks now opened in all its fury, and our line not being able to see anything, found itself tumbling headlong over strong telegraph wires, that the enemy had stretched from stump to stump, and under one of the severest fires that we encountered during the whole war. We were halted and the line was readily adjusted, and then the roar of battle opened in all its fury. Their range being unobstructed and our line being only a short distance and on a slightly elevated position, and their fire severely accurate. Our cartridge boxes were all filled, but our Regiment at the time the enemy broke on our front did not have exceeding two rounds left.

Never did men endure a heavier and steadier storm of ball and shell for the same length of time, with more heroic bravery, especially as our aim was entirely governed by the report of their guns, since it was impossible to see them. Our line, or at least that position including our Regiment, stood firm as adamant and not a single man was missing from his post in the 43<sup>rd</sup>, when the smoke and fog lifted from the scene of blood and carnage. It was indeed a critical moment when we found our ammunition exhausted and looked around for the Virginia Brigade to take our place and which was directed that morning "to run over us if we faltered."

Fortunately the enemy just at this moment broke on our front. The Virginia Brigade could no where be seen, for they had taken refuge behind the Fort's breastworks and hills far in the rear. Our Regiment under our brave and spirited Lieut. Col. Lewis, was withdrawn with orders to replenish our cartridge boxes. The enemy's sharpshooters finding that we did not pursue them came back and took possession of their breastworks and the Virginians were rallied and brought up to occupy our line, when the enemy's sharpshooters opened on them and they gave way. Just then Col. Lewis occupying a position where he could see the whole scene, ordered our Regiment to form a line so as to strike the flank of the enemy, who by this time were crossing the works and advancing, They were swept from the field like chaff before the storm, and we were pressed forward until their retreat was turned into an utter rout. By a skillful maneuver a portion of our forces were sent down the James and succeeded in getting into the rear of their right and charging captured a whole Brigade, officers and all. On the turnpike we took a splendid battery of parrot guns, and the prisoners numbered about 4,000. It was indeed a dearly bought but brilliant and glorious victory. Gen. Whiting who was every moment expected

to strike his rear, from Petersburg, from come cause failed to come in time, or the victory must have been crushing and overwhelming. Hotly and closely did we chase Butler to his safe retreat at Bermuda Hundred. The battle was in its results, one of the most important fought during the war, and never has, and perhaps never will, be regarded in its true character. The masterly skill and genius of our splendid General, as displayed in successfully defeating and routing a greatly superior force, well equipped, well disciplined, and well organized, with a small force, only partially organized and worn-out by the severest duty of thirty-two days, and that by assaulting him in a strong and well fortified position, last its significance and importance, in having occurred amid the great giant battles Spotsylvania. The Battle of Drewry's Bluff, was one of the best and hardest fought of the war, but it was eclipsed the terrific shocks , between the two great armies of Lee and Grant at Spotsylvania and the Wilderness.

The enemy fled precipitately in the direction of Bermuda Hundred, where his gun boats lay to protect him and this gave our command a little respite from the laborious duties which had been continuous for over thirty days and which had well nigh exhausted the men. Lying on the field the remainder of the days of the 6<sup>th</sup>, we had an opportunity to survey the field; and to examine the positions, the two armies occupied during the engagement; their relative advantages, &c., and the evidences of the desperate character of the struggle. The damage on both sides, was heavy. Our Regiment was next to Haygood's SC Brigade on our right, and we saw a Captain and seven men lying side by side behind a small pine pole, stiff in death; each one having received the fatal shot in the head. Every twig, stump and log between the two lines was literally riddled with balls, and to judge from the marks of the bullets, it seemed impossible that even a sparrow could have remained unharmed. The enemy's dead were principally shot through the head, being protected by breastworks. They left their tents, their knapsacks and hundreds of guns, &c. , and their dead in their hasty flight. Our forces pressed them closely, and Gen. Beauregard, after bottling Gen. Butler at Bermuda Hundred at once set to work and by incessant toil day and night entrenched himself securely under the gun boats of the enemy - his defenses reaching from James to the Appomattox. Almost every minute during the time, we were greeted with an unceremonious visit by one of those huge one or two hundred pound shells, which where fearfully demoralizing.

We remember one afternoon J.M. Smith, of Co. I, was sitting in rear of our breastworks under a Yankee fly tent writing, when a large shell striking in our front about 200 yards ricocheted, bounded over the breastworks and passed near his head and struck a tree with its conical point turned back end passing just above his head gathered the tent cloth in its whirling motion and rolled into the ditch. Being suddenly stripped of his shelter, he remarked good humoredly, "Well that's decidedly cool."

At 4 PM on the 19<sup>th</sup>, we received orders (our Rgt.) To march. Reaching the Bluff about dark we took a boat for Richmond. Reaching the city, we were marched up on one of the principal streets, where we remained until the next morning - the men lying on the pavements, and wherever they could find sufficient dry space. So fatigued and

worn and exhausted were the troops, that they slept soundly during the remainder of the night notwithstanding, the air was very cool, and the drizzling rain fell upon their unprotected forms all the while. When aroused to take the train many of them shook as though they were in the clutches of a first-class Georgia ague. A merchant moved to compassion, by some influence brought out two boxes of tobacco and distributed among the boys to their great delight. We were crowded on the train and started for Bellfield, on the Fredericksburg road, which we marched about 12 miles. Here we found the officers actively engaged in removing the Post office and other Government property, and the general appearance of affairs indicated that an engagement with the enemy was imminent at any moment. We learned that we were about 12 miles from Gen. Lee's army; and were marched that evening about 8 miles in the direction of Spotsylvania, and camped. Early on Saturday morning the 21<sup>st</sup>; we moved in the direction of Lee, and about noon we found his army moving on Hanover Junction.

