

CHAPTER XIII.

March Back To Cedar Creek-----Destruction In The
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Brigade-----Battle Of Cedar Creek, October 19th-----
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Of The James.

The next morning we moved back to Harrisonburg, where we found the rest of our brigade impatiently, and with some anxiety for our safety, awaiting us, the rest of the army having marched some hours before to the rear. Our brigade being thus in the rear, remained so until we reached Fisher's Hill, on the 9th. This retrograde movement was made for two or three sound reasons: First, because we were so far from our base of supplies that it required a very large force to keep our communications open and our trains properly guarded. Second, because Early had been again re-enforced by Kershaw's division of infantry, Rosser's brigade of cavalry and a battalion of artillery. Third, because it was contemplated sending the 6th corps, and a large portion of the cavalry, to Grant upon reaching Cedar Creek, the Manassas Gap Railroad being in course of repair for the purpose of transporting the infantry to Washington.

Just before our brigade reached Fisher's Hill, the rebel cavalry under General Rosser advanced so far as to get on the left flank of the infantry column, but a mile or more distant, near Round Top, on the back road. Our brigade prepared for action. Our regiment being in the rear, at once faced about, and moving some distance further back, turned in the direction of the rear of Rosser's position, with whom Custer was now hotly engaged. Other bodies of our infantry were brought back and formed on Fisher's Hill. We had approached very close to his rear, when Custer attacked him in full force, and the report spreading among Rosser's men that the infantry was at the same time flanking them, which was a fact, they immediately gave way and broke into a stampede, Custer pursued them for over twenty miles. At the same time Merritt had attacked Lomax on the Valley pike. From our position on Round Top both cavalry fights, which were going on at the same time, were in plain view. The rebels under Lomax and those under Rosser, though fighting independent battles, some distance from each other, broke about the same time, and the pursuit was on parallel roads, that on the pike, especially, being in plain hearing and view of the infantry support. The low, rumbling, steady roll of resounding hoofs, which fairly shook the earth, the reports of artillery, the explosion of shells and the quick thudding sound of heavy carbine firing, added to which were the cheers and shouts of the pursuing host, combined to form the most animating and exciting scene we ever witnessed. In all our experience and observation in the war, nothing approached it in grandeur and sublimity. General Sheridan viewed it from Round Top near us, and it was said at the time that, when he heard of the capture of eleven pieces of artillery, he offered a reward of \$500 for the capture of the twelfth. At any rate the pursuit could not have been more spirited, had there been a reward offered for the capture of Rosser himself. Rosser's temerity in pushing onto the flank of the infantry at this time cost him 350 prisoners, eleven pieces of artillery, four caissons, an ammunition train, a great quantity of small arms and a number of wagons, including the headquarters wagons of Rosser, Lomax and others, ambulances and 400 horses, besides many killed and wounded.

General Torbert, speaking of the battle, which is known in history as the battle of Tom's Brook, says: "The cavalry totally covered themselves with glory, and added to their long list of victories the most brilliant one of them all, and the most decisive the country has ever witnessed."

General Sheridan telegraphed Grant concerning it: "I directed Torbert to attack at daylight this morning and finish this 'Savior of the Valley.' * * * The enemy, after being charged by our gallant cavalry, broke and ran. They were followed by our men on the jump twenty-six miles, through Mount Jackson and across

North Fork of the Shenandoah. I deemed it best to make this delay of one day here and settle this new cavalry general.”

Pond, in his “Shenandoah Valley,” says of this battle: “The engagement at Tom’s Brook was a fine offset to the check received by Torbert at Millford, for the same two Union divisions had now routed the combined divisions of Lomax and Rosser, inflicting a loss of about 400 men, while Torbert had but nine men killed and forty-eight wounded. Some of the artillery was fresh from the Tredigar Works, and with the five guns taken at Winchester, the sixteen at Fisher’s Hill and eleven at Tom’s Brook, point was given to the jest that cannon sent from Richmond to the Valley were marked ‘P. H. Sheridan, care of General Early.’”

In falling back from Harrisonburg, Sheridan stretched his cavalry clear across the Valley, and destroyed all the hay, grain and forage of every kind beyond what was necessary for his army. This was done in pursuance of orders from the Government. A correspondent, who was present on the march, thus describes some of the scenes witnessed: The atmosphere from horizon to horizon has been black with a thousand conflagrations, and at night a gleam brighter and more lurid than sunset has shot from every verge. The orders have been to destroy all forage in stacks and barns, and to drive the stock before for the subsistence of the army. The execution of these orders has been perfect; the completeness of the desolation has been awful. This is war; terrible, horrible war. Hundreds of nearly starving people are going North. Our trains are crowded with them. They line the wayside. Hundreds more are coming. Not half the inhabitants of the Valley can subsist on it in its present condition. Absolute want is in mansions used in other days to extravagant living. But in no instance, except in that of the burning of dwellings within five miles in retaliation for the murder of Lieutenant Meigs, have orders been issued for the burning of houses, or have such orders been sanctioned by General Sheridan.” And General Sheridan, in a dispatch dated October 7th, says: “The whole country, from the Blue Ridge to the North Mountain, has been made untenable for a rebel army. I have destroyed over 2,000 barns filled with wheat, hay and farming implements, over seventy mills filled with wheat and flour. Four herds of cattle have been driven before the army, and not less than 3,000 sheep have been killed and issued to the troops. This destruction embraces the Luray and Little Fork Valleys, as well as the main Valley.”

On the 11th we reached camp at Cedar Creek, where we voted for State and County officers in Ohio, under the law authorizing soldiers to vote in the field. No election anywhere was ever conducted more fairly and honestly than this one. About noon Generals Sheridan and Crook rode down to the polls of the 36th Ohio and voted. When they galloped off to return to their headquarters, they were lustily cheered by the men. The vote of the 116th for Congressman was as follows:

Plants, (Rep.).....	220
Morris, (Dem.).....	70

Hon. James R. Morris was a brother of our Major, and was a very popular with the regiment.

Early followed us down the Valley, and took up his position on Fisher’s Hill on the 13th. We occupied ??? along Cedar Creek. The day before, the 11th, Sheridan had started the 6th corps to Washington, and it was now at Front Royal, where Sheridan ordered it to await further orders. The 12th he ordered it to move down the Valley and pass through Ashby’s Gap, instead of through Manassas Gap, to Piedmont, fifteen miles beyond, to which point the Manassas Gap Railroad had been repaired.

On the 13th, the enemy appeared on our right, and the front of the 19th corps, the other side of the creek on Hupp’s Hill. They opened with artillery on our camps, throwing several shells into that of the 3d brigade, and one or two into ours. The 1st and 3d brigades of Thoburn’s division were sent over to feel of the enemy and develop his strength. Between the knoll on which our division was camped and Hupp’s Hill, from which the rebel artillery was firing, was a piece of low, open ground, which the batteries swept, but the 116th never moved steadier than it did through this plunging fire of shot and shell, only two men, whom I shall not name here, falling out of ranks and taking shelter behind a friendly log. Crossing this space and the creek, we moved straight towards the saucy batteries, the 3d brigade on the right, ours on the left.

