

The following is from a manuscript printed in *The Globe* newspaper, found in the Middletown (MD) Valley Historical Society. Incorrect spelling and sentence structure have been left intact.

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### 1863

Like all organizations, we had men that were not true to the colors. On the night of the 5th of February the sentinel on duty at the stables deserted, appropriating Major Dallam's horse to help him on his way. On February 24th a mule took offense at me passing somewhere within fifty feet of his rear, kicked me on the leg, but missed his mark so far as to not break any bones. Considering the source from which it came, all that we could do was to pass on the best we could. We were not in a very moveable condition for several days.

On the 28th of February we had the pleasure of witnessing the presentation of a flag from California to the brave boys of the First Maryland Regiment, who had already gained considerable distinction.

The 4th of April was cloudy and cold. We broke camp on Maryland Heights and moved our camp to Bolivar Heights, on the Virginia side of the Potomac. We pitched our tents upon the wet ground. It began to snow in the evening and the next morning there was a wet snow of about eight inches. We had nothing but a narrow board to lie upon the wet ground for a board (bed?) with wet ground below, wet snow above. I lay down cold and shivered to sleep. But that sleep was of short duration. I awoke with the most severe pains through my shoulder and breast that I thought a mortal could experience. But fortunately by calling upon the surgeon, I got relief.

Owing to raids by Imboden and Jones, on April 27th we left Harpers Ferry, on the B&O Railroad, reaching Cumberland in the evening and Oakland the next morning. We left Oakland on the morning of the 29th on foot through rain and mud for Cranberry Summit. Here the auctioneer of Company I, Joseph Boward, put up at public auction one of the Sixth Virginia home guards. He was reported to have aided the enemy at plunder, and killed a citizen's cow, was arrested and afterward turned over to the civil authorities. After pleading for a bid, he was knocked off to Jeff Davis for three cents. Thinking it was too good of a bargain to let his uniform go with the man, his clothes were put up, soon reaching twenty-five dollars. They were knocked off to Uncle Sam. It was rather humiliating, but he had to stand it.

We left Cranberry Summit at about seven o'clock that evening. We marched through rain and the most slippery mud I ever put my foot in. The roads were cut up and uneven. Being very dark, we could not see where to put our feet, and would be slipping to one side or the other, forward or backward, which was very fatiguing. We got within about four miles of Roolsburg at two o'clock in the morning. Just before the regiment made a halt for the night, the front was slo getting up an embankment of the railroad. Being we [ary] and worn out, I perched upon a stump close by me and propped my head in my hands. That was the lost that I knew until some stragglers came up, shook me and inquired where the regiment was. It was gone.

Having an aversion to straggling, I picked up courage and struck out in the direction we were going and was highly gratified at finding that it was putting up for the night. Wet and chilly, I crawled into a stable. Pulling up some hay in the dark, I stuck myself under as far as possible for cover. Someone threw themselves across me, packing it even more closely and I was asleep again, and sufficiently recuperated to take the advance guard to Roolsburg, which we reached about noon. Here we had a fairly good time, mostly fine spring weather, eating maple sugar, smoking Virginia cheroots, hunting young snakes for pastime, which were easier to catch than the fine trout in the Cheat River.

Capt. Anderson was left back sick in the hospital and did not join us until the 13th of May. One of the peculiar feature of the stone at this place, was their bursting qualities when made hot. One of the oldest men of our company had built up two parallel walls. Then procuring a large flat stone for the top to serve as a frying pan, after building a fire underneath, pointing a stick for a flesh fork, he layed his nice slice of meat upon the stone. The meat began to fry nicely. He was leaning over the stone turning the meat and speculating upon what a fine meal he would have, when suddenly the stone burst with the report of a gun, throwing the meat around his head, much to the merriment of his comrades.

On another occasion, whilst picketing on the mountain, my relief being on duty at night, the balance of the post lying around a log fire, I threw a good sized stone into the hottest place and passed time waiting to see what the result would be. Finally it burst with the report of a gun, bringing the whole post to their feet, thinking that an alarm had been fired.

## PART II

Guarding the bridge across the Cheat River and the trestle works a little farther down the B&O RR and picketing on the mountains, etc., until the 15th of May, we mounted the cars, reaching Harpers Ferry and again occupied our old campground on Bolivar Heights.

The 7th Md. Regt. Was the only body of infantry, and some cavalry on the Virginia side of the Potomac. Frequent reports would soon come to camp that Mosby's Guerrillas had captured some cavalry pickets or outposts.

On the night of the 23rd of May, Lieutenant Garrell, of Co. H in in some way got beyond his outpost. On returning he failed to hear the challenge of the picket and he was severely wounded by being shot in his arm and side. He was mistaken for a guerilla.

Whilst here, on the south side of the Potomac, we were frequently called out in line at night, ready for any action that we might be ordered into. It appeared to me that upon every detail for the picket it fell to my lot to go with three men across the Shenandoah River climb to the summit of Loudon Heights, a most lonely place, where great vigilance was required; and as our duty was very heavy, it came to our turn about every twenty-four hours. We felt relief when on the 10th of June we were taken across the river again to Maryland Heights. But that relief was of short duration, for the 13th of June Milroy was defeated and forced back at Winchester. Heavy cannonading was heard each day. We were marched and counter-marched, drawn up in line of battle, and required to do heavy picket duty. The enemy crossed the river at Williamsport. We could see the wagon train wending its way across the valley. All kinds of rumors were afloat, and we were living under constant expectation of something turning up. On the 23rd of June the heights were ordered evacuated. The guns were spiked. While this was going on, one of the magazines exploded killing and wounding 21 men. Our regiment being stationed some 200 or 300 yards below the battery, some of our men were struck by falling missiles, causing severe wounds, and the lifeless form of a man was thrown down in our midst.

Leaving Maryland Heights at about three o'clock, p.m., we encamped at Petersville that night, reaching Frederick the next evening, July 1. Here we were put under very strict orders. Any officer or man failing to do his duty was to have a drumhead court martial and be shot. We had charge of an outpost on the National Pike toward Middletown. Being under the command of General French and seeing that officer coming out the pike with the staff, our men were drawn up in line. After presenting arms and bringing my men to shoulder arms, the General, with that peculiar blink of his eye, interrogated me as to what my duty was. I informed him that I was instructed to keep a strict lookout for the enemy, and arrest all suspicious persons found on the pike. The next was to know what I would do if the enemy's cavalry made a dash on my post. I replied that I would try to do them all the damage I could, and if too many for me I would cross the fence and fall back, whereupon he gave me a bland smile, saying "That will do," turned his horse and rode back to Frederick, and rode back to Frederick, and were gratified to know that our head was safe.

On the 3rd of July, we marched out to Frederick Junction. Owing to the intense heat, many of our men were prostrated.

The next day being the anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, we celebrated that day with great rejoicing, as the news of the great victory of Gettysburg was learned.

On July the 6th, our eye fell upon the lifeless form of a man dangling from a limb of a locust tree, which proved to be that of a spy, who was frequently seen in our camp selling maps, books, etc. The evidence against him was found in his boots.

On July the 7th, Company I, of the 7th Maryland Volunteers, was relieved by Company I of the 7th New York State Militia, and we left Frederick, reaching Jefferson in the night in a heavy rain storm. But, thanks to the good people of that town, the churches were thrown open for us and with a pew for a bed, we had a good night's rest in the Lutheran Church of that place. On the 8th we rejoined our brigade at Maryland Heights, they had retaken it a few day previous.; On July 10th, we marched up through Pleasant Valley to a point near Boonsboro.

Here the Maryland Brigade, composed of the 1st, 4th 7th and 8th Regiments, was united with the First Army Corps, becoming the third brigade, third division, the Sixth Maryland Regiment having been assigned elsewhere. Here I had the pleasure of meeting my brother David, who belonged to a Pennsylvania cavalry regiment.

The next day we were drawn in line of battle, northwest of Boonsboro, along the edge of a woods, and ordered to appropriate fencing in our front for breastworks. Each man struck out to get the nearest rail. That fence went down as fast as I could run, and I did not succeed in getting one until I had gone about one-fourth of a mile.

On the 12th of July we marched to Funkstown. Crossing the bridge toward Hagerstown we filed to the left through fields to a point near Sharpsburg Pike. Company I was thrown out on the picket line on the opposite side of the pike. Here is where we exchanged our first shots with the enemy, in close proximity to

where some of our men were born and reared, and a number whose homes were in Funkstown and immediate vicinity. They had worked over or hunted on these grounds, and within two miles of where we enrolled our names for service. In the evening we were withdrawn to the pike and the enemy took possession of the high ground in our immediate front. During the night they threw up rifle pits. The next morning we had our fun, (if you will allow the expression) of driving them out of their shelter, occupying the pits ourselves, but not to the same advantage.