General Ewell, who was now in command of us; informed us that we must march all night and act as rear guard. We made a forced march of thirty miles that night, and on the next morning at 8 o'clock, we were marched into position in our old Brigade. Long weary months of trial, and suffering had intervened since we left it, and its skeleton Regiments and companies told too plainly that they too, had braved peril and death. Our beloved and noble commander, Gen. Daniel, had fallen at Spotsylvania, and hundreds of his devoted followers, and the magnificent Brigade, that he passed in review only a few months before would now scarcely make a full regiment. Lieut. Col. Lewis was now in command of Hoke's Brigade and Capt. Whitaker of Co. D, was in command of the Regiment. Our whole army now stretched itself on a defensive line passing near Hanover Junction, near which point was the position of our command.

We rested quietly during the night until 3 o'clock the morning of the 23d, we were called to arms and marched down the river, and formed a line began work on breastworks. Heavy cannonading during the day at North Anna Bridge. We were marching counter-marching, skirmishing, fighting, throwing up breastworks, strengthening abatis and other defenses, and all the while in such close proximity to the enemy, that the balls and shells from their lines made it anything but safe and comfortable, from the time we rejoined our Brigade unit the 30<sup>th</sup> of May, a day and night. On Monday the 30<sup>th</sup>, we made a flank movement which brought on the battle of Bethesda Church.

On Monday the 31<sup>st</sup> of May, our Division was ordered to move by the right flank and reaching a public road, we crossed our earthworks and advanced in line. Gen. Battle's Brigade on the right, Daniel's in the center and Ransom's on the left. Proceeding about a mile we emerged from the woods into open ground, when we found a strong line of the enemy well protected by breastworks.

They either did not apprehend our approach, or were ordered to hold their fire until our line was fully exposed, for they reserved it until within one hundred yards of their line, then poured a murderous volley into us. This was the signal for that old rebel yell and charge, which drove them precipitately and in wild confusion from their

position. We were now entering a large plantation, and the cleared ground gave our pursuing troops greatly the advantage, for they fired with terrible effect on the flying enemy. We advanced until we were very near their earthworks which were concealed by the woods, and three batteries with a strong line of infantry opened on us. Instantly two of our batteries, which had followed and gained position in our rear, replied, and the battle opened in all its fury. These new developments necessitated a change of direction in our lines, and Ramseur's gallant Brigade, was ordered to charge. Never shall we forget the splendid bearing of that Brigade, as it moved with the power of an avalanche across the comparatively level ground for some distance under a sever fire from the front and an enfilade fire from the enemy's batteries. It was the best preserved line we ever witnessed in a charge in battle, during the war, and threw itself with unwavering resistless power, against a force largely its superior in numbers, it swept the field like a tornado. But many of its noble men were rushing on to death, and among them was the genial, talented, generous, patriotic and fearless Capt. Eli Freeman of Co. C, 14<sup>th</sup> NC Regiment. The battle raged, (our Division holding its position) until late at night when we retired to a position behind our works.

The loss in our Division was heavy, having to endure a constant and terrific fire for several hours, and the ground being open we wholly unprotected. Our batteries were greatly exposed, and were very soon silenced or disabled by the splendid firing of the enemy. We used the old church called Bethesda for an infirmary, and found it difficult to remove our wounded, as the ground in our rear was so unbroken as to render no security against the raking fire that swept over it. We captured several hundred prisoners, who represented Grant army as being badly demoralized. One of them stated that Grant was about the only man, in his whole army, who was not whipped. His rations had now for several days, consisted of a scant supply of fresh beef and this together with the weather, the constant and heavy fighting and exposure of his troops, began to tell on the morale of his army, as well as to swell his sick list. Our Army on the contrary, was now drawing full rations of bacon, flour, tobacco, and occasionally of sugar and coffee, and its spirit was never better.

Our Command had been about two months without a change of clothing, and the constant fighting day and night and the hard labor in the trenches, where only we were safe from the continuous and heavy firing of the sharpshooters, and where we cooked frequently, eat and slept, in rain and in sunshine without shelter, were but the introductory lessons to the terrible ordeal that awaited us in the trenches of Petersburg, or the laborious trying scenes of the Valley. On the 2<sup>nd</sup> day of June, the enemy were massed under cover of the night in heavy forces in front of Kershaw's command, on our right, with a view of breaking our line. It was said that this great mass of soldiers was thrown against our line fourteen times, but each time to break and recede, like the wave against the rock.