“It became evident to both brigades that Early was in force, but the rage for capturing guns had seized Sheridan’s army, and Thoburn’s men went forward, through the plunging fire from the bow of Hupp’s Hill, until Early was forced to throw out Kershaw’s infantry, Conner’s brigade leading, to check them.”---
Shenandoah Valley in 1864.

Our brigade formed behind a stone wall, and opening fire checked and drove back the enemy. But the 3d brigade was driven back, and there being an intervening space between the brigades, we did not know it, until the enemy advanced on our right flanks. The left wing of our regiment was now thrown forward along a stone wall, running perpendicular to our line of battle, and opening fire across to the right, we checked the advance of Conner, and cleared the front of a body of rebels about making a charge on the brigade. The right of the 34th Massachusetts was broken and driven back. Lieutenant Ballard, in trying to reach our brigade to order us back after the 3d had retired, had his horse shot, and thus the order did not reach us before the enemy struck our right. At this juncture, a large force came down upon the left occupied by the 116th and the whole brigade was driven back amid a furious shower of balls. We were obliged to retreat across a wide, open field, and the loss of our brigade was very severe for a skirmish, as it was called, being over 200; the 34th Massachusetts alone losing over 100 men. We fell back to a piece of woods, where we re-formed, and the enemy soon withdrawing to Fisher’s Hill, we returned to our camp. The loss of the 116th was one killed, seven wounded and five taken prisoners, as follows:

KILLED.

Corporal Dickerson Archer, Company D.

WOUNDED.

Royal Phelps, Company G; Jesse Frazer, Company G, arm shot off; James E. Bullock, Company G; Jehiel Graham, Company G, hip, disabled for life; John W. Hall, Company D, arm; Leroy D. Brown, Company H, knee; John Rush, Company E.

PRISONERS.

Wm. A. Ferrell, Company D; Samuel King, Company F; Orderly Sergeant Charles A. Cline, Company E; George W. Wiley, Company E; Joseph A. Hall, Company E.

This battle, known by the name of “Stickney Farm,” was replete with surprises. Only the day before, the cavalry had gone up the Valley ten or twelve miles without finding any enemy.

“October 12th I sent reconnaissances from the 1st and 3d divisions up the Valley pike and then back road for ten or twelve miles, but could find no signs of the enemy.”
---*Torbert’s Report.*

It seems that Powell, in the Luray Valley, had, a day or two before, reported Early at Craig’s Creek, between Brown’s Gap and Waynesboro. Several reconnaissances of the infantry, one by our brigade, made on the 12th, reported no enemy near. So, to have a lot of big shells dropped into our camps just as we were sitting down to our dinners, when we didn’t think there was a Confederate cannon within miles of us, was, to say the least of it, rather sensational. Then, when we went out to see what it was all about, to be met by Kershaw’s infantry, batteries in position, and all the rest of Early’s army in sight on Hupp’s Hill, and to find ourselves repulsed, before we had time to take in the situation, or “view the landscape o’er.” Was altogether so startling and sudden a visitation as to make us wonder, not only how this surprise happened, but what would be the next thing in order for old Early to treat us to.

Colonel Wells, of the 34th Massachusetts, and Lieutenant Dempsey were killed. The death of Colonel Wells was a severe stroke to his gallant regiment and a great loss to the service. He was one of the very best officers in Crook’s corps. He was a natural soldier, and as brave and gallant an officer as there was in our army. By his discipline and incessant drill he had made the 34th Massachusetts one of the very best regiments in the service. It was as steady as a rock in battle, and, as long as any troops could stay on a

battle line, they would be found there. Always cool, intelligent, effective and heroically steady and firm, Colonel Wells had the genius, so largely developed in General Sheridan, of imbuing his men with his own daring and soldierly qualities. He occupied a high position in the esteem of the people of Massachusetts, as he deserved, and his death was deeply mourned in all parts of the State. The day after the battle, his body was obtained under a flag of truce and sent to his home in Massachusetts, accompanied by an escort from his noble regiment. Colonel Wells was brevetted Brigadier General a few days before his death, the commission reaching the army a few days after his death. All felt it a pity that he could not have lived to realize that his services had been appreciated, and, at last, rewarded.

The death of Colonel Wells placed Lieutenant Colonel Wildes in command of the brigade, the 116th thus being left in command of Captain W. B. Teters, a brave and efficient officer, and one thoroughly qualified from his long service to command with credit to himself and honor to the regiment. He commanded it from this time to the close of the war. The brigade at this time consisted of the 34th Massachusetts, the 2d battalion of the 5th New York heavy artillery, the 123d and 116th Ohio.

This demonstration of the enemy satisfying Sheridan that he was being again menaced by Early's re-enforced army, he ordered the 6th corps, now at Ashby's Gap, to return, which it did next day, going into camp to the right and rear of the 19th corps. Up to this time it was supposed that Early was far up the Valley, certainly no nearer than New Market, and some reports located him near Brown's Gap, as before stated. On the 15th Sheridan started for Washington to hold a long deferred conference, taking with him Merritt's division of cavalry, which was to be joined by Powell's at Front Royal, from which point both were to go upon an expedition under General Torbert to destroy the Virginia Central Railroad about Charlottesville and Gordonsville??, always a favorite project of General Grant. Upon Sheridan's arrival at Front Royal, he was overtaken by a messenger from General Wright, whom he had left in command at Cedar Creek, bearing the following dispatch taken from the rebel signal station on Three Top:

To Lieutenant General Early:

Be ready to move as soon as my forces join you, and we will crush Sheridan.

LONGSTREET, Lieutenant General.

While thinking this was a ruse, still General Sheridan, deeming it best to be on the safe side, ordered back the cavalry to Cedar Creek, while he proceeded on his way to Washington, at the same time cautioning General Wright to be on the alert, to "look well to his ground, and be well prepared." It should be borne in mind that from Three Top the rebels could see our whole camp and every movement taking place in it, and from this point it was that Early and Gordon planned for us the surprise of the morning of the 19th, which we are now approaching. It would be difficult to exaggerate the importance of Three Top as a lookout station. It gave a perfect birds-eye view of our entire position and of the whole Valley down as far as Winchester. On the 18th our brigade made a reconnaissance to the left and another brigade of our division made one towards Strasburg and Fisher's Hill, but no sign of any movement on the part of the enemy was discovered.

On the night of the 18th, Sheridan, on his way back, lodged at Winchester. The position of the army was at this time the same as heretofore stated. Behind Crook's left, and at right angles with it, lay Kitching's provisional division, with a view to protect the flank. Thoburn's division lay a half mile in advance of the left of the 19th corps. Hayes' division lay in reserve behind Thoburn's and half a mile distant from it. To guard against surprise, the North Fork was picketed by Powell's cavalry from Cedar Creek to Front Royal, nine miles distant, on our left. Artillery was posted on the line of the 19th corps and on ours, one battery being stationed to the right of our brigade, in front of General Harris' 3d brigade. But for some unknown reason the fords on North Fork on our left, and the road and fords at the foot of Massanutten Mountain on our front, were not guarded by the cavalry on the night of the 18th, which left no cavalry on that flank nearer than Buckton Ford, two and a half miles distant from the infantry pickets. But no one believed Early would venture on an attack after so many severe defeats, and it is more than probable that these places had been neglected for some time, and probably never, since our recent occupation, had they been properly guarded. Had they been so guarded before, it is incredible that Early could find out in time to make the move that he did, that on the night of the 18th alone they were left unguarded. The reasonable

presumption is that Early had, through his scouts and disloyal citizens, learned of our *habitual neglect* to guard them and hence his movement on the night of the 18th, which we are about to relate.