The next morning we had our fun, (if you will allow the expression) of driving them out of their shelter, occupying the pits ourselves, but not to the same advantage. They had the excavated side while we could only use the pile of dirt thrown out toward us. Sitting in a stooped position, left leg resting against the pile of dirt, and looking behind a fence opposite. With a sharp whisk some of their bullets passed between our nose and knee, suggesting to us the idea of hugging the ground a little closer. Lying down, rolling upon our backs to load, we would stick a cap above the scant breastworks and would watch the enemy smoke to get a mark to shoot at. Looking to my left, I saw comrade Gimple behind a similar pile rubbing his eyes. Asking him what was the matter, he replied, in a comical manner, the — — — Rebs knocked dirt in his eyes, which caused me to take a hearty laugh.

In this skirmish Charles Scuffin was the first man in Company I, or the 7th Regiment, to shed blood, receiving a flesh wound in the leg.

On the 15th of July we made a heavy march toward Berlin, where we crossed the river on the 18th, reaching Middleburg, Va., on the 20th. The weather being very warm on this march, there were many stragglers. The Maryland Brigade was a new annex to the first corps. It was blamed on them for the number of stragglers, although we had our share. This was said to have caused some sharp words between General Newton and General Kenly.

Captain Anderson, of our company, although a brave officer, was a man who had his likes and dislikes. And there were some things transpired of rather private nature that caused some distant feeling between him and some of the men. Upon this march on of our men of rather a cool and unassuming nature, was compelled to fall back on account of sore and galded feet, catching up to the command about the middle of the day, it having halted for a rest. He sat down, pulled off his shoes and was wrapping his feet. About this time the command, tired and worn, was called into marching order. The men were slow to fall into line. The captain ordered the one who had just caught up to fall in, as he was one of the tallest men, whereupon the man replied that he had just caught up and would like to fix his feet so as to keep up while the company formed. The captain, in a harsh manner, told him that if he did not fall in he would buck and gag the next time we stopped. Incensed at such a threat, the man arose, placed his fist under the captain's nose, and with fixed teeth and stern eye informed the captain that it would be the last man he would ever buck and gag. The man was ordered under arrest, but he was relieved the next morning.

We resumed our march on July 22nd via White Plains, Warrenton Junction, leaving there on the night of the 25th at about 11 o'clock and reaching Bealton Station at daylight. Water was scarce and bad all along the route.

The further we penetrated Virginia, the more we felt we were in the enemy's country. Reaching Warrenton, we scarcely saw a white citizen. The colored people did not seem to have much fear of a Yank and at one place a number of both sexes and of all shades, were assembled to see us pass. One especially that we noticed, seeming to be better clad than the rest, was a young woman, with long black wavy hair hanging down her back, with fine features and the picture of health, would have made a fine subject for some quack medicine firm to display in their advertisements.

On the above march we stopped over from the 20th to the 22nd at Middleburg. Here we had a little change in our diet. Blackberries being in abundance, we had a chance to fill up and leave a few for the natives.

On the 2nd of August we left Bealton Station, marching across the Rappahannock, returned and encamped on its banks where we threw up entrenchments and picketed on the opposite side. For some time we had no other water but that of the river for drinking or cooking. Not knowing how many human beings or beasts were lying in the stream, we went to work and dug a well. About the time we were blessed with the pure, limpid element shining at its bottom, we were moved about a mile to the right, near the railroad-bridge. Fortunately there was a well of good water near by. There was nothing to relieve the monotony of camp life except hearing occasional fighting in the direction of Culpepper until the 13th of September, when there was a move of strong cavalry, artillery and infantry forces across the river toward Culpepper.

We were under marching orders with knapsacks packed ready to move at any moment. It was here on the 15th of September that I got a note from Captain Little of Company K, 143rd Pennsylvania Volunteers, that my brother Adam was at Bealton Station in the hospital, very sick. This was a great surprise to me, he being very young, and my not knowing he was in the army. Armed with a permit and taking all my equipments with me, I tramped back to Bealton, where I found my brother in the hospital tent, unconscious from typhoid fever. Fain would I have stayed with him, but under existing circumstances, the army all activity, it would have been useless to make application for permission to stay. Fortunately he recovered. This made three out of four of our family in the army.

Returning, I found my regiment where I had left it. Heavy fighting was heard in front, when we started across the river on the 16th to a point about three miles to the left of Culpepper. Here on the 25th of September there was a deserter from the Fourth Maryland Regiment executed by shooting. The division was drawn up in line, and his arms were pinioned. He was marched along the line between the points of bayonets to his open grave upon which his coffin was placed. Standing at the foot of his coffin, he was blindfolded. The detail for the purpose stood some distance in front. The command was given: "Ready! Aim! Fire!" He dropped back into his coffin without a struggle.

Strenuous measures had to be taken to prevent desertion and bounty jumping. About this time numbers were executed in the same manner in the Army of the Potomac. As high as four were shot at one time.

The first days of October opened with more moving, shifting from one position to another and a common expression was "There is something brewing in the air." On the 10th we were moved forward to the Rapidan River, then back recrossed the Rappahannock at Kelley's ford, taking our position on a hill nearby from which we could see the shells bursting in the air. The direction of fighting seemed to indicate that we were being cut off from Washington.

Shortly after midnight on the morning of the 13th we began our retreat to Centerville Heights, owing to a flank movement of Lee's army like so many pack mules, with knapsack packed containing woolen blanket, shelter tent, overcoat, dress coat, change of shirt, drawers and a few other trinkets, gun and equipments with forty rounds of cartridges, canteen full of water or preferably coffee, and haversack stuffed with eight days' rations. We trotted along, between quick time and double-quick, and appeased our appetites from our haversacks as we trudged along, until about 0 o'clock that night, when we reached a point near Bristow Station, covering a distance of about thirty miles. With aches and pains through my breast and shoulders, we cut branches from a pine tree and threw them in the mud for a bed. We lay down, cold and shivering for a night's rest. But that rest was of short duration. There was fighting going on all the time in our rear and on our left. We were called into line again, started our march at four o'clock and next morning reached Centerville in the evening. Fighting was still going on in close proximity, some of which was visible until the 16th, when all was quiet.

About this time, we were visited by heavy thunderstorms. Having shelter, we were obliged to hunt high places upon the ground to spread our blanket, and with knapsack for a pillow, lay down wet and shivering with our gum blanket over us for the rain to beat upon. But not to rest, for it was not long until I had such excruciating pains through my breast and shoulders I was compelled to seek relief from the surgeon and turn in my gun and equipments. On the 18th of October I intended to march with my company but not being able, I was picked up by an ambulance and reached Haymarket, rejoining my company while the fight was going on in that place. In [that] fight Company G suffered the heaviest. In all there were one killed and five wounded and sixteen taken prisoners, among whom was Lieutenant Peter Hagen, formerly of Middletown.

The next day we marched through Thoroughfare Gap, remaining until the 24th. It rained all night and it rained all day. We made a heavy march through mud, wading swollen streams waist deep back to Bristol Station. Here, on the 6th of November, 1863, we bade adieu to our brave and loved Col. Edwin H. Webster. His resignation was accepted owing to his election to Congress. Upon his resignation, Lt.-Col. Charles E. Phelps was commissioned Colonel, whose subsequent career will prove that a braver man never graced the Army of the Potomac. We are glad to know that he is still living. He was born in Vermont, May 1, 1833; has lived in Maryland since 1841, was a graduate of Princeton and the Harvard Law School in 1853; after some time spent in foreign travel he began the practice of his profession in Baltimore; was a member of the City Council on the Reform ticket, and popular revolt, against misrule; captain and major of the Maryland Guard, 1859-61; most of whose members fought in the Confederate Army. His position in the organization well qualified him as a drillmaster of our regiment. A perfection which we had attained we could feel

proud of. David T. Bennett, captain of Co. E, was promoted to Lieutenant-Colonel; Edward M. Mobley, captain of Co. A major instead of Major Dallam, who resigned on account of ill health.

### Part III

For a little change, on the 8th of November, we were piled on some box cars filled with prisoners captured by Generals Russell and French, near Culpepper. We guarded the train to Alexandria, returning the next day. On this trip, Dr. Garrett, surgeon of the Seventh Regiment, was so unfortunate as to get into one of the cars by mistake and was held prisoner of war until identified. The regular routine of soldiers' life was gone through with. Hostilities were kept up at the front.

On the 23rd of November we marched within one mile of Rapahannock station, and a few days later to the banks of the river, near the railroad bridge. The weather growing cold, we began to long for winter quarters, but on the 3rd of December, there was hustle and bustle again. Wagon trains and troops coming back from the front, rumors were rife. We naturally thought of a repetition of Lee's flank movement.

On the 4th of December we crossed the Rapahannock and occupied some comfortable quarters not far from Kelly's Ford, which the enemy had built and left intact, but we did not take it as a memento of good will, from their former treatment of us. We were not permitted to enjoy Christmas dinner here, for the day before we were marched to Culpepper with no quarters to go into. Nevertheless, we enjoyed a hunk of that bird called a turkey for our Christmas dinner.

In our diary for December 28th we have this pathetic note: "Cloudy, rainy, cold, very muddy. Came in from picket at six o'clock P.M. No quarters to go into." These conditions of weather had prevailed for three days. Think of being out in the cold and wet for twenty-four hours, returning through mud ankle deep, wet and shivering in the rain with nothing but the barren earth around you. It was then we thought what a pleasure it would be when we return home safe again to "The Girl I Left Behind Me." But, alas, we had gotten word that she had married another fellow.