The ground was literally covered with their dead, and Gen. Lee, ever watchful, moved our Division and Heth's promptly on his flank, and struck him a terrible blow. Our engagement began at 3PM and lasted long after nightfall, driving him from one stronghold to another until we had secured a good position. The loss to the enemy was

heavy; while we lost many valuable men. Large numbers of drafted men, were now being constantly added to their numbers and strange to say, they were sent right on to the front line, to meet the veterans of Lee, who were covered with the scars and dust of a hundred battles, and of course, were timid, awkward and almost entirely unreliable. Many were captured on our front who said they had just arrived and had never been drilled. We remember that on the evening of the 2<sup>nd</sup>, our Regiment ran into a Regiment of the raw recruits who did not even know how to surrender.

Thus the persistent determination of Gen. Grant "to fight it out on this line;" cost the unavailing and useless, if not criminal sacrifice of not less than 75,000 of his men up to this time. We were now on the ground occupied by McLellan in 1862; and near Gaines' Mill, where Jackson and Hill's troops immortalized their name in the memorable charge that resulted in the complete route of McLellan's army. The head of Grant's columns was again penetrating the swamps of the Chickahominy, as he slowly swung around our defences, to find some vulnerable point. His men were in bad health, and bad spirits, and with a less stern and determined leaders, they would have abandoned the task which thus far, had brought such disheartening results, and so little glory to their arms. But the iron will of Grant, was not to be baffled, and again and again, he threw his columns against the unwavering and dauntless front of Lee's in his vain endeavor to break through. We were worked day and night, either in the trenches, or in line of battle, and the 12<sup>th</sup> day of June found us, the dirtiest, raggedest, sauciest army of men that perhaps ever was seen. Our command left its baggage at Weldon just two months before, and our appearance could be readily imagined. But no one could laugh at another, for never had 60,000 Southern men, so far as appearances were concerned, been so nearly on an equality. Sunday, the 12<sup>th</sup> was a bright beautiful day, and the comparative lull on the lines gave us an opportunity to hear Dr. Rosser of Richmond, preach at Gen. Battle's Head Quarters and the Rev. E.H. Harding, Chaplain for the 45<sup>th</sup> Regt. The latter preached in an open field, to our Brigade, near the Mechanicsville road, from Psalms 23, 1<sup>st</sup>, 2d, and 3d. It was a very fine sermon and all seemed deeply interested. At intervals during the day the distant rumbling of cannon was indistinctly audible, and many were the conjectures as to its locality.

On Monday the 13<sup>th</sup>, we were ordered to fall in and from the quiet and usual manner of the officers, we little thought that our destination was the Valley of the Shenandoah. No orders in regard to baggage, no special orders in regard to the sick; no unusual movements among the ordinance and supply trains, and we thought as we moved off, it was only to take a new position further towards the James river, and on Grant's front. But after an hour's march, we found that a long line of troops had their backs on Lee, Grant and Richmond and we found our forces toward the North. As we neared the patriotic village of Louisa C.H. we could learn more of the cause of the cannonading of the day before, and when we reached the scene of the struggle between Hampton and Sheridan, the putrefying bodies of men and horses and the wild wreck of the battle told plainly of the desperation of the conflict.

The weather was desperately hot and the dust, and the direct and reflected rays of the Sun, as we filed through gaps in hills and mountains, concentrated on our heads,

the scarcity of water and marching at the rate of 25 miles a day; was a severe tax on the physical endurance of the troops. On the 17<sup>th</sup> we passed through Charlottesville, where the citizens and especially the ladies, lavished upon us their kindness and night found us at North Garden. The next morning we took the train for Lynchburg, and when we reached that city at 4 PM the enemy's shells were falling in the suburbs. All was consternation and excitement among the citizens, and each new arrival of troops, was hailed with great delight. We were hurried through the city, and thrown into line in a beautiful grove, which overlooked the city, and where we could get a good view of the enemy's front line, about three-fourths of a mile distant. Heavy skirmishing was going on between the cavalry pickets and the general outlook indicated that at early dawn on the next morning; the battle would be inaugurated in full fury.

In consequence of a want of transportation, only Ramseur's Division, and portions of two others had up to this time arrived. Irregular troops, dismounted cavalry and citizens were disposed as best they could to hold the enemy in check aided by Breckenridge's troops. Our artillery had not arrived, and the greatest consternation prevailed in the city. The enemy just before dark opened a terrific fire with his artillery on our front, but as the night closed in, a lull followed and all thought that certainly the struggle which was to decide the fate of Lynchburg would open furiously with the dawn of the next morning. Gen. D.H. Hill was seen in company with Gen. Early, reconnoitering and the boys made up their minds at once, that the first thing to be done next morning was to charge the enemy. At 3 o'clock in the morning we were called up and moved our into position on the turn pike. No one seemed to know where the enemy was, but near daylight, scouts came in and reported the enemy in full retreat along the pike. Immediately we were put out on the chase. We were rested only a few moments in each hour. Pressing on through smoke of burning houses and fences, and a scene of general devastation and ruin, until late in the afternoon, when Col. Lewis, then in command of a Brigade struck his rear and drove him through the village of New London. After a march of 25 miles, we fell down to sleep, hungry and fatigued, in an old field. Daylight found us on the road in hot pursuit with empty haversacks and on a terrible rough road. Hunter had laid the country in waste; leaving nothing upon which we could subsist. The sheep that could not be used by him were shot down and left. Smokehouses, corn cribs and mills were ransacked; and every available thing destroyed. Our wagon trains had not caught up, and if we had been blessed with rations we had no means of cooking.