Soon after midnight Early, having arranged his troops unperceived at the foot of Massanutten Mountain and at Fisher's Hill, set them in motion toward Sheridan's lines. His cavalry and light artillery advanced against the right of the 6th corps and the cavalry on the right about day light. His infantry marched in three columns, the first of which, composed of Gordon's, Ramseur's and Pegram's divisions, placed themselves before daybreak on the left rear of the whole Federal position. Kershaw got, about the same time, close under the entrenched rising ground, on which lay Crook's corps, and Wharton advanced upon the front of the 19th. Word was sent to General Crook from Kitching's division that his pickets had heard the rustling of underbrush and the tramp of men in their front about 2 o'clock in the morning. Captain John F. Welch, who was then on Thoburn's staff, heard musket firing at 3 o'clock in the morning, and awakening Thoburn told him what he had heard. Both listened for some time, but heard no more. Captain Welch heard firing again between 4 and 5, immediately followed by a volley and by artillery in their front. This last firing was the opening of the rebel advance upon the first division of Crook's corps. Our brigade was roused by our camp guard, which we never failed to keep, about 4 o'clock, as the rebel columns struck our pickets in our front, when there occurred enough firing to give the alarm. But the 5th New York heavy artillery battalion was captured almost entire on the picket line in our front, only one officer and twelve men escaping. The pickets were not fired upon, and the rush made upon them was so sudden that their fire was only very scattering. The moment the alarm was given our teams were hitched up, wagons loaded and our headquarters stuff, and much of our camp equipage sent to the rear. Skirmishers were sent out in our front, which soon met the enemy silently advancing through the woods. I at once dispatched Captain Karr to division headquarters. With Lieutenant Dissoway, of my staff, I rode to the brigade on our right, which we found in their beds. Some good, vigorous efforts were made to arouse them. There stood the guns of the battery with only a sentinel over them, and only a man now and then of the infantry or artillery could be roused up enough to ask "What's up?" or "Who the h—l are you?" Seeing we could do nothing with these sleepy fellows, we rode rapidly back to our brigade, which we had scarcely reached before the storm burst in front and on both flanks. The mist and fog was so heavy that you could hardly see the length of a regiment. The enemy came over the works on both flanks unopposed, but we met the rebel advance with so hot a fire that it fell back in our front, which gave us opportunity to move out unmolested. The 34th Massachusetts was on the right of our brigade, and when the rebels came over the works on their right they were struck so suddenly and heavily on the flank that they broke, and becoming involved with the utterly stampeded and broken masses of the surprised brigade, and battery on their right, fell back in confusion. The 116th and 123d stuck together and began falling back towards the pike, where it was touched by the 19th corps, about a mile distant. They were hard pressed the entire distance, but kept in good shape, delivering their fire to the rear or either flank as the rebels approached, and checking the pursuit sufficient to get off our trains. We formed a line across the field just after rising out of the ravine, about 1,000 yards in front of Thoburn's headquarters, and facing about opened fire on the enemy, now pouring down the hill on the opposite side. We checked his advance for a short time, but now a heavy line came out of the woods square on our left, and by this force we were pressed to the right off the high ground we were following. Back of Thoburn's headquarters to our rear was a piece of woods in which we intended to make another stand, but it was already occupied by the enemy. The enemy now pressed us hard until we reached the pike, but not a man broke from the ranks, and we rose on to the pike with a firm line.

Lieutenant C. M. Keyes, in his excellent history of the 123d Ohio, says of that morning attack and of the position and action of our brigade. "At half past four on the morning of the 19th of October, the regiment was routed out by a straggling picket fire in our front. The word was passed along that the enemy was advancing, and the men quietly fell into line along the breastworks. The other brigades, however, failed to observe the warning, or were too slow in falling in. The rebels easily turned the right of our corps, getting over the works with little or no opposition, many of the men being still asleep in their tents. Some resistance, however, was made by our brigade, the only one in the division not surprised. We fell slowly back, the broken ranks of the other brigades rallying upon our line."

General Lincoln, in his history of the 34th Massachusetts, confirms this statement in every particular, saying: "At first sound of the attack our own regiment and brigade fell into line behind our breastworks and made such resistance as was possible."

Upon reaching the pike, we were met by General Emory. The enemy now filled the woods behind us, not over 300 yards from where we struck the pike at the left of General Emory's line, but he had not yet made preparation to protect his flank. We informed him of what was coming, and of the situation of affairs on his left. His reply was an order for our two regiments to charge into the woods. We formed at once for the charge, for which the most we could hope would be time for the 19th corps to turn its line to meet the enemy. Every officer and man in our little band knew he was going to meet overwhelming numbers in those woods, but they never hesitated. Fixing bayonets, we started on the way back down the hill from the pike, and as we started to ascend to the woods, raised the old yell and dashed forward. Just after we started, General Wright rode out in our front and most gallantly led the charge. We advanced close to the edge of the woods, where we met with a terrible fire and a counter charge from ten times our number, which swept us back again to the pike. General Wright was wounded in the face, and came back bleeding freely. He displayed great personal courage, but gallant as he and the men who followed him were, they were obliged to give way before the awful fire they met at the edge of the woods. Falling back again to the pike, we found the 19th corps changing front to the rear along down the pike, and a division of the 6th corps coming up on the double quick.

A correspondent on the ground wrote, at the time, of the action of our brigade up to this point: "Lieutenant Colonel Wildes, of the 116th Ohio, who was in command of a brigade, had his men in line and had sent word to General Wright of the enemy's approach when the storm burst, sweeping away two of his regiments at once, and pushing the rest back in a storm of ball in flank and rear. Failing to find General Crook, he reported the 116th and 123d to General Emory, and was sent into the fight, where he and his noble men made a glorious record."