After all we had passed through subsisting upon hardtack, some wet and mouldy, some nice and crisp which we could split apart and eat after blowing out the wild and wooly bugs, others so hard that they resembled a composition of rice starch and marble dust dried. One of these Yankee biscuits we have yet in good condition, carefully preserved since April 1863, gotten at Harpers Ferry by the one who is now sharing her fate with me in the battles of life.

In addition to the above, we had plenty of good coffee and sugar, salt pork, some of which was clear fat four or five inches to the backbone.

We closed the year 1863 and were finely settled in winter quarters the first day of January, 1864. Then came in the regular routine of camp life. Roll call, guard detail, picket detail, guard mount, morning, company drill; afternoon battalion drill, dress parade, inspection, etc.

Here I must say, God bless our good friends at home. Boxes began to come in filled with the good things from their larder, and how we did enjoy them after the coarse diet we had to subsist upon. Then, too, we were issued soft bread— one loaf for a day's rations, but it scarcely lasted for more than one meal. The change being so great, we would break off and eat until it was all gone. Whiskey was forbidden to be brought through the army, and boxes were all inspected, and every scheme was used to avoid detection by those who would have it. Tin cans were made with false bottoms, or double sides, with whiskey between and jellies, preserves, etc., on top or inside. Some would get drunk and for their unruly conduct, fighting, etc., they would be consigned to the guard house, fatigue, etc.

But here we had another pest to contend with, which caused us to think of the plagues visited upon the Egyptians when the dust of the earth was turned into lice, for it appeared that the earth was polluted with them. The man who could pass through active service in the army of the Potomac without experiencing their torture must have been a quality obnoxious to the insect, or have a special mark placed upon him, like the children of Israel.

One of the features of our battalion drill was the rallying upon the colors. After executing all movements in double-quick time, the colors would be placed at a distant point, mostly to the right of the new line facing our left. The signal being given, ranks were broken, when each man in as short as time as possible,

sought his place on the new line. The crossing of men from right to left, and from left to right would cause a mix-up, and tumbling over each other. After which Colonel Phelps would ride along the line to take note of the casualties.

This routine of camp life was not broken but once, which was on the 5th day of February, when the first corps made a reconnaissance down to Raccoon Ford on the Rapidan River. It was very rainy weather, and upon reaching the ford we went into a dense woods to put up for the night. With mud and water ankle deep, we were compelled to gather what rubbish we could and pile it up, to keep us out of the water for a resting place. Returning the next day, it was necessary to double team the artillery and pull the pieces through the mud. The men would stick fast and pull until the shoes would come off their feet, and would have to dig out their shoes with their hands. Others would stick fast with both feet, and their efforts to pull loose, would fall down and would have to be helped out by their comrades. We did not get to camp until some time in the night, in a very sorry plight.

In the meantime the old First Corps was broken up and the Maryland Brigade, commanded by General John C. Robinson, became the Third Brigade, 2nd Division, 5th Army Corps, Commanded by General Warren, figuring in all the engagements this corps was subject to until the close of the war.

During the comparative rest of three months, the boys would pass their time reading, writing letters home, or to their friends, or playing cards, which was extensively indulged in. After pay day the sweat cloth would be spread out, and gambling with dice and cards, etc., was practiced, with the hope of winning. Some would lose all they had and write enormous and pathetic letters home for money, or as an excuse for not sending money home for the support of their families.

So things went until the first day of April, the regiment started back, having the influence of their late Colonel F.W. Webster, then in Congress, obtained a furlough to go home to vote. The regiment disbanded in Baltimore and the men went to their respective polling places, and enjoyed seeing and mingling with their friends. The 13th of April found us again in our old camp at Culpepper.

Toward the close of the month and the first of May things began to look squally in every respect. On Monday, the 2nd of May, while out on battalion drill, a cyclone struck us, fairly raising us from our feet, demolishing tents, cabins and trees.

Being now under marching orders, we were lying ready to move. Early Wednesday morning, May 4th, we started, crossing the Rapidan at Germania Ford about noon. We arrived at the Wilderness in the evening and ate a hearty supper of fried beef in about twenty minutes after the animal was killed. The evening was clam and pleasant. Bands were playing in every direction. Not knowing what change there would be in the music for us on the morrow, we lay upon the green sward and had a good night's rest.

At daylight on the 5th, the Maryland Brigade, Colonel Dennison now acting separately, took position on the right clearing near the Lacy House, from which were seen heavy columns of troops disappearing in the thicket, and the skirmish fire playing around the unseen heads of the columns as they deployed along an edge of small timber facing west or northwest, in what might be called the right center of the general position, and advanced in line, brigade front, through the woods, brush and undergrowth.

## PART IV

In this first day's fight, while pressing forward, and just before opening fire, I had my cap knocked from my head. I had made but a few paces when I picked up another cap of fine material and braided. We had it for a number of years after the war, but it was finally lost.

After halting in close quarters with the enemy, not being content with firing through the bushes mostly at random, I stepped back a few paces in the front line, kneeling behind the butt of a pine tree, scarcely thicker than my body. The dead branches of the tree started out not far above the ground. From this point I could see beneath the bushes a thick mass of enemy's legs, not over fifty yards in front of me. I loaded and fired, as fast as I could at those legs, which were moving slowly toward our right. Bullets struck the dry snags around me, sounding like pistol shots. Others passed close to my head with that sharp whirr particular to a mine ball. I was seemingly lost to everything except what was visible in front of me and did not know the condition of affairs on our right and left flanks. Upon looking back I found that I was all

alone. Not deeming myself of sufficient force to hold the enemy in check, I made a hasty retreat in the direction we came.

I did not go before I beheld Corp. Cyrus Ridenour, of my company, crawling upon his hands and knees. He had been shot through the right ankle. I got him up and put my right arm around his waist, and with his arm over my shoulder, we helped him to hop upon his left foot until the swinging of his leg would cause him too much pain. He would then get down and crawl awhile. Repeating this several times, I finally discovered four other men when near the cleared land. Calling them to my assistance, we put him in a shelter tent. Four of us then carried him, whilst the other took charge of the guns, and we made better speed until we reached the fire that was burning in the thicket and we had to hunt our way through fire and smoke, reaching the opening in an exhausted condition myself.

After a little blow, we cut his boot from his foot, in which we found a piece of bone about two inches long knocked out of the flesh. Taking him back near the Lacy House, we saw him landed safe in an ambulance. Although minus a leg, he is still living near Hagerstown.

From all the information that I could gather in reference to the position our regiment was placed, it was flanked on our right and left. It has always been a mystery how I escaped detection of the enemy in getting out of that thicket with my comrade.

My next thought was to hunt my company. Starting out along the line, I found it some time in the evening behind rifle pits, a little to the left of where we started in. Some of the boys met me in surprise, stating that I was reported killed — shot in the head. We were highly gratified to know that it was a mistake.

On my left in the same fight was Corp. Jacob Houpt, of Co. G., who occupied a similar position to myself but who was not so fortunate, as we have it from his own lips. He had taken a position behind the butt of a tree. The enemy could be seen through the underbrush. Loading and firing, he didn't see the enemy come in on the left flank, which was forced back, and he was left alone, the enemy getting in his rear. There was no chance to escape and he was taken prisoner, sent to Andersonville prison, where he was confined in the stockade of square timber, about twenty feet high, with no shelter but what little they could prepare for themselves. Their rations consisted of nothing but corn meal, doled out to them by the spoonful. With no salt for seasoning, they would make it into a grewle, or make dough of it, roll it in a ball and bake it in the coals.

While here there was a consignment of prisoners who had served three years and re-enlisted. With them was a fat dog weighting about fifty or sixty pounds, which these men had with them from the time of their first enlistment. Corporal Houpt and his special associate, a N.Y. man, by the name of Tate, desiring a change in their diet, secured the dog and killed it. The dog, being missed, caused an exciting stir among the old vets, and no telling what would have been the consequence had they found out who killed the dog. To conceal the carcass, they dug a hole in their scant quarters, put it in a sack, and buried it under the ground upon which they slept. Opening up their treasure at about midnight, they would slice off a hunk, cook and eat. Mr. Houpt says he thought it the best and sweetest meat he ever ate, and that the dog was doing better service than he ever did before. Mr. Houpt is still living near Myersville, Md., and is an industrious and respected citizen.

After some 500 yards or more of such scrambling, the ragged line suddenly stumbled upon another line of somebody else's skirmishers, waiting for something to turn up. It was discovered that these were the skirmishers of the "Iron Brigade" of western regiment, which had the right-of-way, soon came up from the rear, passed through intervals formed for the purpose, swept forward through the woods, skirmished ahead, and in a few minutes became hotly engaged. Their battle for some time prospered, hundreds of prisoners were sent to the rear, with several colors, and considerable ground was gained. Then the tide turned, the first symptoms being the suspicious numbers of supernumary attendants upon the wounded, soon followed by stragglers with the usual discouraging reports.