Arriving at Liberty, a small quantity of bacon was issued and men were detailed to carry it. While it might have been a ludicrous sight to the citizens, yet, it was refreshing to our half famished boys, to see the men marching at the head of the column with huge sides of bacon on their heads. We had no bread, and the raw bacon was greatly relished without it.

At Bonsack Factory, which was a smoking ruin, we were greatly touched by the sad demeanor of a lady, who wore the air of refinement, as she moved slowly among the ruins, gathering such fragments from the wreck, as might afford some relief in this dark hour of her trial. Passing Coyner's Springs and Bedford Alum Springs, we pushed on

and night found us on Buford's magnificent farm at the pass, known as Buford's Gap where we slept for the night. This was a terrible day's march - we were beginning to feel sensibly the pangs of hunger, not having received anything since the morning before only a small bit of bacon, which was eagerly devoured raw.

The morning of the 21<sup>st</sup> opened upon us, in unclouded brightness as we filed through the pass, and the scenery was indescribably grand and beautiful. Otter Peaks stood out against the blue background of the sky, in all the sternness and distinctness of some grand old castle of the Oriental East, while the neighboring hill and mountain tops were lit up in the effulgence of morning's brilliant splendor. As we gazed on that clear sky and grandeur and sublimity of the scenery, we were confirmed in the long entertained opinion, that tourist to Italy and Switzerland, were simply throwing away money for the mere gratification of a whim. As we filed out and away from the mountains a magnificent farming country lay before us, for we were now in the upper Valley. Like the two preceding days, the weather was excessively warm, and having to follow immediately in the trail of Hunter, the dust was almost intolerable. Nothing to eat; heat and dust almost beyond endurance, with feet blistered and frequently suffering greatly for water, it was indeed a severe test of physical endurance, when after a forced march of two and a half days, we should be ordered to "double-quick" under the blaze of the hot noon Sun. But the enemy were filing through Hang Rock Gap and if possible we must strike his rear. We were rushed for six miles in this condition at quick and double quick but arrived just too late. We were halted near Salem and so great was the heat and exhaustion that men actually dropped dead in ranks.

Gen. Ransom, who took charge of the cavalry at Lynchburg, succeeded in striking the rear of the enemy at the gap and captured several horses and guns. Worn out, and almost perished, we were filed out into a beautiful grove, where we could at least enjoy its cool shades, and the delightful waters that burst forth from the mountains.

We were now in Roanoke county, in the midst of one of the finest farming countries we had ever seen. Fine stock, luxuriant grasses, neat farms and houses orchards bowing under their rich loads of fruits, water unexcelled in purity and sweetness had a scenery that would defy the pencil of the most skillful artists. But the most attractive feature to us was the fact that this section had been comparatively exempt from the friendly ravages of that class known in the army as "foragers." For miles around the whole country would be scoured, whenever we stopped for the night although we may have marched 25 miles during the day. It is needless to say that in our condition, without rations, and a whole day to rest, that few farm houses within a radius of ten miles escaped the eager eye of the old "Johnny forager." Milk, butter, bread, cherries, onions and every thing that could be bought or begged were brought in during the day, and add to this the luxury of a bath in the cool sparkling mountain streams and perhaps during our whole soldier life a day was not more welcomed or more enjoyed.

On the morning of the 25<sup>th</sup> we arrived at Lexington - a place sacred to every Southern heart - as containing the ashes of one of her most illustrious Captains - the immortal Stonewall Jackson. Nearing the Cemetery, we were ordered to reverse arms and

the head of the column was filed in to the gate. Men, women and children crowded to the fence around to grounds, the witness this tribute of love, by his old comrades and followers. With measured, solemn tread we passed around the grave, each officer dropping the point of his sword to the ground and all uncovering their heads. Hunter's troops on occupying Lexington on their way to Lynch burg, had removed every sprig of grass, and everything that they could appropriate as a memento, even taking the head and foot boards and chipped them up to send to their homes in letters. Now a pole about 20 feet high with a neat little Confederate flag, waved silently over him and the grave was decorated with beautiful wreaths of flowers, placed there by the affectionate had of his devoted country-women. All eyes were turned and fastened on the grand and war-worn old veteran - the Stonewall Brigade as they approached the last resting place of their great and idolized leader. Hearts that had braved death in a thousand forms, on a hundred fields; the heroic spirits that had followed him with a trust and devotion, unsurpassed in all the annals of the world, now sunk in grief and the bronzed cheeks were moistened with tears of affection.

The energies of his mighty spirit and the resources of his towering intellect, which filled a nation with surprise and admiration, at the wonderful feat and achievements of his earlier career had now ripened into a cordial gratitude for his invaluable services, a boundless confidence in his capacity, an enthusiastic affection for his person, and a sincere veneration for his character. A reverential conviction of DUTY to his country and his God, was the great propelling power that moved his mighty should.

