

BITS OF WAR HISTORY

ASKETCH OF THE FIFTY-FIFTH NORTH CAROLINA REGIMENT.

BY LIEUT. CHARLES M. COOKE

This Regiment was Organized at Camp Mangum, Near Raleigh, in the Early Part of 1862--After Being Sufficiently Drilled it Was Sent to the Pamlico District Then to Washington, N. C., and Thence to Virginia--Its Position in the Fight at Gettysburg.

The Fifty-fifth North Carolina Regiment was organized at Camp Mangum, near Raleigh, in the early part of 1862. The companies composing the Regiment were Company A, from Wilson county, William J. Bullock, Captain; Company B, Wilkes county, Abner S. Calloway, Captain; Company C, Cleveland county, Silas D. Randall, Captain; Company E, Pitt county, James T. Whitehead, Captain; Company F, composed of men enlisted from Cleveland, Burke and Catawba counties, principally from Cleveland county, Peter M. Mull, of Catawba county, Captain; Company G, Johnston county, J. P. Williams, Captain; Company H, composed of men enlisted under Vandever Teague, who was Captain from Alexander county, and some enlisted from Onslow county under Alexander J. Pollock, who was First Lieutenant; Company I, Franklin county, Wilson H. Williams, Captain; Company K, Granville county, Maurice T. Smith, Captain.

John Kerr Connelly, of Yadkin county, who was for a while at the National Naval Academy at Annapolis, and who had been Captain of a company in the 11th Regiment of North Carolina Volunteers, was elected Colonel of the regiment; Captain Abner S. Calloway, of Company B, was elected Lieutenant Colonel, and Capt. James T. Whitehead, of Company E, was elected Major; William H. Young, of Granville county, was appointed Adjutant; W. N. Holt, of Company G, was appointed Sergeant Major; George W. Blount, of Wilson county, was appointed Quartermaster; W. P. Webb, of Granville county, Commissary; Dr. Charles Smith, of Granville county, Surgeon; Dr. Isaac G. Cannady, of the same county, Assistant Surgeon; Rev. William Royall, of Wake Forest College, Chaplain; A. H. Dunn, of Company I, Quartermaster-Sergeant; W. B. Royall, of Company I, Commissary-Sergeant; S. W. C. Young, Ordinance Sergeant; Peterson Thorpe, of Company K, Hospital Steward; Charles E. Jackey, of Pitt county, Chief Musician; Lieut. Col. Calloway, resigned, and Major Whitehead died within a few months after the organization of the regiment, and Captain Maurice T. Smith, of Company K, was made Lieutenant-Colonel, and Captain A. H. Belo, of Salem, who commanded a company in the 11th Regiment of North Carolina Volunteers, was made Major. Lieut. Col. Smith was killed at Gettysburg and Maj. Belo became Lieutenant Colonel, and upon the resignation of Col. Connelly, on account of severe wounds received in the same battle, Lieut. Col. Belo became Colonel. On account of the fact that the senior captain of the regiment was in prison from Gettysburg until the close of the war the regiment had no other field officers.

Adjutant Young resigned in November 1862 and Henry T. Jordan, of Person county, was appointed Adjutant. He was captured at Gettysburg and, after Lieut. Charles Smith, of Cleveland county, acted as adjutant for several months, and then C. M. Cooke, from company I, was assigned to that position and held it until the close of the war. Surgeon James Smith resigned in December 1862, and Dr. B. T. Greene, of Franklin county, was appointed surgeon. A. H. Dunn died in August 1862, and Henry S. Furman, of Franklin county, was appointed Assistant Quartermaster-Sergeant. W. H. Young, of Company I, made Lieutenant in Company H, and Jesse A. Adams, of Johnston county, was made Sergeant Major.

The regiment, after it had been sufficiently drilled to take the field, was sent to the department of the Pamlico, then under the command of Gen. James G. Martin, and remained there during the summer and early part of the fall of 1862. It was on duty a greater part of the time at Kinston, and in Trenton. The first time the regiment was under fire was on the 7th of August, 1862. A Federal gun-boat had come up the Neuse to a point a few miles below Kinston, and the regiment was sent down to prevent the landing of the troops. We were formed in a line on the south side of, and not far from the river; the gun boat came up to a point nearly opposite the position occupied by the regiment, but after the firing of a few shells went back without attempting to land any troops.