An aid galloping from the front wanted to know who commanded these troops and was referred to Colonel Denison. He said he had no time to get to him. "Tell him the Rebels are driving our right, and there is no support on that flank." This message was promptly communicated to Denison who remarked with great composure that he had just received an exactly similar report about the left. The Seventh held the left of the brigade, its left emerging from the woods into a clearing of the Hagersen farm, south of the Orange

Pike. Near the edge of this clearing, a venerable mounted officer, unattended general, said to be General Wadsworth, his white locks streaming, was shouting, "Where is my second line? Bring up my second line!"

Before any response could have been given, the crisis came. The Iron Brigade had fairly broken to the rear, the enemy close upon their heels, charging after the colors, picking up prisoners, until they rushed impetuously up to the very muzzles of the leveled pieces of the Maryland Brigade (at some points of the line), our men having held theirs to the last minute, so as not to injure our retiring friends. Then followed a hot and bloody duel at close range, which lasted nobody knew exactly how many minutes, but long enough at all events, to clear the front of the Seventh, at least, from every sign of a living Confederate.

The fire slackened on both sides, but it appeared at a glance that this was but a lull in the storm. All that now remained of the brigade was the Seventh and a fraction of the Eighth on its right. The entire right wing of the brigade, formed of the Fourth and First with most of the Eighth, had been flanked and "fell back", rather irregularly, about a mile. It should be noted that only a small battalion of the First Maryland is here referred to. The majority of the regiment, having lately re-enlisted, were on "veteran furlough" under Colonel Dushane.

There was nothing now in front of the Confederate force but the small command of Phelps, just referred to, which found itself isolated; the left flank "in the air", right flank in the bush. When the attack was shortly afterward renewed, there was also a mischievous fire from fugitives who had rallied some distance back in the thicket, and who, doubtless supposed in good faith that everything had fallen back when they did.

Under these discouraging circumstances some of the rank and file began to grow unsteady, and the utmost exertions of the officers were required to keep the line firmly in place, seconded by the dauntless bearing of the color guard. By a hot and well-directed file-fire the position was stubbornly maintained, until at last Denison rode up and ordered Phelps to "fall back steadily." The movement was executed by word of command, as if on drill.

The men reloaded while marching by the rear rank, then halting, facing front and firing at about intervals. Some men, it is true, were lost at each halt but, from the difficult character of the ground, nothing else could have been expected. The same difficulties equally obstructed the rapid advance of the enemy in anything like good order, and the deliberate and steady punishment they were getting warned them of the inconvenience of approaching in bad order. At all events, they did not deem it prudent to follow up their cautious pursuit for more than one or two hundred yards and, as soon as the command reached a small stream where a good defensive position was found, they were effectually checked, and the men were given a halt to blow and cool off by its side in the heart of the Wilderness.

After a short rest the command was visited by an aid and conducted still further to the rear, and occupied a line of breastworks near the Lacy House, connecting with Crawford's Division. It was about noon when the battle opened, and about 3:30 P.M. when the breastworks were occupied. They had been hastily thrown together of logs. The dry leaves had taken fire from the burning cartridge papers, and the flames had caught the works. After putting out this fire, a field return was taken, showing but 278 of the Seventh Regiment present. These, with about one company of the Eighth, included all that was left of the Maryland Brigade, until the missing regiments and men came up from the rear later in the evening, surprised to find their comrades alive. There being no space for them in the line as formed they were placed in a second line.

The loss of the Seventh Regiment on the first day's fight in the Wilderness, May 5, 1864, was eleven killed, two officers and forty-one men wounded, and seventeen missing. The missing included men killed or wounded, but not heard from, and a few prisoners taken. The officers wounded were Capt. David T. Bennett and Adjutant George L. [Tyler] and Sergeant Noble H. Creager, afterwards first lieutenant, was also wounded before retiring. These three were all from Frederick County. Colonel Phelps had several bullets through his clothing and his horse killed under him.

Captain Bennett, for conspicuous gallantry in this action, was named lieutenant-colonel. He was shot in the face while engaged in a revolver duel with a Confederate officer, both in advance of their lines, and refused to leave the field until ordered to the rear by their colonel. The loss of the entire Maryland Brigade, including the Seventh, were two officers and eighteen killed, six officers and ninety-three men were wounded, and one officer and sixty men were missing. The brigade went into action about 1,300 strong. (History Md. Vols. 1861-65)

That night we sat in our entrenchments, guns in our arms, pickets firing all night in our immediate front. We did not care for sleep but were ready for any general attack that might be made.

Before daylight on the 6th of May, the Maryland Brigade was relieved in the works by the Pennsylvania Reserves and stacked arms in close column by regiment (Seventh, as usual, by wing) on the Lacy clearing, near Grant's Headquarters. About 7 A.M. A New York regiment, the 14th Brooklyn, came up from guard duty in the rear, and by order reported to the Maryland Brigade, its colonel (Fowler) by seniority, taking command. He commanded the brigade for that day only, his regiment being ordered elsewhere. It was thought at the time to be an extraordinary performance in the midst of a great pitched battle, to place an entire stranger, with a strange staff, in command of troops who had been ably handled the day before by their own commander (Denison) who had shown himself brave, self-possessed, cool headed and judicious. It was an error, and in direct consequence of it, later in the day the command narrowly escaped a great disaster as will shortly [be described].

### **In Support of Hancock**

After several changes of position and reinforcing the troops engaged on the Orange Pike on the right about 3 P.M., the Maryland Brigade was hurried over to the left to support Hancock on the Brock road, and was formed by General Robinson in two lines in rear of his first brigade and right of Berney's [Birney's] Division. In this position the Fourth, First and Eighth formed a second line, and the Fourteenth Brooklyn and the Seventh Maryland a third, the left of the Eighth and Seventh being projected into a swamp. The young timber here was dense and choked with undergrowth. The third line was some 25 yards in the rear of the entrenchments along the Brock road, a short distance north of its intersection with Orange Plank Road, about midway between it and Germania Plank Road.

Very soon after the brigade got into position, the fight on this part of the field reached its climax. The log breastworks along Hancock's front took fire from the burning leaves. The direction of the wind favored the enemy, Hancock's first line driven out of the works. The fight to regain them was going on. While this was taking place, on our near left, not within sight, because nothing could be seen through the thicket, the Maryland Brigade, the Seventh Regiment in particular, was going through a very extraordinary experience.

Scarcely had the brigade got fairly into position, when the din of battle upon the left rapidly drew nearer.

Not only so, but it appeared to pass beyond our left, to get behind that flank into our left rear. As stated, the Seventh held the left of the third line, and so dense was the brush that but a few files could be seen at once.

The firing increased in volume, individual exclamations could be distinctly heard, the screaming and exploding of shells in quick succession rose above the continuous crash of musketry, and stragglers and fugitives were seen to burst through the bushes. Every sign indicated the necessity for a prompt change of front to meet the impending attack upon the rear. General Robinson, at the right of the line, was notified, and erroneously explained that the line made a sharp angle on the left. The officer who had communicated this information was on his way back when he met General Birney, riding hastily from Hancock's front to General Robinson with precisely the same information, followed by an orderly, who was at that moment shot from his horse and killed. Immediately after Birney communicated with Robinson, the second and third lines were faced to the rear.

### **An Awkward Fix**

And now rides up a stranger purporting to be a staff officer, with a verbal order to the colonel of the Seventh, "Swing your right around immediately." Being faced to the rear, our proper right was then our left. To be certain "which right was meant" the officer replied that he gave the order just as he had it from Colonel Fowler. He was asked whether the order meant a "change front forward on the Tenth Company," the effect of which would be to swing around our proper right, but then our left, and the precise movement dictated by the situation. He said "I suppose so," and rode off. The tactical command for this movement was given; "By company, right half wheel," etc. The Tenth Company established on the new line and the Ninth as it came up, but when the next was partly in position, some hesitation and confusion were noticed toward the center of the movement under the direction, as it afterwards appeared, of some staff officer who had faced the companies about and was trying to bring them by a flank to a "change front the rear of the First Company."

At that Moment, the situation of the regiment was such that, by no fault of any one connected with it, but through the improper interference of a blundering staff officer, a total stranger, it was broken into fragments, lost from each other's sight in the bushes, the left companies forming on the line, the right companies somewhere else, the center nowhere.

The roar of the battle in the immediate vicinity was deafening. Nobody that was wanted could be seen and, to make "confusion worse confounded", a panic struck some of the troops of the second line, who fell back in disorder upon the Seventh whilst in the predicament above described, bewildered by conflicting orders and false movements.

In the midst of this scene the colonel of the 14th Brooklyn, whose temporary staff officer had done the mischief, rode up to the colonel of the Seventh, while in the act of repairing it, and used some hearty expressions which were afterward handsomely withdrawn when the facts were understood. In fact, the accident would have been avoided had the latter's suggestion been acted upon and the captain of the companies notified of the precise movement to be made by inversion in the dense thicket.

### **The Rally on the Colors**

Fortunately for such emergencies, the Seventh had been drilled in getting mixed up and straightened out again. A simple "rally on the colors" brought order out of chaos as if by magic. It was only needed to find the color company (Company C Harford County, Captain Boulder) face it square to the nearest rank and a round of hearty cheers promptly attracted the broken files from either flank. The men fell into ranks by the instinct of habit, and the line was re-established in much less time than had been required to dislocate it and scatter it. It was then an easy matter to adjust its alignment to that of the other regiments, which was done under the supervision of General Robinson.