High praise indeed, but none too high for the two regiments which so nobly stood together that morning, till dashed to pieces against the strong lines of the enemy in this charge, and in the brave stands afterwards made on other parts of the field. Wharton had come up, and was now engaging the 19th corps in front, with Gordon, Ramseur and Pegram coming onto the pike still further to the left, they having routed Kitching and Hayes. Reaching the pike, our broken ranks rallied, and hearing that General Crook had made a stand at a point near Sheridan's headquarters, a short distance beyond the pike, we fell back there. Here were gathered fragments of Crook's corps, and here were Crook and his staff, Hayes and his staff, and a large number of officers striving with might and main to stem the tide of disaster. We had scarcely taken our position here, before the division of the 6th corps we had seen going to the front, and the left of the 19th corps came falling back in considerable confusion. These troops passed mainly to our left, and formed at the new position now being taken by the army, some distance in our rear. Our corps, having formed on favorable ground, now advanced to push back, if possible, or at least to check the rebel advance, until the trains could be got off, and especially until the contents of Sheridan's headquarters could be loaded up and run off. We checked the advance of the enemy and pushed him back a short distance, and I think the very hardest and most stubborn fighting of the day took place here. We were fighting Kershaw's and Wharton's rebel divisions. The proportion of officers to the number of men in our line was very large. Probably not over 1,500 enlisted men of Crook's whole corps were engaged, while there was fully one-fourth that many line and staff officers. A great many line and staff officers took muskets, and lay down in the ranks of the men, while all mounted officers used their holster revolvers. The position was held for over a half hour, which gave time for the trains to move out of the way and Sheridan's headquarters to be emptied of everything of value, and also for the 6th and 19th corps to form a new line further to the rear. We now fell back to the left of the new line. Our brigade was greatly broken up by this time, but it was re-formed at the new line, where it soon rallied in good shape. Finding the enemy still on our flank near Middletown, we moved forward again to the edge of a piece of woods to check the enemy until another line could be formed by the 6th and 19th corps, still further to the rear beyond Middletown. Here we had another hard struggle for another half hour, finally being driven back by the masses of the enemy in our front and on our flanks. We now fell back again to the position beyond Middletown, the remnant of our little corps still clinging to the left, which it stubbornly refused to yield amid all the dreadful assaults of the morning, the 6th on our right in the center, and the 19th now on the extreme right of the line. Custer's and Merritt's cavalry divisions had been brought over from the right and were now doing valiant service in beating back the enemy from our left. Our left now lay near the pike, beyond which we could see the cavalry driving back the rebel hordes, which was the first ray of hope and grain of encouragement we had received during the morning.

But the day was lost, as all felt, and the army directed its attention to saving its trains and preventing the enemy getting complete possession of the pike and cutting us off from Winchester. A short time, however, served to demonstrate that we had succeeded in placing the enemy squarely in our front. Our camps, lines of works, twenty-four guns and 1800 prisoners were in his hands, and the army, though in a measure reformed, was in a condition of demoralization that would have justified any commander in withdrawing it from the field. A vast number of stragglers were well on their way to Winchester, and some had already entered that town. But many were now flocking back, and Crook's corps was every moment lengthening its line toward the pike. It was about 9 o'clock by this time, and every exertion was made to bring together the broken commands and strengthen our position. The enemy appeared content with his victory, and was now making no attempts to force us further back. Only straggling skirmish firing was going on, with now and then some artillery firing. We afterwards learned that this time was devoted by Early's men to plundering our camps, which were a rich field for his ragged and half starved army.

We now had time to count our loss. Colonel Thoburn, our division commander, was mortally wounded. General Hayes, commanding the second division, was badly crippled with a broken foot, by his horse, which was shot, falling upon him. Captain Bier, General Crook's Adjutant General, Colonel Hall, of the 13th West Virginia, and a dozen or more other officers were killed. Dr. Thomas J. Shannon, of our regiment, was mortally wounded. Major Kellogg, commanding the 123d, Captain Teters, commanding the 116th, and many more officers of the brigade were wounded; and our loss of men in killed, wounded and missing was very heavy. Our corps had lost seven guns, the 19th corps eleven and the 6th corps six, making twenty-four in all, besides many caissons, ambulances and wagons, our own corps, however, losing but four wagons and two ambulances in all the confusion of the day.

Hearing away in our rear cheer upon cheer, and coming nearer and nearer, we had only a moment to wonder as to the cause, when here came Sheridan galloping across the turnpike to where Crook was standing behind the remnant of his little corps. *

** "One thing at once struck me as curious, that the stream of men was now going towards Middletown. Astonished, I left Wheaton and galloped over to the pike, where I learned that Sheridan had just passed up. As well as can be ascertained, it was half past eleven o'clock."---Colonel Crown. In Sheebel's Cedar Creek.*

His great black horse, immortalized in song, was covered with flecks of foam and dripping sweat. Throwing the reins from his hand, he jumped to the ground. "Well, Crook, how is it?" he asked. "Bad enough, bad enough," answered Crook, pointing to the hand full left of his corps. "Well, get ready now, we'll lick them out of their boots yet before night," was Sheridan's quick reply, as he nervously and vigorously cut off the tops of weeds and grass with his riding whip. Hardly a minute elapsed before he was in his saddle again and off down the line in a hard gallop, the cheers of the men as he passed along telling just where he was. "We are now going back to our camps, boys." "We'll have all those camps and cannon back." "We'll soon get the tightest twist on them you ever saw." "Get ready, boys, to go for them." "We'll sleep in our old camps to-night." Such are some of the quick, crisp sentences he spoke to the men as he passed down the lines. Presently clouds of stragglers came flocking back to their places, and our corps was moved across the pike. A portion of the 6th corps was some distance in the rear. One staff officer after another was sent to hurry it forward, for Sheridan determined to stay right where he found the most advanced line. It didn't come quick enough to suit him, and he dashed away for it himself and brought it up on the run. It was not a moment too soon, for just as it moved into its place, about 1 o'clock, the rebel attack which Sheridan had been expecting was made on the 19th corps, and Wheaton's division of the 6th. From the left he had been watching the enemy's movement and knew he was preparing to attack. It was made to our right, and for a moment we trembled with anxiety, for the line at one place broke, but it was at once rallied and rolled back with a ringing cheer, when Sheridan galloped among the men, swinging his cap and calling on them to stand their ground. The attack was repulsed, and Sheridan said: "Thank God for that! Now if they attack you again go for them with the bayonet." *

** "The repulse of Early's left told him that fortune had quitted his standard. He thenceforth contented himself with the endeavor to get his prisoners and his captured guns and wagons back to Fisher's Hill."---The Shenandoah Valley in 1864.*

“So many of our men had stopped in the camps to plunder, (in which I am sorry to say that officers participated) the country was so open and the enemy’s cavalry so strong, that I did not deem it prudent to press further, especially as Lomax had not come up. I determined, therefore, to content myself with trying to hold the advantages I had gained until my troops had come up and the captured property was secured.” ---Early’s report to Lee.

(General Powell had successfully kept Lomax from coming onto the field and operating on our left, as planned by Early.)