In this devoted town Hunter seemed to have unbridled all his fiendish hate. He burned the Military Institute with all its valuable contents and had plundered Washington College and the Statue of Washington had been stole. Ex-Governor Letcher's residence was burned to the ground and his family barely allowed time to escape. Citizens were hung, women robbed and insulted. Houses burned leaving helpless women and children without food or shelter and in some instances; all the clothing taken except that worn by them. The country was literally stripped and while ruin and devastation surrounded those people, on every hand, still they clung with unfaltering devotion to their land and its cause and were ready to contribute their mite to its aid.

Leaving Lexington, we marched to Sweet Sulphur Springs and camped on the night of the 25<sup>th</sup>. Long before the neighboring hill-tops and mountains were emerging from the darkness we resumed our tramp and as the roseate light of the morning began to tinge the Eastern horizon with its mellow glow, new scenes and new beauties began to unfold and multiply in all their varied and enrapturing charms - until in the clear and sparkling sunlight, a magnificent picture spread out in delightful picturesqueness and grandeur before us. To those of our troops from the Eastern part of the State, unaccustomed to mountain scenery, and the billowy fields of golden grain and the rushing streamlets of pure icy water, this lovely country was peculiarly charming. Many were the exclamations of admiration, even from the ragged foot sore soldiers. Twenty miles brought us to the village of Middlebrook, when we filed into camp before sundown. Two things were always mysterious to the unsophisticated Johnny Reb - one was that whenever at all convenient, the Yankee troops camped in open ground, while ours

quartered in the woods - the other was that after a long and severe days march we would be counter marched often several times over the ground selected for our night's rest. This was peculiarly trying, especially to those who were barefoot and we are reminded of it, by some fancy field maneuvers that we remember to have performed in the grove that evening. We moved our next morning upstanding that we would reach Staunton, before noon. At 10 o'clock we were drawn up in a beautiful grove in sight of the town, and told that we would probably rest the remainder of the day. How gladly this order was received, none can know but those belonging to that sore, stiff, worn-out army. Some tumbled down on the rocks to sleep, others to rambling around to find the most convenient place for the "weeks washing"; others to preparing to cook their mite of flour and beef and others to writing letter to the "dear ones at home;" and thus the delightful day of rest was enjoyed.

The next day we remained in camp until 4PM when we filed out through the town and entered the famous and historic Lower Valley of the Shenandoah. Six miles brought us to a halt for the night. As a matter of reference, for the reader, we give the points and distances between them from Staunton to Williamsport on the Potomac:

From Staunton to Mount Sidney, ten miles; from Sidney to Mount Crawford, seven miles; from Crawford to Harrisonburg, eight miles; from Harrisonburg to Lacey's Spring nine miles; from Lacey Spring to New Market, nine miles; New Market to Rhude's Hill four miles; Rhude's Hill to Shenandoah river, two miles; Shenandoah river to Mount Jackson, one mile; Mount Jackson to Edinburg, seven miles; Edinburg to Woodstock, five miles; Woodstock to Fisher's Hill, ten miles; Fisher's Hill to Strasburg, two miles; Strasburg to Cedar Creek, three miles; Cedar Creek to Middletown, two miles; Middletown to Newtown, five miles; Newtown to Winchester, eight miles; Winchester to Bunker Hill, twelve miles; Bunker Hill to Martinsburg, ten miles; and from Martinsburg to Williamsport, ten miles.

Nearly every foot of this beautiful Valley, is sacred to the fond hearts of thousands of families from the St. John's to the Rio Grande. On its plains were enacted deeds of heroism that would have added fresh luster to Rome's glory, in her palmyest days, and in its bosom repose the ashes of the gallant, devoted, noble dead.

The blood tide of War swept time and again, over its fair bosom, with the fury of the raging ocean and the receding wave would leave the desolation and wreck of a Simoom. But the bitter day of its trial was yet to come, for it must be cursed by the blighting tread of Sheridan - the modern Attila.

Passing through Mt. Sidney early the morning of the 29<sup>th</sup> we took the Keezletown road to the right and at noon stopped to rest on the battle ground of Cross Keys, where Jackson and Fremont fought in 1862. Camped at Keezletown that night near one of the finest springs in the Valley. The next day we again strike the turnpike and pass through

New Market, and camped for the night in an open field. Here we are on the 1<sup>st</sup> of July with another month behind us and still not a drop of rain has fallen on us.

The dust and heat were almost intolerable and many of our men by this time were completely barefoot and marching at the average rate of 22 miles per day over a rough, rocky county had placed them almost beyond traveling. But with that heroic fortitude characteristic of the Southern soldier they would be at their post at night. We passed Mt. Jackson, Edinburg and through Woodstock and camped on the creek 4 miles from the latter place. On the 2d of July we passed through Strasburg and Middletown, and reaching Newtown camped for the night. Here Hunter had the house of a Methodist minister and of a Col. White burned. He ordered the whole to be laid in ashes, but this officer trusted with this humane and chivalry order for some reason failed to execute it. But he required and forced the citizens to take the oath of allegiance to the United States Government. It was said that Hunter did this in retaliation for an attack made on one of his trains by Mosby. This officer, although called a "guerilla," by the enemy, was a regularly commissioned officer of the Confederate Army and his attack on the train was legitimate warfare and the cruel order of Hunter to burn, the roofs from the defenseless heads of women and children, as a retaliatory measure must be regarded by all honorable brave men as not only without excuse but dastardly and cowardly. Sunday morning we are again moving and passing through Winchester where the enemy said "lived the most rebellious women in the South: and camped near Smithfield that night. Oh the dust, the heat, the sore bleeding feet, the tired stiffened limbs! Was this holy day never again to be to us "a day of rest!" But such is War.