### **Victory**

Meanwhile, an attack had been made upon the breastworks in the immediate front held by the other brigade of the division, and this attack had been repulsed. The troops of the second line had been rallied into position and all was now steadiness and confidence, where, a few moments before there was disorder fast verging upon wreck. The men were ordered to lie down (on account of shell), and all awaited the expected onslaught, whether its main fury should burst upon our front or rear. The storm, however, had reached its height and spent its energy; our brave allies of the second corps, driven from their first line of works, had rallied and retaken them and, although repeatedly attacked, were not to be driven again. By five o'clock, the enemy was completely repulsed at all points on Hancock's front, with heavy loss. Later in the evening the Maryland Brigade was thrown into the second line. Skirmishing, more or less heavy, continued until nightfall and, indeed, to some extent throughout the night.

The loss of the Seventh on this second day of the Wilderness was slight, there being but three men wounded, one from each of the three left companies.

Worn out with the long day's work, the men had scarcely settled for sleep when an order came to build a second line of works, fifty paces in rear of the first. The companies were divided into reliefs, and all night long the woods resounded with the music of axes, picks and spades, fires being allowed along the line.

These two parallel lines or works are distinctly visible to this day. (History Md. Vols. 1861-'65).

### **Part V**

On the second day we had some rest, and a good opportunity of hearing and seeing, as far as we could see, what real war was—cannon belching their fire, bombs bursting in the air, with the roar of musketry all along the line, sometimes heavy on the right, then on the left or middle of the horseshoe line, man after man being borne on stretchers, some limping, some walking with bleeding arms or heads, returning to the rear, until in the afternoon, when we were hurried over to the left.

Here, while the battle was going on, growing closer and closer, bullets flying through the bushes, and the racket of musketry close upon us, not knowing how soon the enemy would be upon us, we remember Colonel Phelps sitting upon his horse, musingly said, "Boys, it beats any theatrical bombardment I have ever heard." Soon after came the mix-up formerly described. The fighting being close upon us, no command could be heard.

### **Wilderness—Third Day**

Daylight came, but not the expected attack. The morning was occupied mainly in clearing brush and timber in front of the works thrown up during the night, in strengthening the position, and in burying the dead.

As the heat of the sun increased, the men began to spread their shelter tents, and construct brush arbors. Here they slept awhile, waking up now and then as the skirmish firing came closer and hotter, suddenly swelling at times into a volume like that of a line of battle, and then subsiding to a scatter.

It is an interesting fact that fighting caused little interruption in the postal service, and mails were, with more or less regularity, collected and distributed on the battlefield.

About 10 A.M. the brigade mail carrier collected letters from the different regiments headquarters. A hasty note from those of the Seventh said: "As I write, our skirmishers are engaged about 500 yards to the front, and heavy firing is heard on the right. My trust is in the mercy of God. If we are defeated, I have no wish to survive so immense a disaster. If we are victorious and I should fall, I shall be satisfied to have my memory associated with so glorious a triumph." Later in the day, the brigade was moved back to an edge of the clearing before mentioned, in the vicinity of a fine, strong spring, where arms were stacked and beef slaughtered and distributed. The battle of the Wilderness had passed into history, as a wild, weird struggle, where 200,000 men were mixed up, like a hole full of snakes, with their tails intertwined. In the quaint words of an old English ballad:

*They both did fight, they both did beat, they both did run away;  
They both quick marched, again to meet, the quite contrary way.*

### **The Famous Night March**

Soon after 8 o'clock on Saturday night of the 7th began the historic forced march to turn Lee's right. The movement was by the left flank, Fifth Corps leading, Robinson's division and Maryland Brigade in advance, which was thus the leading infantry brigade of the army. At first, nobody knew whether it was advance or retreat. Soon, the apparent direction, jubilant spirit and extreme rapidity of the movement gave currency to the flattering rumor that Lee's whole army was in full retreat, and that Grant was after him, hot foot. The double line of Hancock's corps, through which we were being rushed, rapturously cheered our advance as conclusive proof, and their cheers, in turn, confirmed our confidence.

The first halt was to throw out flankers on our right, when after an hour or more of hard marching, the long lines of works were at last cleared. Plunging into the mysterious gloom of a deep cut and washed out road, men occasionally tumbled into the rocky furrows, or stumbled over carcasses. At intervals, darkness would be made visible on the right by a blazing brand dropped from some distant tree-trunk, still aglow in the depth of the wilderness, like a signal-light of goblins. The low damp air, reeked with the acrid snuff of horse and human slaughter (History Md. Vols. 1861-'65)

Our anxiety was running high to learn what was the result of our hard work and dangerous work, although we had comparative rest that third day, eating or sleeping was hardly thought of, and instead of a night's rest, I worked on breastworks all night. If there was any relief, it did not come to me.

In the direction we started out at night, I felt somewhat braced up, feeling assured that we had the enemy on the go. Plunging down through that deep, dark and dismal ravine, hearing groans and yells of men on what appeared to be a plateau above on our right, probably being roasted to death by the flames that were licking up the leaves and undergrowth, sometimes seeming to run to the tops of the trees. It was a night never to be forgotten.

Shortly before daylight, Sunday, 8th of May, 1864, the head of the column emerged into the open country around Todd's Tavern, where a cavalry division was found, and a halt was ordered. No sooner were arms stacked than the men dropped, falling asleep directly [where] they touched the ground. Before, however, they had fairly stretched themselves, they had to be punched, kicked and shaken to learn that more fighting was in order, before either lodging or breakfast. The "crack! crack!" of carbines reverberating in the forest glades ahead closed up yawning jaws and put snap into benumbed legs.

Merritt's Cavalry Division, on the road to Spottsylvania Courthouse, was meeting a serious obstacle in Fitzhugh Lee, and after considerable dismounted fighting, got out of the way of the infantry, which had

been annoyed by the shifting movements of the led horses. The Maryland brigade was then displayed on both sides of the road, the Fourth on the skirmish lines.

Successive barricades, of felled timber across the road, were struck and carried, the enemy making a stand at each obstruction. In the language of the Confederate courier who bore the verbal message from Stuart to Fitz Lee, informing him of the march of Anderson's Corps to his relief and "urging him to hold out to the last at any sacrifice", it was of "the last importance that Fitz Lee should delay the advancing column and cover the position at Spottsylvania Courthouse as long as possible. His division of cavalry encountered the head of the Federal column of infantry near Todd's Tavern, about four miles from the Courthouse and, dismounting his men and fighting with carbines, fell slowly and stubbornly back. The fighting was dreadfully severe, and many of the flower of Virginia's youth went down before the terrific volleys of the Federal infantry."

The same writer then gives a spirited account of the reckless daring with which the horse artillery was handled by Major Brethed, in covering the retreat, to which he attributes great importance in retarding the advance of the Maryland Brigade, which led the column, until the arrival of Anderson's Corps. Substantially the same account of this action is given by Stuart's chief-of-staff, who call it "one of the severest conflicts in which Fitz Lee's division was ever engaged." (McClellan's Campaign of Stuart's Cavalry, 407)

While this was the way affairs looked to the cavalry, their infantry opponents, whose lose was trifling, took it much less seriously. In fact, compared to what was to immediately follow it seemed to them more like a picnic.

All this time nothing whatever was known of the parallel and unobstructed march upon an inside track of Anderson's (late Longstreet's) Corp for the same objective point. Nothing of it appears to have been learned by the Union cavalry, although the routes pursued by the opposing forces were but one or two miles apart. Meade and Sheridan had some hot words over it later on, each holding the other responsible.

Lee's whole army in full retreat to Richmond! Nothing in front but a rear guard of cavalry, and horse artillery trying to cover his retreat. Whereat there was extreme elation. Foot-sore, famished, jaded as the men were, on that theory they felt as if they could have kept on to Richmond, if necessary. Unhappily, that was not the situation but quite otherwise.

While about three miles of stubbornly contested ground were being thus wrested from Fitz Lee's cavalry, another force, under Stuart in person, was engaged in throwing up a hasty but sufficient line of timber defenses, and Anderson's leading division, under Kershaw, was taking behind them, with artillery somewhat advanced on his right, to enfilade an attacking column. Here Stuart remained to witness the expected assault.

These important works commanded the fork of the Brock road, one branch leading to the Spottsylvania Court House, one and a half miles southeast, and the other leading to the old court house, about two miles south, the Black House being half way. Both roads directly or indirectly pointed to Richmond. Since the war, a small settlement has made its appearance at the fork, with a post office, called "Sunlight".

Reaching the high clearing about Alsop's farm, Warren saw this line of works in a skirt of woods along the ridge of Laurel Hill, and energetically addressed his troops as they came up. While the Seventh was passing his white horse, hew was heard to exclaim with an impulsive gesture, at each sharp, crisp sentence: "Never mind cannon! Never mind bulls, press on and clear this road. It's the only way to get your rations."