The demoralization of the morning’s defeat was all gone. Everyone felt the tide of disaster had turned, and the men were now only too anxious to move forward to get “those camps and cannon back.” About 1 o’clock General Custer, at the head of his cavalry division, moved across behind us from the left to the right. He was cheered, too, for next to Sheridan, Custer was the pride of the army. It was wonderful to see the enthusiasm and confidence the presence of Sheridan inspired. There was real magic in it. Up to 4 o’clock all was silence on both sides, and preparation, organization and a deep suspense on ours. Sheridan continually rode along the front, studying the ground, encouraging the men, arranging and strengthening the lines. Every minute was adding strength to our lines. There was a growing desire to advance, which Sheridan kept telling the men they would do “as soon as he got a good ready.” It was nearly four o’clock when he started “the right wing of the 19th corps to swing towards the left.” Getty’s and Wheaton’s divisions of the 6th corps advanced at the same moment. The left half wheel by General Dwight, of the 19th Corps, on the extreme right, was successfully made, while Custer, riding round the right of the wheeling column, made a furious charge on the crumbling ranks of the enemy in the rear. The constant dread of being flanked by the cavalry had caused Early to stretch out his infantry lines until they were made very thin. But it did not after all save him from the dreadful cavalry, while it made it easy for the infantry to crush his distended lines. Now the bugles all along the lines sounded the “advance,” and Sheridan’s whole army was in motion. The rebels were lodged behind stone walls and rail pens, and in many places on the right made a stubborn resistance. But the strong infantry lines advancing and crowding them back in the front and on the flank, and the clouds of cavalry in their rear, spread consternation all along their lines until one division after another gave way, and as Pond, in “The Shenandoah Valley in 1864,” says: “The army that had swept over the field in triumph at dawn, was a mass of fugitives at night. Never was greater rout seen on a battle field since Bull Run.” *

** “A portion of the enemy had penetrated an interval which was between Evans’ brigade on the extreme left and the rest of the line, when the brigade gave way, and Gordon’s other brigades soon followed. Every effort was made to stop and rally Kershaw’s and Ramseur’s men, but the mass of them resisted all appeals and continued to go to the rear. Pegram alone got a portion of his command across Cedar Creek in an organized condition, but this small force soon dissolved.” ---Early’s report to Lee.*

No stop was made till the embarrassment of crossing Cedar Creek huddled them together in great masses on its bank. Custer and Devin came upon them now, when they broke into utter confusion and fled in all directions. The infantry halted at Cedar Creek, but the cavalry pursued the demoralized enemy towards Strasburg. One division of the 19th corps moved over to Hupp’s Hill after dark. Between Strasburg and Fisher’s Hill a bridge across a little stream broke down under the weight of a galloping battery, when the road for a long distance became blocked with a mass of guns, caissons, ambulances, wagons and fugitive men. Now Custer and Devin again swooped down upon the tangled mass and gathered it all up. Here is where the great capture of artillery, fifty-seven pieces, and “everything on wheels” that Early had, was made. Scores of wagons, ambulances, etc., were burned. Ten battle flags were among the trophies. The enemy abandoned everything at this last charge of the cavalry and fled in utterly broken up masses. It was well on towards morning before all the captured artillery and other property was brought back, and parked near Sheridan’s headquarters. Although tired and hungry, the men stood by the roadside in dense masses and gathered in great crowds around the rebel prisoners and captured property, and about their camp fires, nearly all night. The change from the gloom of disaster that hung over that army in the morning, brought about by the complete and undisputed victory in the evening, can be better imagine than described. What camping we did that night, we did on the *sites* of our camps of the night before. But our tents, blankets,

rations, etc., were gone, the rebels having made clean work of our camps, and no rations came up to us until the next morning, when we ate as hearty a breakfast as we ever did in our lives. We found our dead stripped of their clothing, the hyena conduct of which the rebels were almost universally guilty when ever by the fortunes of war our dead fell into their hands.

Our large force of cavalry, pursuing the fleeing rout, drove it out of Strasburg, following it to Fisher's Hill that night, and the next morning as far up the Valley as Woodstock. Two hours more of daylight, and our infantry would have utterly annihilated Early's army. It was a grand sight to see that army of ours, lately so shattered and stricken, thus re-form its columns and move out on the charge to such a glorious victory! It has no parallel in all the battles of the great rebellion. It was one of the most remarkable battles of modern times. Of all the retrieved battles recorded in history, none equals it. It has often been compared to Napoleon's great battle of Marengo, and some features of both are very much alike. About the same number of men were engaged in each; the losses were about the same; Napoleon's army was defeated in the morning, and returning to the conflict won a decisive victory in the afternoon. As Napoleon rode along his lines after joining his army, he said, "Men, you know I always sleep on the battle field." As Sheridan rode along his lines he said, "We'll sleep in our old camps to-night." And the presence and speech of Napoleon at Marengo inspired his men no less than did the presence and speech of Sheridan at Cedar Creek. But there the parallel ends. Napoleon brought with him to the front 4,000 of the Imperial Guard, the best soldiers in Europe, and a few moments after his arrival, 4,000 of Dessaix's corps of veterans, just arrived from Egypt, came upon the field. Our army, after having sustained a decided defeat, totally routed the victors without receiving any re-enforcements, save one man...SHERIDAN! It must be remembered, too, that the men had eaten nothing since the night before, that they had lost their canteens and were suffering much from thirst, as well as hunger, and that they had been fighting and maneuvering, often at the double-quick, for nearly twelve hours. To this general condition, our brigade was an exception in one or two respects. Most of the men had their canteens, and many their haversacks, having had more time, as we have shown, to prepare for action in the morning, than most of our corps. Whatever was or may have been the condition of others, our brigade was in line and ready for the onset of the rebels, and it has always been so conceded. We came back to the pike, fighting all the way, with two regiments, and there we went into a charge led by General Wright himself. The stigma of "surprise," therefore, does not, and never did attach to the 1st brigade. *

* Prof. Leroy D. Brown, Superintendent of the Hamilton Union Schools at present, was a private soldier in "H," and on the night of the 18th of October was an orderly at brigade headquarters until midnight, Edward H. Bradley, of "G," then taking his place. Prof. Brown has written a paper of great merit on "Sheridan in the Shenandoah Valley." He has very kindly furnished me with a copy and I am indebted to it for a number of important facts incorporated in this work. But I will let him tell his experience of that night himself: "This night I was orderly at brigade headquarters. General Wildes, now of Akron, then the Lieutenant Colonel of the 116th Ohio, was in command of my brigade. I was on duty till midnight, and it was reported that the enemy was moving towards our left. This was not believed by our commanders. Nevertheless I took the precaution to secure my gun and accoutrements, with the half shelter tent and blanket which I carried before I went to sleep. I was awakened by my comrade Bradley about 2 o'clock, who told me that he had heard the marching of cavalry down by Massanutten. This was confirmed by a captain of the 5th New York, whose regiment was on picket. Still nothing was done to arouse our sleeping army."

In a letter to me Edward H. Bradley says: "I was orderly at brigade headquarters from midnight until the attack was made on the morning of the 19th of October, when I took my gun and went to my company. I heard brisk firing on our front and right about 4 o'clock, and immediately informed you. The brigade was in line fully half an hour before the enemy struck the Virginia brigade (the 3d) on our right. They were asleep, I think, at least they made no stand, and we were flanked out of our works."

The officer of the 5th New York, mentioned by Prof. Brown, came to my headquarters twice during the night, and told of what he had heard at the front and on the left. He

was convinced that something more than usual was going on, and he told me that the officer of the day had been notified by him. The regimental commanders of the brigade were ordered about 4 o'clock to have their commands under arms at once. The whole brigade was at the works fully half an hour before the storm burst upon the 8th corps on our left and right. The officer of the day Lieutenant Colonel Furney, 34th Ohio, was captured about 3 o'clock in the morning. It seems that, being informed of the indications of some movement, he undertook to investigate for himself, and nearing a point at which our cavalry should have been stationed, he saw a body of mounted men up to whom he unsuspectingly rode and was made a prisoner and sent to the rear. This mishap, very likely, combined with other things to make the surprise more complete than it might otherwise have been. Colonel Furney escaped at Mount Jackson and returned to camp in a couple of days after the battle.