On the morning of the 4<sup>th</sup> of July, we approached Charlestown, and so well guarded, were our movements, that some of the Federal troops - some of the bombproof gentry, were out in the village to escort the few loyal ladies that could be hound to Harper's Ferry, to aid in celebrating the 4<sup>th</sup>, but their leave-taking was rather hasty and unceremonious. The citizens and especially the noble ladies, lavish upon us every kindness and attention. We pressed on to the village of Boliver, which occupying the heights, bearing the same name, overlooks the town of Harper's Ferry and drove in the pickets.

Our boys having learned that a magnificent dinner had been prepared by the garrison and a large amount of army supplies had been stored at the Ferry, were easger and anxious to investigate the matter. But on our approach, the enemy took shelter in their works on Maryland Heights, and shelled us furiously with long range guns. Being fully exposed to their fire, and being in range of their sharpshooters, who had occupied every cliff in the face of the mountain, that hung over the town, an attempt to enter the village was extremely hazardous. On the morning of the 5<sup>th</sup>, our Regiment was ordered to occupy the town as Provost Guard, and while we were greatly annoyed by the sharpshooters during the whole day; yet the boys found ample opportunity to appropriate canned fruits and other goods that were indeed a luxury.

Private property was respected, but Sutler shops, &c, that belonged to the “hangers-on of the army” were freely appropriated. Several of our men were wounded during the day as every one showing himself on the street was made a target instantly for a hundred rifles. Large quantities of forage, new wagons and army stores of all kinds, were captured. At night we burnt the bridge across the Potomac and at Sun-rise, on the morning of the 6<sup>th</sup>, we were relieved by the 6<sup>th</sup> NC Regiment and moved out under a terrific shelling from the Heights. Marching in the direction of Shepherdstown, we waded the Potomac near that place about Sun-set, and passing through Sharpsburg, struck camp in an open field, near the Rock Bridge, on the famous Battle ground of Antietam. The next morning, we hurriedly surveyed the surroundings and saw the marks of that terrible battle, still pointing the stranger to the sad but gallant record which the brave dead of both armies made for themselves on that bloody field. Turning Eastward, we pass into Pleasant Valley and at Rhoersville, we met the enemy’s cavalry and after a slight skirmish they retired. We lay here all day and that night. A grateful shower came to our relief on that day, the first rain that had fallen on us since, we left Gen. Lee at Richmond, on the 13<sup>th</sup> day of June. We were now far away from our base of supplies and the army was made to subsist on the country we occupied. And it was indeed, a land of milk and honey. Having been comparatively exempt from the invasion of armies which so rapidly and effectually impoverishes a people, we found the country abounding in all necessary supplies for troops and horses. We were now on the North of the enemy’s stronghold on the Heights and Sigel was evidently greatly embarrassed. As Gen. Early’s design was plainly to approach Washington City, and as he would not of course leave a heavy force of the enemy on his rear, and in easy striking distance, it was evident that his design was maneuver Sigel out of his position on the Heights. All our cavalry and infantry was now on the North side of the Potomac and all the passes of the mountains leading in the direction of Frederick City and Washington were in our possession. That night while lying near Rhoersville, the long expected, and greatly needed shoes arrived to the delight of our sore-footed boys. On the morning of the 8<sup>th</sup>, we began to ascend the western slope of South Mountain at Crampton’s Gap, and at 10 o’clock, a scene burst upon our view which can never be forgotten.

Standing on the crest of the mountain, a section of Middletown Valley, about 12 miles long, by 8 wide, lay in full view to the East. At our feet nestled the neat little town of Berketsville, and within the scope of our view several little villages were glittering in the bright morning Sun’s light. Beautiful farms and farm houses, divided by skirts of green woods, gave the lovely picture a pleasing variety of shade. We have often seen more grand and sublime scenery, but for a natural picture of loveliness, we have never seen anything to equal it. At night, we camped near the little town of Jefferson, and were blest with another refreshing shower. It was now plain that Washington was our objective point, and many wild rumors filled our camp in regard to our ultimate purpose and the means to be used to accomplish it. While many of the citizens of Maryland were bold in their sympathy for our cause, yet the larger portion, seemed to prefer a neutral, at most, noncommittal position. Many of them were eager and anxious for us to capture the Capitol.