#### **FORMATION FOR ASSAULT**

Robinson's three brigades were promptly formed in three parallel columns of attack, column by regiment the Seventh, as usual, doubled by wing. And in rear of the Eighth and the battalion of the First. The Fourth made the charge with another brigade to the left. The Maryland Brigade found on the right of the division, near the spot where General Sedgwick fell the following day, indicated now by the Sedgwick monument. A battery took position on the right of the Maryland brigade and opened fire but was not allowed time to get the range, and made no impression upon the work, which could have been easily breeched by a few well-directed shells.

The formation was in an edge of timber, about four hundred yards from the works, the intervening space being an undulating open field. These works on Spottsylvania Ridge, otherwise Laurel Hill, are still to be seen in fair preservation, together with the epaulement for the advanced battery on the Black Horse road, to their right.

At first, the men generally failed to take in the gravity of the situation. Their senses were simply stupefied by sleepless overwork. They had been temporarily braced up by the intoxicating excitement of combat and pursuit but, when massed in close column, they acted as if they supposed the next order would be to stack arms and rest, preparatory to throwing up entrenchments as in the days of McClelland and Meade.

## PART VI

Instead of that, came the startling command: "Battalion, Guide Center!" The men responded with a hearty cheer and at the word "march!" stepped off with life, with no music but that of their own voices. There were ringing yells of defiance from the works, as the enemy's picket line drew in. Most of the field and staff heartily dismounted as the movement began and left their horses behind. General Robinson led his division; that is he rode abreast of the front rank of the Maryland Brigade on his right, followed by Colonel Demson, [Denison] also mounted. The enemy opened with shell, followed by canister and then double canister, from the cross-fire guns on their right. Kershaw's veterans, behind the works, lost no time in proceeding to business. Their fire increased in intensity as the attack advanced. In addition to advantage of position, they were in better shape physically than their assailants. It is true they also made a hard night's march, but it was a peaceable one, and the delay interposed by Fitz Lee, had enabled them not only to get in ahead, but had given them margin enough for what breakfast they had and a good rest, while the jaded Federals were expending what little energy they had left in more marching and fighting. They had even found their breastworks ready for them. The shooting, however, of the defendants was not as good as might have been expected under the circumstances. The best shots had been carefully picked out for the battalions of sharpshooters attached to Kershaw's division. The sharpshooters had done extra work all night in flanking the exposed left of Anderson's column, and were late in reaching the battleground. Still, it must be admitted that the shooting, although not ideal, was good enough practically, and the other side have no right to complain. Had the sharpshooters been present, it is probable that this particular narrative not have occurred. There was, of course, no skirmish line in advance of the assault columns, as has been erroneously stated. (Humphreys, Va. Campaign, pg. 60, an incorrect account from a very high authority) The men had not been required to remove caps from the nipples of their pieces.

Naturally enough, the front rank was goaded into a return fire; individual progress was as naturally retarded by the act of aiming and reloading. Men from the rear rank pressed impatiently forward to repeat the process. In this way, ranks and regiments soon became intermingled, straggling was made easy, the time of the exposure was fatally prolonged. The Seventh, which was in the rear when the movement commenced, soon found itself working up to the front, but rather in a mixed condition. The rattle and crash were such that no command could be heard, and this mischievous return fire, which was helping that of the enemy to destroy the impetus and solidity of the charge, could not be stopped.

At the distance of about fifty yards from the works, General Robinson was shot from his horse and borne from the field, with the loss of a leg. Many years after, in 1895, he received a "medal of honor" from the War Department for conspicuous gallantry on this occasion.

Colonel Denison, commanding the Maryland Brigade, was about the same time shot from his horse, and assisted to the rear with the loss of his right arm. He was brevetted brigadier for this action, was again wounded later in the campaign, and brevetted major-general.

Upon the fall of these two ranking officers, the command of the division, or what was left of it in sight (the two left brigades having been repulsed or mingled with the Maryland brigade) was promptly assumed by the colonel of the Seventh Maryland. The situation at that moment was very plainly that of a forlorn hope, calling for nothing but quick and reckless work.

What remained of the movement was no longer a column, but a bunched and ragged line. At points where the enemy's fire was most concentrated, the drone of bullets blended into a throbbing wall, like that of a sonorous telegraph wire pulsing in a strong wind, punctuated by the pert zip of the closer shots. The din and racket were such that but few could have heard the commands: "Hold your fire! Double quick!"

What was plainly seen in front was the sudden appearance of the new commander, pointing with saber to the breastworks and trotting up toward them, until horse and rider came down. Following closely was Captain Anderson of the Seventh and when he fell, all was over. The unordered retreat left there two officers lying within ten paces of the works, Anderson having stopped three bullets while taking a step forward, just after the unsuccessful attempt to extricate Phelps from the weight of his dying horse. Anderson was well in the lead of everything when he fell, and for his conspicuous gallantry on this occasion, and in the Wilderness, was subsequently brevetted up to lieutenant-colonel. He commanded one of the Washington County companies, Company I.

### **Capture and Rescue**

After two hopeless attempts at escape, in one of which he was severely wounded and in the other waylaid and robbed by stragglers, Phelps was taken back to a Confederate field hospital where he had not only proper but exceptional treatment, and the next day was recaptured, together with over 300 Union prisoners, by Sheridan's cavalry at Beaver Dam Station. He was present at the battle of Yellow Tavern, where General Stuart was mortally wounded, and at the battles of Meadow Bridge and Mechanicsville, where the enemy commanded by [General Braxton] Bragg and under the eye of Southern President, Jefferson Davis, made a desperate fight for the defense of Richmond.

Returning to Baltimore by the James River route, he was honorably discharged in September, 1864, upon resignation and surgeon's certificate of disability, brevetted brigadier-general, and elected to Congress. Among the prisoners recaptured as above were Lieutenant [Isaiah] Lightner, of Company F, (Carroll County) and Sergeant [Georgel] Walton, of Company K (Baltimore City).

The loss of the Maryland Brigade in this action was one hundred and ninety-two killed, wounded and missing. The actual charge was made by about 700 men. The loss of the Seventh was ten killed, two officers and thirty-seven men wounded and six prisoners. Among the killed was the brave color-sergeant, George Stockham, Harford County, and two color-corporals, Solomon Baker, of Company I, and S.M. Diak, of Company H. Two color-corporals were wounded, but the colors were saved. From first to last, the enemy's fire appeared to be mainly concentrated upon the mounted officers and the color bearers. Of these, none escaped. (History, Md. Vols. 1861-'65)

Upon reaching Todd's Tavern that Sunday morning, not having any place to sleep since the Thursday previous, I threw myself down in the burnt woods nearby. I went to sleep about as soon as touching the ground. The crack of carbines did not disturb us from our slumber. But that Sunday was not to be a day of rest for us after the hard work we had been doing the week previous, and our sleep was of short duration. Being prodded up more dead than alive, everything appearing as though under an eclipse of the sun, we seemed no to care whether it be life or death. We saw some of the fruits of the cavalry fight by the dead along our pathway, and an occasional shot reached us from some distant point. General Warren rode along the line, speaking words of encouragement. Then came the assault of Laurel Hill.

I distinctly remember seeing Colonel Phelps sitting upon his horse a little to the left of my position in ranks, when he drew his sword, with a stern look, fire in his eye, gave the command "Hold your fire! Forward, double quick, charge!" We started in with a yell and were soon in front of everything, and in front of the enemy's breastworks, and in such a hellish rain of fire from the enemy's guns that we thought none could hardly escape its effect. Here was the only time that I took delivery [deliberate] aim of a single enemy in full view, coming direct toward me, I raised my gun and fired. I saw him drop. What the ultimate result of that shot was I never cared to know. A break was made for two guns of our artillery. Another rally was made, the guns limbered up and started back. I received a whack from some missile just below the ribs on the right of my stomach, knocking the breath from me, but soon recovered, and when in the act of firing got another in the left hand.

Crestfallen, we started back, the artillery and main body taking the same course which we came. Thinking to take a short cut, instead of following up the main body, I started through a pine thicket in the rear. I had entered but a short distance when the enemy's bullets began to cut through the thicket too close for comfort. I dropped my knapsack and made a little faster time, and their band began to play the tune of "Hail Columbia!"

Reaching a small stream of water, I could not resist the temptation of lying down and quenching my thirst. Passing out on the opposite side toward a lone tree on the hillside, some shots were beginning to cut the dirt around me. Halting at the tree between and where our men were reforming in line, it not being a very

favorable position, I was compelled to make some strategic movement. At this time the enemy was throwing shells, which were being returned by our battery. Making an oblique movement to get under the cover of a small house and fence to my left, I reached the line, taking my place in the ranks. Lieutenant [William D.] Radcliff, now being in command of the company, ordered me to the rear to have my wounds dressed. Starting back, the rear guard halted me as though I was skulking duty. This aroused my passion and wheeling around I returned to the ranks. Being ordered back the second time, I informed the lieutenant that I was halted by the rear guard and that I might as well stay with the company, whereupon he told me to follow him, and I was passed through the line. After going back some distance in the woods to find the surgeon's quarters, I saw one of our sergeants. Inquiring of him what was the matter that he was back here, he replied that he had helped back one of our men who was wounded. I informed him that there was work in front for him to do. In reply, he said it was too poisonous there for him and he was satisfied to stay back as long as he could. Incensed at his cowardice, I spoke my mind pretty freely. We have no record of a man whom he claimed to have helped out ever being wounded, and was mustered out with the [rest of the skulkers].