Major Karr says in a letter to me: "You sent me to Colonel Thoburn's headquarters a little after 4 o'clock in the morning to notify him of the enemy's approach."

Speaking of the stand made by our corps before falling back beyond Middletown, General Harris, in his report, says: "By this time we had arrested and brought together a sufficient number of officers and men to justify an attack on our part, to aid in checking the enemy's advance, and were directed by the General commanding to a point of the line in the woods. In our advance towards these woods we were aided by Lieutenant Colonel Wildes, commanding the 1st brigade, and Colonel Wells, commanding the 15th West Virginia, each of whom brought a considerable concession to our strength. This force, now numbering three or four thousand men, was pushed forward into the woods until its withdrawal was rendered imperative by the giving way of our lines on our left, as also by a movement of the enemy to turn our right."

The loss of the 116th was as follows:

KILLED.

Dr. Thomas J. Shannon, Surgeon; Francis Caldwell, Company B; Aaron Weekly, Company A; David Bruny, Company F.---4.

WOUNDED.

Lieutenant Colonel Thos. F. Wildes; Captain W. B. Teters, Company H; Lieutenant R. T. Chaney, Company D; Lieutenant J. C. H. Cobb, Company G; Corporal Abraham Strait, Company D; Orlando Griffith, Company K; Pardon C. Hewett, Company K; Abel C. Barnes, Company C; Samuel R. Halliday, Company G; Robert Carpenter, Company F; James Wilson, Company F; Color Sergeant Charles P. Allison, Company K; Milton Mozena, Company C; William S. Parrott, Company I.---14.

PRISONERS.

Corporal James H. Stewart, Company B; William S. Parrott, Company I; John Rawlings, Company G; Daniel Bennett, Company D; Jacob Carpenter, Company H; William B. Seagur, Company G; James Whitman, Company G.---7.

General Sheridan, in his report of the Shenandoah campaign, says: "At Cedar Creek, Getty's division of the 6th corps, and Merritt's and Custer's division of cavalry, confronted the enemy from the first attack in the morning, still none behaved more gallantly, or exhibited greater courage than those who returned from the rear, determined to re-occupy their lost camps."

Believing that the reader will be interested in the account they give of the extraordinary battle, I give below in full the official reports of Lieutenant Colonel Wiles and General Crook:

HEADQUARTERS 1ST BRIGADE, 1ST INFANTRY DIVISION, ARMY OF WEST VIRGINIA.
CEDAR CREEK, VIRGINIA, October 24, 1864.

Lieutenant F. L. Ballard, A. A. A. G. 1st Infantry Division, Army West Virginia:

LIEUTENANT:---In compliance with your orders, I have the honor to submit the following report of the part taken by my command in the action of the 19th inst:

About 4 o'clock on the morning of the 19th of October, 1864, I heard brisk picket firing on the right and left of the position occupied by my command. I immediately ordered the brigade under arms behind its fortifications. In a few minutes afterwards I heard a volley of perhaps twenty rifle shots, and a yell, as though a charge was being made, in the direction of a picket post in front of my left. I at once directed Captain Karr, of my staff, to inform Colonel Thoburn that there was considerable firing along the picket line. I then went to the right of my command to the position occupied by the 3d brigade, 1st division, when I discovered that some of the pickets were coming in. Believing we were about to be attacked, I moved the 123d and 116th Ohio regiments to the right, closing upon the 34th Massachusetts regiment, filling up a gap made in my line by the absence of the 5th New York H. A. on picket duty. The line was scarcely closed up when a heavy volley of musketry was fired on my right. Upon going again to the right to learn the cause of it, and the state of affairs there, I found the works of the 3d brigade occupied by the enemy, and that the 34th Massachusetts regiment, being flanked in its position, had left the works in its front. Just at this time I heard brisk firing on my left. Seeing that I was flanked on my right, and apprehending that my left was also threatened, I ordered the 116th and 123d Ohio regiments to move by the left flank and form line of battle in the field on my left, fronting the position lately occupied by the 3d brigade. I had scarcely formed this line when I heard firing in the woods immediately in my rear. I then moved by the left flank of the brigade and formed another line on the hill overlooking the ravine in rear of the works of the 3d brigade. Halting here a moment, I discovered the enemy was in my rear and threatening to cut me off and to surround me. I then moved quickly towards the turnpike, my command fighting the enemy in my front and on my right until it reached the position occupied by the 19th A. corps. Here it formed a portion of the line under the direction of General Emory, and fought until the line was broken on this part of the field, my command at one time charging the enemy's position under the immediate direction of General Wright. After this the line became so broken that but little could be done in rallying the men until they reached the train of the 6th A. corps in the vicinity of the present headquarters of General Crook. A line was here formed to allow the train to cross the ravine and creek. Considering the broken condition of the ranks, the men of my command fought with great bravery and coolness at this point. When the train had crossed this line gave way, and falling back some distance, scattering portions of my brigade were collected and moved forward under the direction of Colonel Harris to a line formed in the edge of the woods beyond the ravine in which the 6th corps' train had become blocked. When this line fell back, portions of my command formed with the remnant of the 1st division behind a stone wall on the right of the turnpike beyond Middletown. Colonel Harris then directed me to go to the rear and direct all stragglers from the Army of West Virginia to return to their commands. Taking Lieutenant Dissoway of my staff with me, I went to the rear and succeeded in collecting a considerable portion of the stragglers, and shortly after returning, under direction of Colonel Harris, moved the brigade across the turnpike to the support of the batteries situated on that part of the field. It lay there until the advance was made in the afternoon, when it moved forward and encamped near its present position.

I neglected to state in the proper connection that my command was in line of battle fully three-fourths of an hour before the attack was made, and that information of the picket firing was sent to division headquarters a full half hour before the attack was made on my right. My regimental commanders, Major Kellogg, 123d Ohio; Captain Teters, 116th Ohio; Captain Potter, 34th Massachusetts; and Captain Wilkie, 5th New York H. A. regiments,

did everything in their power with the men , and performed their duties nobly throughout the day.

The members of my staff, Captain Karr and Lieutenant Dissoway, conducted themselves in the most gallant manner throughout the day, and rendered very valuable service in their strenuous efforts to keep the command together. I have heretofore forwarded a list of casualties in my command in the action. I enclose reports of regimental commanders.

I am Lieutenant, very truly your obedient servant.

THOS. F. WILDES.

Lieutenant Colonel 116th Ohio Volunteers, Commanding Brigade.

HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT WEST VIRGINIA.
CEDAR CREEK, VA., November 7, 1864.

Lieutenant Colonel J. W. Forsyth, Chief of Staff, Middle Military Division.