On Saturday morning the 6<sup>th</sup> of July, we left the little village of Jefferson at early dawn and moved in the direction of Frederick City, and after a rapid march we arrived in sight about 9 am. The occasional report of cannon which we had heard during the morning now began to assume the rapid work of battle. Our Division was marched through the skirt of the city and so disposed as to command the railroads from Baltimore and the crossing of the Monocacy above the junction. A large force of the enemy was strongly posted along the ridge on the East bank of the Monocacy, with two strong block houses which commanded the railroad bridge and the crossing of the turnpike. Ramseur was soon sharply engaged immediately on our right, and general advance of our whole line seemed most probable, but soon the steady terrific roar of battle rose, in deafening volume over the cracking of Ramseur's rifles and told us that our men under Breckenridge and Gordon were thrown upon the enemy's left. The struggle for two hours, was stubborn indeed, but gradually we could perceive that the wave of battle was moving to our left, and were satisfied that his left, had given way. At about 2pm the crossings in front of Ramseur had been uncovered by the pressure of Gordon's gallant columns, and at once that glorious little Carolinian, threw his Division, on the yielding lines of the enemy, and they gave way precipitately, and fled in great confusion along the roads in the direction of Baltimore. To our Brigade, which had not yet become engaged the sight was at that moment the most exciting. Occupying a high ridge along the West bank of the Monocacy, the flying troops of Gen. Wallace were in full view and for miles the dust swelled up over them like a dense fog over a winding stream, while Infantry, Cavalry, and Artillery hotly pressed their rear and poured in a most destructive fire at every step. The pursuit continued until near dark when the weary dust, blood stained troops were halted. In this engagement we lost about 700 men, principally confined to Gordon's Command, and the enemy lost about that number in killed and wounded, and about 450 prisoners; Gen. Early had levied a contribution of \$200,000 on Frederick City, and had procured a large stock of supplies. We had now struck down the only barrier that obstructed our march on the Capitol, and the remainder of Wallace's demoralized and mangled force promised but little resistance to a successful entrance to the gates of Washington. Our Brigade, lay during the night in open fields near the city and at an early hour on the morning of the 11<sup>th</sup>, we were called up and moved across the Monocacy at the point where the gallant Ramseur the day before had hurled his invincible columns against the enemy. The number of dead thickly dotting hills around the block houses showed where the storm had raged the fiercest. Large numbers of the wounded of both sides who could not be removed during the night, were being conveyed to the Hospitals in the city. The whole army was now in motion, and its head turned for Washington. Passing several little villages, we marched twenty miles and bivouacked for the night. On the morning fo the 11<sup>th</sup>, we were marched hard through the dust and heat passing through the neat and patriotic town of Rockville which is 14 miles North of the Capitol, and where the citizens especially the ladies, gave many evidences of sympathy and friendship. We pressed on, under the most oppressively hot Sun that we remember ever to have endured, and men fainted and fell all along the march. Just as we approached the boundary line of the District on the road of Blair's magnificent Silver Spring place, a man belonging to a Georgia Regiment fell dead in the road from exhaustion and heat. At 2 pm we arrive in sight of the dome of the Capitol and filed out on the gravel road leading to the residence of Mr. Blair.

We were now plainly in view of the Dome of the Capitol, which towered in solitary boldness above the oaks, and a Signal Station, and the earthworks which encircled the city to the right and left as far as the eye could reach. A hasty glance revealed the fact that even with a small force manning the works, the enemy could inflict terrible damage on us before we could possibly carry them. A continuous line of works, pierced all along for an immense number of guns, and strengthened by palisades and abattis, - all the timber having been cut down in cannon range, in front, and over all, huge forts that looked impregnable frowned upon us. All along the line, were evidences of activity, consternation, and confusion, and although we had captured on the 9<sup>th</sup> at Monocacy, some of the Sixth Army Corps, thereby ascertaining that a portion of Grant's army, had been transferred hither, still the white coats, and citizens dress' that dotted the works along our front told plainly, that the chief defense of Washington at that time, rested on the citizens, whom we did not dread. When the sharpshooters of our Division, which were ordered to the front as soon as the Division could be thrown in line of battle, moved out in the open field and in view of the works, the furious fire from their batteries and the senseless popping of rifles at a harmless distance told too plainly that the men behind the works were not the veterans that had so often met us on the South side of the Potomac.

As our line was not ordered to follow the Sharp shooters and which we all looked for every moment, we concluded that the demonstration was intended to develop if possible the full strength of the enemy and to reconnoiter the ground over which we must pass. Our ranks had been greatly reduced by the severe heat of the day, and here before the walls of the Capitol, was an enemy worn out with fatigue, barefoot many of them and whose numbers on our long and terrible march from Richmond, having only about two days rest during the whole time, had been reduced over 3,000 , but that army was buoyant and hopeful. Gen. Early, at any time before dark on the evening of the 11<sup>th</sup> given the order that army without doubt would have swept over those works like a tornado and he has been often very severely criticized for not doing so, but in the light which subsequent events, threw upon his position, it must be admitted that he had acted wisely in refraining from the attempt. For, apart from the fact that large numbers of our men had fallen on the road side from exhaustion and that Ramseur's Division, which was left at Monocacy to destroy the Rail Road bridge and to do other work did not arrive until about 12, that night, is still more important fact, that two Divisions of the 6<sup>th</sup> Army Corps together with the whole of the 19<sup>th</sup> Corps arrived during the night and took position in the works, to receive our expected assault on the next morning. Although we might and doubtless could have taken the city, when we remember that in addition to all this that Hunter's Command, was also hurrying to its relief, it is very questionable whether we could have held it ten hours. Again, there was not an intelligent man in our army, who did not feel that should we succeed in entering the city, it would be the destruction of the army, even if we did not meet any formidable resistance, for it was the prevalent impression that no discipline could restrain the troops from straggling and plundering. Every man would have been his own officer, and it is doubtful whether there could have been, in an hour after our entrance, found a platoon of organized troops. Of course, Gen.