Colonel Phelps, for gallant conduct in this engagement, was made brevet brigadier general March 13, 1865, and was awarded a medal of honor under an act of Congress approved March 3, 1863, for distinguished gallantry. He was elected to Congress on the Union ticket in 1864, re-elected on the Conservative ticket in 1866; was on the Naval Committee, was instrumental in securing retention of the U.S. Naval Academy at Annapolis; supported the 14th Amendment to the Constitution, but was opposed to the radical measures and policy of reconstruction, and particularly the 15th Amendment; declined executive appointment as judge of Maryland Court of Appeals; president of Baltimore School Board 1876; served during the strike riots in 1877 as colonel of the Eighth Maryland Regiment; elected judge of the supreme bench, Baltimore, in 1882 on the independent ticket for 15-year term; re-elected for like term in 1897 on the Republican, Democratic and Prohibition ticket; term was unanimously extended by the Maryland Legislature 1902, beyond the constitutional age limit in response to petition of the Maryland Bar Association.

Captain Anderson was brevetted up to lieutenant-colonel on March 13, 1865, for conspicuous gallantry in the wilderness and at Spottsylvania Court House, Virginia. He subsequently died in Washington.

Will here state that, in company with Capt. Jacob Koogle, we had the pleasure of meeting and dining with the distinguished Gen. Charles E. Phelps by special invitation at Braddock Heights Hotel, August 11, 1905, after a separation of over forty-one years, where we fought the battles over verbally.

## PART VII

After turning in gun and equipments, and having our wounds dressed, not having eaten anything and not knowing when we would get anything to eat, I sat my haversack down to go a few paces to a spring for a drink. When I returned my haversack was gone. With nothing now but the clothing on my back, I lay down and slept, how long I don't know. Then a reaction appeared to set in. With pains in my bruised side, hand stiff and sore, aches and pains through my breast and shoulders, the only consolation I had was that I still fared much better than many of my comrades in the hospital tent, especially that of Solomon Rohrer, of our company, one of the color corporals whose suffering was intense, causing his death later.

On the 10th of May, we were moved to Fredericksburg, and the following day to Bellplane, landing where we got out of hearing of the din of battle which was going on all the time. Not having ambulances enough to haul the wounded, they were put in commissary wagons. The bumping of these wagons over corduroy roads caused much suffering.

Whilst on the way, a heavy hailstorm came up. Beating the mules upon the right side caused one of the teams to become unmanageable, turning off to the left on a hillside, upsetting its load of wounded, which was a most pathetic sight.

On the 12th of May, we were loaded upon a steamer and landed in Mansion House Hospital, at Alexandria, Va. Here we could see men wounded in almost every conceivable manner. One which especially excited our sympathy was a youth. A ball had passed through his head from side to side, just far enough to destroy both eyes. Although nicely healed, he died from consumption. Some apparently slightly wounded men would die, others critically wounded would recover, especially if not addicted to alcoholic drinks.

We had a number of Confederates in our ward, seventeen being brought in at one time. And here, with credit to the United States, they received the same treatment and attention as the Union soldiers. One of these Confederates had a severe wound of the knee. Gangrene had set in and the surgeon told him to save his life his leg would have to be amputated. He stated that he did not want any doctor to practice on his leg. The surgeon informed him that he had all the practice he wanted, giving him to understand the nature of

his case, but he could not prevail. Some days later, the Confederate wished it amputated. He was emphatically told that it was doubtful if his system was strong enough then to bear the shock, but he would die with it on, and might live with it off. The leg was taken off, but he died the next day.

Owing to the great number of wounded, there was not sufficient help to give proper care while being transported to the hospital. We have seen men whose wounds were full of maggots, although without any seeming effect on the wound. After they were removed, the wound would have a healthy appearance.

One man, especially, who had his left arm amputated at the shoulder, when the wound was opened up was full of larva. The matron of our ward poured in what I took to be ether, causing a great many to work out, and with a pair of tweezers, picked them out until she had the wound clean. He being a healthy man, not addicted to alcoholic drinks, his wound healed nicely.

One of the efforts of our surgeon was to keep the men from becoming low-spirited, claiming that it had an effect on the system. There was a Scotchman of our army who had his leg amputated below the knee. His mouth was never still if he could have someone to jabber with, unless he was asleep. His leg healed in a short time sufficient to be allowed crutches to hop around the ward.

Another was a young Confederate, who had his leg off, and in about the same condition as the Scotchman. Although of a healthy appearance, he was melancholy and fretful about home. After the Scotchman got around, he was instructed to go to his room and if he could not make the young Johnny laugh, he should make him angry. It was not long until he could do both, and draw an audience to hear the fun, and the improvement was magical.

After recuperating somewhat, and to make room for those more unfortunate, we were granted a furlough for 40 days. It was only then that we could learn of the great anxiety of the people at home for their loved ones who had participated in this bloody strife, thousands of whom never returned to tell the story.

After our vacation, we returned. Hospital life becoming monotonous, we began to wish to be with the boys in the front.

About the 10th or 12th of July, we could see boatloads of troops going up the river toward Washington. They reported that the enemy was near the Capital and Government hands were drilling. This was caused by Gen. Early's raid into Maryland.

Anxiously scanning the papers to know what was going on in front, writing and receiving letters from my old comrades and friends at home, time passed with an occasional transaction to break the monotony.

To show the necessity of stringent measures, on the 16th of September there was a deserter shot near Alexandria who was said to have jumped the bounty seventeen times, reported to be worth \$20,000. For such persons, those who were standing the brunt of war had no sympathy.

On Sunday, May the 15th, we had the pleasure of listening to a stirring sermon from an old minister who had eight sons in the Union army.

On the 30th of August we were transferred to the 104th Company 2nd Battalion V.R.C. [Veterans Reserve Corps]. We remained in Alexandria doing light duty until the 31st of December when we were mustered into Co. A, 12th Regiment, V.R.C., located in Shurburn Barracks at Washington, which was located on high ground at 1st and E Streets S.E. at the intersection of North Carolina and New Jersey Avenues.

From this point we could see the broad flames as they lashed from the towers of the Smithsonian Institute when it was partially destroyed by fire on the 24th of January, 1865. Here we were engaged in doing duty at the Old Capitol and Carroll prisons, patrolling the city, etc. This regiment was present and acted as guard at the Capitol upon the second inauguration of Abraham Lincoln.

With what opportunities we could get we visited the different places of interest. One especially interesting to us was the Navy Yard. Here we had the pleasure of going through the Monitor Montock, which was considered to be a very formidable engine of war at that time. This boat figured prominently on the James, and was struck over two hundred times. Only one shot pierced her armament, lodging in the woodwork near the water line.

Upon the opening of April we began to get some cheering news from the front. On April 3rd, at noon, the news came that Richmond was in our hands. Following was a salute of five hundred guns, at the fortifications around the city. On the fourth everybody appeared intoxicated with joy, and at night there was a great illumination and display of fireworks. The good news of success of our troops was still pouring in, and great anxiety was for the latest news.

On the morning of the 10th the news was read to our company that Lee had surrendered. I then proposed three cheers. More hearty cheers were never given. Everybody was gay and happy. Men would grab each other around the neck and hug them, others would go around and shake hands with everybody. Some would jump up and yell for joy. Another salute was fired at the forts.

On the night of the 11th there was another great illumination and display of fireworks. The same was repeated on the night of the 12th when we listened to stirring speeches delivered at the White House by our

beloved President, Abraham Lincoln, and Senator Harlin. Rejoicing was kept up. On the nights of the 13th and 14th there was great illuminations and displays of fireworks when everything appeared to be in a blaze of fire and joy.

But that joy was suddenly turned into grief. Between the hours of 11 and 12 on the night of the 14th, Captain Cromie, of our company, standing at the foot of the stairway to our quarters, called out as though labouring under some great pain or distress, "Orderly! Orderly! Orderly!" Whereupon the first sergeant replied, "What's the matter, Captain?" The answer was, "Form the company as quick as possible; Lincoln has been shot!"

Without any further information of how the assassination took place, we were marched with the regiment to Old Capitol and Carroll prisons, not knowing but what there might be a demonstration to release the prisoners.

Frenzied by the news and the turning of great joy into great sadness, it appeared every man was itching for a fight. Citizens were watched with ears on alert to catch words of sentiment. Some who were foolish enough to give vent to their feelings by expressions of approval were knocked down; some reported killed, others arrested.

While the patrol was passing a prominent residence, a lady standing in the doorway, sneeringly remarked "Ah ha! I guess your tyrant Lincoln is gone now!" Whereupon the guard took her in charge and placed her in the central guard house. Not a very pleasant place for a lady, as it always had its quota of drunken soldiers.

The 16th of April was clear and pleasant, but sadness prevailed. Buildings that were decorated with flags and bunting, and illuminated at night, were now draped in mourning with flags at half mast and left in darkness, and instead of the lively tunes played by the drum corps at dress parade, the drums were muffled and the dead march played.