COLONEL: I have the honor to report that on the morning of the 19th ult. The Army of West Virginia under my command, owing to the heavy details made upon it, did not number over 4,000 bayonets present. The 1st division, Colonel Joseph Thoburn commanding, and batteries B, 5th U. S.; and D, 1st Pennsylvania artillery, were encamped further down Cedar Creek and almost one mile from the left of the 19th corps, on a high ridge overlooking Cedar Creek and the country in the vicinity of Strasburg, with the right resting close to and fronting down the creek. The general bearing of this ridge was an irregular crescent, running to the rear of and about one-half mile distant from the left of the 19th corps. Battery L, 1st Ohio Artillery, was occupying the works above the bridge across the creek, while the second division, Colonel R. B. Hayes commanding, was held in reserve and camped about one-fourth of a mile in rear of the left of the 19th corps. My pickets were at the usual distance from camp, and connecting with those of other commands. The works in front of the 1st division were being extended on this ridge opposite the 2d division, to be used by other troops in case of emergency, but I had not a sufficient number of men to man them. Subsequent investigation goes to show that the greater part of the enemy, some time during the night previous, crossed the Shenandoah River below the mouth of Cedar Creek and massed just outside of my pickets. At about half past four o'clock A.M., another force of the enemy crossed the creek in front of the first division, and soon after the enemy came rushing in solid lines of battle, without skirmishers, on my pickets, coming to the works with those of the pickets they had not captured, in overwhelming numbers, entered that portion of the works not occupied by our troops and soon were on the flank and in the rear of the first division and the two batteries, compelling them either to retreat or to be captured. The ground to be passed over was one succession of hills and ravines, so that it was impossible for the troops to make a rapid retreat in anything like good order. In the meantime, the 2d division was formed on a ridge parallel to and facing the pike, with its right nearly opposite to the left of the 19th corps. One brigade of the latter was placed in position nearly at right angles to this division and on its extreme right. On the left of the 2d division was Colonel Kitching's command. This command commenced falling back, when the whole line apparently took it up in a good deal of disorder. In every regiment, however, a considerable number of men contested the advance of the enemy, and so delayed him until the army headquarters and other wagons were enabled to get off safely. Battery L. 1st Ohio artillery, remained in position until compelled to retire, doing good execution in its retreat. The dense smoke which enveloped everywhere tended greatly to create the general confusion that prevailed. After my command was re-formed, General Sheridan placed it on the left of them 6th corps, to be held in reserve. After the

general advance was made I followed after, overtaking the other commands before they reached Cedar Creek. Captain H. A. Dupont, with battery B, 5th U.S., and Battery L, 1st Ohio artillery, galloped forward to the skirmish line and did most admirable execution, (see Captain Dupont's report.) The command camped for the night on the grounds occupied before. As the dense fog which prevailed shut from view the operations of most of the army. I respectfully refer you to the enclosed reports of my subaltern commanders for further details of this army's operations.

My loss was as follows: First Division---Killed, 13; wounded, 97; missing, 474; total, 584. Second division---Killed, 26; wounded, 154; missing, 31; total, 211. Artillery Brigade---Killed, 7; wounded, 17; missing, 28; total 52. Totals---Killed, 46; wounded, 268, missing 533; total, 847. Seven pieces of artillery, ten caissons, two battery wagons, one forge, four army wagons, and two ambulances.

I am specially indebted to my division and other commanders and to the members of my staff for valuable services rendered on that day. Captain Dupont, chief of artillery, and the officers and men of his batteries are deserving of particular mention for their conspicuous gallantry and the valuable services rendered that day. I am pained to report the death of Colonel Joseph Thoburn, commanding 1st division, and Captain Phillip G. Bier, Assistant Adjutant General on my staff. Both fell mortally wounded while rallying the men. Brave, efficient, and ever conspicuous for their gallantry on the field of battle, in them the country sustained a loss not easily repaired.

I respectfully call your attention to the loss of many brave and valuable officers who fell on that day, as mentioned in the reports of my subaltern commanders. Colonel R. B. Hayes had his horse shot under him, and was slightly injured.

I am, sir, very respectfully your obedient servant,

GEORGE CROOK, Major General.

The loss of the army in killed, wounded and prisoners was about 5,700, of which about 1,400 were prisoners. The loss of our corps was forty-six killed, 268 wounded, and 523 missing, which shows that it did not break to the rear with no attempt to show fight. The 1st brigade lost as follows: 116th Ohio, four killed, thirteen wounded, five prisoners; 123d Ohio, one killed, sixteen wounded, thirteen prisoners; 34th Massachusetts, two killed, seven wounded, thirty-four prisoners; 5th New York H. A., one killed, seven wounded, 153 prisoners, making a total of seven killed, forty-two wounded and 205 prisoners, which shows a very large proportion of the loss of the corps, and a still greater proportion of the loss of the division, which was thirteen killed, ninety-seven wounded, and 474 prisoners.

This battle ended the campaign in the Shenandoah Valley, and effectually destroyed the fine army, among which were the choice troops of the South, with which General Early had entered the Valley, and threatened Washington in July. Among the rebel killed was General Ramseur. When the news of this great battle reached the North, it rang with the praises of Sheridan. General Grant ordered salutes of 100 guns fired by the armies in Sheridan's honor, and he wrote the President as follows:

"Turning what had bid fair to be a disaster into a glorious victory, stamps Sheridan what I always thought him, one of the ablest of Generals."

President Lincoln telegraphed Sheridan:

"With great pleasure I tender you and your brave army the thanks of the Nation and my own personal congratulations and gratitude for the month's operations in the Shenandoah Valley, and especially, for the splendid work on October 19th, 1864."

And, a few weeks later, the President appointed him a Major General in the regular army; and a few months later still, Congress passed a resolution thanking "Major General Philip H. Sheridan and the officers and

men under his command, for the gallantry, military skill and courage displayed in the Valley of the Shenandoah, and especially for their services at Cedar Run on the 19th day of October, 1864, which retrieved the fortunes of the day, and thus averted a great disaster.”

The greatest loss we met was in the death of Colonel Thoburn. No better or braver officer ever lived. Every man in his division fairly loved him. Firm, yet kind hearted as a child, he impressed every one who met him as an honest, patriotic, Christian gentleman. As a man he drew around him a pleasant circle of friends, constant and affectionate, who deeply and inconsolably mourned his loss. In disposition he was frank, manly, kind, and always cheerful. He was the soul of kindness to those he commanded, and the very soul of honor itself in all the relations of army life. He did not possess an impulsive nature. He was not a thunder-bolt on the field. He was a rock, rather. Fiery floods might break upon him, and yet he was always the same, always cool, strong, intrepid, brave and firm. While he was the soldier, every inch, he never forgot that he was also a citizen and a gentleman, and that he was simply engaged in war because duty and patriotism called him there. Hence he took no interest or pride in the pomps or forms of military life. He was too sincere, too deeply in earnest in the cause of his country to give a thought to anything that did not point directly toward the unity of the Nation, and its restoration from the fell powers of treason and disunion. His young State of West Virginia and the Nation could ill afford to lose such a man as General Thoburn. After the battles ending with Fisher’s Hill, he was asked by General Crook to furnish the names of the officers of his division most conspicuous for gallantry and efficient conduct, and who were most deserving of promotion. A few days before his death he sent me a copy of his reply to this request: I here publish it, possibly for the first time it has been published anywhere, as a part of the history of our regiment. It will doubtless be gratifying to the officers named in it to know now, if they never did before, of the esteem in which their dead friend held them.