Early had no such apprehensions, and was not governed by such consideration, but being among the men of the ranks, we felt that success would be our utter ruin. There was no ford on the Potomac near than 40 miles, and our whole rear was exposed, it therefore became necessary for Gen. Early to act and to act promptly! Not time was to be lost.

The morning of the 12<sup>th</sup> found us still in the same position. Desultory firing was kept up the whole afternoon our Brigade was ordered hurriedly into line and deployed as skirmishers. We advanced with spirit through the open ground and in the face of a raking fire, for three fourths of a mile, and until within deadly range of their rifles. Their sharpshooters were driven in and a sharp encounter between the two lines, for two hours, or more. Our surmise that this demonstration was a feint, to cover our retreat, proved to be true, when we received orders about 10 o'clock to withdraw quietly. Our Regiment lost 31 men, our killed, being left on the field and our wounded at a farm house near Silver Spring. On retiring, and just as we were passing the magnificent and palatial mansion of Hon. Montgomery Blair, (for we now were the rear-guard of Infantry) we discovered it to be on fire and soon the flames had the whole building enveloped, and the light from its crackling ruins lit up the county for a long distance. On our approach, the house was abandoned leaving the Stars and Stripes floating defiantly from its top. It was doubtless rifled of its contents before the match was applied, but the burning of even an abandoned house was not justified by any sentiment of honor or manhood, nor even by the glaring example of the free-booter Hunter, who had so recently devastated the beautiful valley with the torch. It was generally understood that it was the Maryland Cavalry, and in retaliation, Butler soon thereafter had the house of a widow living on the Rappahannock, burned from over her head, leaving a note with his signature saying it was done by his order. Gen. Early was accused by the Northern Press of having the house of Blair burned, but of course he was not going to notify the enemy, in this manner, of his retreat.

The night was dark, and the signal light blazing above the city, and the glare from the burning dwelling of Blair, shone with peculiar strength and brightness. We turned our backs on the walls of the Federal Capitol with reluctance, for we felt that it could easily have been taken. We now had failed to capture it, but history will not censure Gen. Early for refraining from the attempt, for when we reflect that had made a forced march from Richmond to Lynchburg, and then to Salem, and then down the Valley to Harpers Ferry, and through the passes of South Mountains, and had met and routed the forces of Hunter, Sigel, and Wallace, and now with a greatly reduced force consisting of only about 8,000 muskets, the men wearied and worn, it will stand as one of the achievements in warfare that gives character and fame to the soldier. Everything considered, the rapidity and length of the march, under the cloudless sun of mid summer, has been rarely, if ever, excelled in the annals of War. We were on our feet during the whole of the night of the 12<sup>th</sup> and reached Rockville about 10am on the 13<sup>th</sup> and passed on westward thro the Village of Poolsville and stopped in the afternoon to rest. At sunset we again started on "our weary way" and marched all night.

On our Regiment and Brigade this was terribly trying and severe, for apart from the active duty in front of Washington, we had not slept for three nights. Men would

actually sleep as they walked. It was frequently observed that the horsed of the unconscious riders, would straggle off from their posts, while the worn out rider enjoyed his snooze in the saddle. The morning of the 14<sup>th</sup> found us on the North bank of the Potomac, with the hills of dear old Virginia in full view. Crossing at Whites Ford just above Leesburg, we found ourselves in Loudon County, having brought over all our prisoners and the large number of horses and beef cattle, and other captured supplies, in safety. Our rear guard were shelled from the North side as they crossed by an advance of the enemy's cavalry, but this was their only demonstration during the day. Never was a day's rest more needed, or more enjoyed, by an army.

And had our friends at home seen us, they would have laughed, or cried, or both, for a more ragged and dirty army of men were never seen on this continent. All our baggage was left at Staunton, and we had barely had sufficient time allowed us to cook our scanty rations, without an hour to devote to our linen. We remained quiet and rested until the morning of the 16<sup>th</sup> when we took the Winchester Pike and moved towards the Valley. About noon a force of the enemy's cavalry dashed on our train and burnt ten wagons - principally those containing Quartermasters captured stores, and to a soldier who was acquainted with the facility with which that class of officers could capture "stores" it is needless to attempt an enumeration of the great variety of articles it took to make a load for one of those wagons.

One of them had a bundle of ladies hoop skirts, and an endless variety of "yankee notions: and a five gallon demi-john of French Brandy - but it was all burned, and not many regrets were expressed in our ranks, for in those days quartermasters commanded but little sympathy in the ranks. Maj. Gen. Rhodes was riding just in the advance of the wagons that were fired, and being recognized by a daring cavalryman, as an officer of rank, he mad a bold dash at him and doubtless would have killed the General, but a timely shot from one of the teamsters, pierced his heart and he fell in a few feet of Gen. R - who was not aware of his danger until apprized by the report of the gun. Our Regiment was counter-marched and double quicked to the scene, but just too late to save the wagons, and just in time to catch a distant glimpse of the flying raiders. We reached Snickers Gap at sunset and passed through and slept on the western slope of the Blue Ridge, and along the banks of the beautiful Shenandoah.

To be continued