Good news was still coming in from the front, and on the 17th we got news that [Gen. John] Mosby had surrendered, and that Secretary Seward's would-be assassin was taken.

On the 18th I went to view the remains of the President lying in state at the White House. Upon arrival there, the avenue was a perfect swarm of humanity from one side of the street to the other, and I had almost despaired of getting into the line. However, by making an effort, I managed to get into a channel moving in that direction and soon reached the entrance. Little did I think when listening to his last cheering public speech on the night of the 12th, that so soon would I look upon those features, now cold in death, and especially caused by the hand of an assassin.

On the 19th was the funeral procession. With the slow boom of cannon and the tolling of bells, it was a most solemn occasion.

On the 20th, the remains were viewed by thousands at the Capitol, leaving Washington on the 21st for its final resting place. Our regiment acting as escort from the Capitol to the depot.

On the 27th of April we got the news of the capture of John Wilkes Booth, the assassin of Lincoln, he having been shot through the neck, and was dead. His remains were brought up on a boat, and persons were taken out to identify him as the perpetrator of the deed. Various reports were circulated as to what disposition was made of the body. The most authentic that we had was that it was buried under the pavement of the old Penitentiary.

On the 23rd of May, Sheridan's cavalry, the Second, Fifth and Ninth Corps, passed through Washington on review. We then had great pleasure of meeting my old comrades that were left of the Seventh Maryland Regiment. Their ranks were greatly thinned. To mingle with them once more, shake hands and congratulate each other that the war was over, and we were victors, was a great pleasure.

## **PART VIII**

After the first assault, or Battle of Laurel Hill, the Seventh Regiment, with the Maryland Brigade, participated in all the engagements and marches of the Fifth Corps; Spottsylvania, May 9-27, 1864; Harris' farm, May 19, 1864; North Anna May 23-27, 1864; Shady Grove, May 30, 1864; Bethesda Church, May 31 to June 1, 1864; siege of Petersburg, 1864 and 1865; Weldon Railroad, August 18-21, 1864; Poplar Grove Church, September 30, 1864; Chapel House, October 1 to 3, 1864; Hatcher's Run, October 27, 1864; Hicksford Raid, December 7 to 12, 1864; Dabney's Mills, February 6, 1865; White Oak Road, March 31, 1865; Five Forks, April 1, 1865; Appomattox Courthouse, April 9, 1865. It so happened that the last blood shed in the Army of the Potomac, was that of Robert N. Weller, corporal of the Seventh Regiment (Frederick County). He was struck by a piece of shell, fired by the First North Carolina Battery, on the 9th of April, 1865, just before the surrender of Lee at Appomattox Courthouse.

At the assault of Petersburg, on the 17th of June, 1864, and while the Seventh was in line, Jacob Koogle, first sergeant of company, saw a shell bounding toward them. He called to the men to "look out!". Watching its course, he attempted to step out of its way when it lodged against his breast. Its force being about spent, he threw it off with his arm without injury to himself and, as it didn't explode, it injured no

one else. The Seventh, with the brigade, figured conspicuously in the capture of the Weldon Railroad, thereby cutting off Lee's supplies.

On March 27, 1865, the Seventh with its brigade and corps, marched around the enemy's right, and on the 31st occurred the Battle of White Oak Road, in which the regiment acquitted itself in an able manner.

On April 1, 1865, occurred the Battle of Five Forks, which was a glorious victory for the Army of the Potomac, resulting in the capture of 6,000 prisoners and a number of colors. Among the colors taken was one by Lieutenant Jacob Koogle, of Co. G. of the Seventh, he having been promoted to that rank November 18, 1864. He ran with the color guards of the Seventh, into the enemy's ranks, grabbed the colors and returned to the main line amidst a shower of bullets without being harmed. He was awarded a Medal of Honor by Congress for gallantry in the above-named battle. Lieutenant Jacob Koogle served from the date of his enlistment, August 13, 1862, to the date of his muster out, May 31, 1865, without being incapacitated for duty at any time. He is still living—a highly respected citizen of near Myersville, Maryland.

On the following day, May 24th, the Fourteenth, Fifteenth, Seventeenth and Twentieth Corps were reviewed. It appeared everything around Washington was full of soldiers, and thousands of people became to see the review, and greet their friends that were in the army.

On the 29th of April, our regiment, the 12th V.R.C. [Veteran's Reserve Corps] was taken to the Old Penitentiary to guard the prisoners who were confined there, and who were in the assassination plot. Here we continued to do duty by detail. Upon several occasions it fell to my lot to sit between Spangler and Dr. Mudd during court hours, a non-commissioned officer being placed between the prisoners with instructions not to allow them to converse with anyone but their counsel. I had a good opportunity of seeing them all, except Mrs. Surratt, who was always heavily veiled when brought from her cell.

On the second day of June, by accident, we had the pleasure of meeting the old war-horse of Maryland, Frank Thomas, with whom we had a pleasant greeting. At this time, my old regiment had gone to Baltimore and was mustered out of the service.

On June 4, a regiment of Pennsylvania, and one of Virginia cavalry were in the city and got to playing smash, breaking into saloons, helping themselves and finally got into a fight among themselves, on major, two lieutenants and a number of men were wounded, when we were called out on patrol and restored order. Fortunately, they were short of ammunition or the casualties would have been greater.

On the 17th of June we were deployed around the B&O depot to keep a body of the same cavalry from getting out into the city and committing further depredations.

It appeared that after the active and exciting duty these men had in the front, quiet camp life did not agree with them, and they were after some excitement.

On the 1st of July I was sent with a squad to do duty with the transportation office. Here we had considerable drunkenness to contend with. Men who had gotten their discharge and had drawn their pay would fill up on whiskey before coming for their transportation papers, each one wanting to be first at the window to put in his application. One big sergeant who, I was informed, had been a colonel in the volunteer service and re-enlisted in the veteran corps for the big bounty, came up with a great pomp along the lines of men who were waiting to hand in their papers in rotation. Attempting to pass me, while standing at the rear of my guard at the window, I halted him, asking him where he was going. He replied, "To hand in my papers for transportation." I informed him that he would have to take his turn. He attempted to force by, stating that he could not wait until that crowd got through. Placing my left hand upon his breast, my right upon my bayonet, I informed him that from the stripes he wore he ought to know a soldier's duty, and that he would not get his papers until he took his turn, and that he was no better than some that were waiting since the day before. Turning upon his heel, he started back along the line, gaped and jeered by the men in line.

The war being over, my old regiment having been mustered out a month previous, I naturally felt like casting off the old uniform and donning citizen's clothes. Having had some trouble at the War Department to get a descriptive list, I wrote to my old colonel, Charles E. Phelps, on the first day of July. On the 3rd of

July, Captain Cronise, Co. A, 12th V.R.C., sent for me at the transportation office and I was promoted to brevet citizen. On the 5th of July I was mustered out and got my pay, and on the next day I took transportation for "Home, Sweet Home," not the hale, hearty young man of three years previous, knowing nothing of pains and aches, but with hollow cheeks, sunken eyes, a weak, gaunt creature, like the flickering of a candle, ready to go out. But with proper care and treatment, I gradually regained my health to a certain degree, and am thankful to that Ruler of the destiny of all nations that I am still spared to tell the tale. After passing through that which we thought no mortal man could endure, yet ours was but mild to what thousands had to suffer in that bloody strife. Being from a Southern state, where sentiment was divided, some taking their chances in the Confederate Army, we were sometimes met with insult from the adherents of the "lost cause", but never once by those who vindicated that cause by taking arms against us, and fighting us as Americans fight, and by this late day we are stigmatized as Government bummers, Government plugs, etc., but the source is too insignificant for notice. And as a general thing the old soldier has learned to pass it by with a smile of contempt.

It will be but a few years until those who had participated in that bloody strife will receive their final mustering out from the battle of life, and there will be none to tell the story, neither will there be any clamoring about inequality of pensions. Each will receive his bounty according to his deeds. May God grant that this nation may never see another civil war, but that the states may stand together in love and union for the flag that floats over it, the greatest nation upon the face of the earth, in the language of Abraham Lincoln, "A nation of the people, by the people, for the people," and all stand together shoulder to shoulder for its integrity.

After all the sacrifice that has been made to establish our independence, protect ourselves from invasion of foreign nations, to maintain the Union of the State, and vindicate our rights upon land and sea, I sometimes think that there is another enemy that requires great vigilance, as our nation is founded upon the expressed will of the people through the ballot box. There is an empty gnawing at that foundation. It is the canker worm of corruption, and instead of a nation of a nation "of the people, by the people, and for the people," it appears to be getting more and more into the hands of the wiley bosses, wire-pullers, and boodlers, and no man, no matter how meritorious he may be, if he can't be pulled in shape to carry out their corrupt practices, he is not considered worthy to fill any place of honor, whether it be municipal, state or national. Under this state of affairs, men with low conscientious scruples are placed in our legislative halls who cast their vote for or against a measure, but the best interests of the people, but according to the bribe they receive, or the special interest to themselves.

*"Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people."*

THE END