HEADQUARTERS 1ST INFANTRY DIVISION, ARMY WEST VIRGINIA.
September 27, 1864.

CAPTAIN:---In answer to your request to furnish you with the names of the officers of the 1st division most conspicuous for gallantry and efficient conduct in the late battles of Winchester and Fisher’s Hill, and who are most deserving of promotion. I have the honor to report that with few exceptions all were brave and efficient, and deserving of all praise, and it is very difficult to avoid making the list too long, and thus defeat the object at which you aim. Among the bravest and most efficient I have the honor to present you with the following names: Colonel T. M. Harris, 10th West Virginia Volunteers, commanding 3d brigade; Lieutenant Colonel Thos. F. Wildes, commanding 116th Ohio Volunteers; Major H. W. Potter, commanding 34th Massachusetts Volunteers; Lieutenant Colonel J. P. Linton, commanding 5th Pennsylvania Volunteers; Adjutant Baughman, 10th West Virginia Volunteers; Lieutenant Geo. McComber, 34th Massachusetts Volunteers; Lieutenant H. H. Hornbrook, 1st West Virginia Volunteers; the last two, members of my staff. These officers were most conspicuous for gallantry, and are all highly deserving of promotion.

I have the honor to be very respectfully your obedient servant,

J. THOBURN, Colonel.

CAPTAIN P. G. BIER, A. A. Gen’l A. W. Va.

I write of him as General Thoburn, at times, from the fact that he was promoted to Brigadier General, and his commission reached the headquarters of General Crook a few days after his death. No man in the army more meritoriously deserved high rank than he did. It was sorely regretted by all that he did not live to enjoy and wear the star he had so well earned, and so richly merited. It will, I know, be considered pardonable pride to have won the confidence and esteem of this noble man, otherwise I would not have published this highly prized paper.

A great many promotions in the army followed this battle, which was the effectual wiping out of the rebel army in the Shenandoah Valley. Serenading was the order of early every evening. The band of the 34th

Massachusetts was one of the best in the army, and was in constant demand. On the 21st of October, General B. R. Cowen, then Adjutant General of Ohio, wrote to us: "I congratulate you on the gallant bearing of your command during the past campaign. You have reflected honor on the State by your actions, and will not be forgotten." On the 26th we received a visit from Colonel Washburn, to whom we gave a royal greeting. Tuesday, the 8th of November, the regiment voted for President, casting 371 votes for Lincoln, and eighty-one for McClellan.

On the 16th of November, at Kernstown, to which place we had fallen back on the 9th, the regiments of our brigade held the first dress parade they had had since early spring, except the 116th, on the occasion of Colonel Washburn's visit. Over six months had been so crowded with marches, battles and hard field service that there was no room for drills or parades, except in maneuvers on bloody battle fields.

Our Chaplain, Rev. E. W. Brady, resigned on the 18th, and left for his home. Before leaving he talked a few moments to the men and offered prayer, the first for five months. The last few months had been hard ones for a Chaplain, but Chaplain Brady always did the best he could. He was always ready to do anything he could, as well as officiate as Chaplain. He was exceedingly kind and attentive to the sick and wounded, and did a great deal of good work in the hospitals. During the whole time he was with the regiment he acted as postmaster, and was very faithful in the discharge of the important duties of that position. Both officers and men paid him the highest respect whenever he engaged in the duties of his calling, but when off duty and among the men, he was as jolly and as fond of sport as any of them in their efforts to break the *ennui* of camp life. He left the regiment with the good wishes of every officer and soldier in it. Rev. James Logan a private soldier in company C, was promoted to Chaplain and commissioned by the Governor at the request of the regiment. He had distinguished himself in several engagements in carrying the colors of the regiment after the color bearers had been disabled, coming forward at Lynchburg at the call for volunteers to carry the colors after the whole color guard had been wounded. His bravery was so noted, and his Christian character so marked, withal, that the private soldiers unanimously requested his appointment to the chaplaincy on the resignation of Reverend Brady. On the 28th we were paid off, and the men of company I raised a subscription, and sent it to Mrs. Matilda Secoy, whose husband had been killed in the battle of Opequan, on the 19th of September.

On the 18th of November, our brigade was ordered to Opequan bridge to guard the railroad at that point. On the 24th we received our share of the 10,000 Thanksgiving turkeys sent to "Little Phil's" army by the loyal people of Ohio and New York City, which, together with such chickens, pigs, turkeys, sheep, etc., as the "enemy's country" afforded, were served up at a Thanksgiving dinner, that, could our friends at home have seen, would have dispelled many a story to be found in the press and in old letters about the "sufferings of the boys in the field." Of the turkeys sent to the army at this time, Sergeant Walker wrote in his diary, under date of November 24th, 1864: "The train stopped at our depot to-day and put off 1,000 pounds of turkeys for this brigade, our share of 36,000 pounds sent to the Army of the Shenandoah by the citizens of New York City. All honor to the noble State that could thus remember the soldiers in the field. I will venture to say this is the first instance on record of turkeys being furnished to an entire army. American citizens against the world." Great boxes of all sorts or good things came at the same time from Massachusetts for the 34th, from which Lieutenant Ripley selected many a toothsome morsel for the table at headquarters. It now rained nearly every day, and was very cold and disagreeable, but very comfortable long huts were speedily built and "winter quarters" established on a grand scale. But, as was the constant fate of the soldier, we were doomed not to enjoy them very long. On the 17th of December a grand salute was fired in honor of General Thomas' victory over Hood.

On the 18th orders came to be ready to move next day for the Army of the James, in front of Richmond. The 6th corps had preceded us to the Army of the Potomac, going about the 1st of December. An order had come from General Grant for "the best division in Crook's corps," and in compliance with the order the 1st was selected. We were now to bid good-bye to the Shenandoah Valley! What recollections the thought revived

*"The echoes that start
While memory plays its old tune on the heart."*

What hardships the men of this division had endured in this Valley of Virginia. How often had its soil been baptized in the blood of its bravest and its best. What severe defeats they had sustained and what glorious victories they had achieved upon its soil. Scores of its best men were to be left behind in sanctified graves. From the Heights of Bolivar to the environs of Lynchburg, the roadsides, fields and forests were dotted with the burial places of its noble dead. In the hospitals of the army, lay hundreds of its maimed and disabled, and Oh, how many languished, worse than dead, in Southern prisons! How faithfully had its men fought for the success of the great cause of Liberty and Union in this bloody Valley. Is it any wonder, then, that protests were entered to its removal? Not from its officers or men, but from army commanders and the authorities of West Virginia. Strong protests against its removal from the field upon which it had achieved its renown were sent to General Grant and the authorities at Washington. It was urged that this division was more familiar with the Valley than any troops in it, was better acquainted with its people and their character, had become identified with it in every sense more closely than any troops that ever occupied it. But this was all in vain, and on the day designated in our orders, we started for our new field of operations. How well we maintained the good name of the "Army of West Virginia" alongside the veterans of the Potomac and the James, let history tell.

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May 9, 2002
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