The regiment during the time spent in that section was thoroughly drilled and disciplined. On the 3rd of September, while the regiment was in camp near LaGrange, there was a special order made on dress parade that two hundred men were needed for daring service and volunteers were called for. That day the entire regiment was organized into two companies of one hundred each. Capt. P. M. Mull, of Company F, was put in command of one company, and Capt. Maurice T. Smith, of company K, in command of the other, and the lieutenants were selected from the different companies. Capt. Williams, of Company I, was so anxious to be among the number that he procured the consent of the Colonel for his going as First Lieutenant of one of the companies. It was ordered that these companies be prepared with three days' rations to march the next morning at sunrise. Capt. Mull was senior officer and in command of the detachment. Just as the sun rose the next morning we moved out of camp, marching a little north of east, and were then informed that the movement was not a surprise attack upon Washington, N. C., and that we would be joined by the 8th and 9th regiments. We reached the place by other troops. We met on the 6th, between Greenville and Washington, a detachment from the 8th, and also from the 17th regiment, and an artillery company, but without cannon, armed as infantry, under the command of Col. S. D. Poole, who, from this time, being the ranking officer, took the command of the force on the march, although Gen. J. G. Martin had the general direction of the movement. Later, Capt. R. S. Tucker, with his company of cavalry, joined us, and camped on the night of the 6th with a few miles of Washington, and began our march upon the town. We were in Federal pickets just outside of town before it was fairly light; we moved double quick, and with a

"rebel yell," entered the town. The Federal troops were taken by surprise, and after firing a round or two, fell back through the town up the river, under cover of their gun boats. We, in possession of the town, the troops from our regiment being stationed on a square near the centre of the town. We held the position for several hours, but the cannon from the gun boats were turned upon us, and the Federal infantry, having re-formed, commenced to fire upon us with a long range rifle, while we were armed with the old smooth bore musket. We were forced to fall back to the place where we had camped the night before; the enemy did not pursue us, and the next day we commenced our march back to camp. Captains Mull and Williams, both of whom behaved with great bravery, were wounded; of the men of the 55th Regiment engaged seven were killed and eight wounded. There was no other meeting with Federal forces while the regiment was in this section.

On the 1st day of October, while the regiment was doing picket duty at Wise's fork, between Kinston and Newbern, it was ordered to Virginia, and for awhile did provost duty in the city of Petersburg. With the 2nd, 11th, and 42nd Mississippi, it was formed into a brigade, and General Joseph R. Davis was assigned to its command. The regiment remained in this brigade until January, 1863, when it was transferred to Cooke's Brigade. The 26th Mississippi Battalion and the 1st Confederate Brigade were brought into the brigade in the early part of 1864. It was a fine brigade. The 2nd and 11th Mississippi, with the 4th Alabama and the 6th North Carolina, had constituted the immortal Bee brigade at the first battle of Manassas, and General Whiting afterwards commanded that brigade. In forming the brigade for Gen. Davis, the 6th North Carolina was sent to Hoke's brigade, the 4th Alabama was transferred to a brigade of Alabama troops, and the 2nd Mississippi, which was brought to the Army of Northern Virginia for that purpose, and the 55th North Carolina took their places in the old brigade. Although all the other regiments, except the 55th, were from Mississippi, their relations with the officers and men of that regiment were quite as pleasant as they were with each other. The regiments of Davis' Brigade, as the part of the force which General Longstreet carried to Suffolk, Va., in the spring of 1863. It was while near Suffolk that an incident occurred which illustrates the high spirit of the officers of the regiment and how jealous they were of its honor. One evening about dark, a heavy piece of Confederate artillery was captured by an unexpected and surprise attack by a brigade of Federal troops. Capt. Terrell and Capt. Cousins, the one Assistant Adjutant General of Gen. Lee's Brigade, and the other on the staff of that General, reported that the 55th North Carolina had been assigned to protect the battery, whereas, in fact, it was a mistake. As soon as Col. Connelly heard of the report, he went to see those gentlemen and stated to them that they were mistaken; that the 55th Regiment had held the position to which it had been assigned, and was in no way responsible for the capture of the battery. They were not satisfied with his report at once. This they declined to do. Thereupon Col. Connelly returned to his regiment, called a meeting of the field officers and captains, stated the circumstances to them, and insisted that the honor of the regiment required that its officers should demand satisfaction from those who had slandered it. He proposed that the field officers should first challenge the Abolitionists, and if the matter was not satisfactory arranged, consistent with the honor of the regiment, and if they should be killed, each officer should pledge himself to take up the quarrel and fight until the last man was killed unless proper amends should sooner be obtained. To this the officers generally assented, but Lieut. Col. Smith, who was an elder in the Presbyterian church, and a young soldier of unquestionable bravery, arose and stated that he was conscientiously opposed to duelling, and that he would not resort to that method of settling any question. Col. Smith's christian character and his personal courage were so well known, that his scruples on the subject were respected, and Maj. Belo proposed to take his place; and so it was arranged that Col. Connelly should challenge Capt. Terrell, and Maj. Belo should challenge Capt. Cousins. Capt. Satterfield, of Person county, then Captain of Company H, was Col. Connelly's second, and Lieut. W. H. Townes, of Granville county, then 1st Lieutenant in Company D, was Major Belo's second. The challenges were accepted and Captain Terrell selected as weapons double-barreled shot guns, loaded with buck-shot and Captain Cousins selected the Mississippi rifle at 40 paces. According to appointment, the parties next day met in a large field in the neighborhood, in one part of which were Col. Connelly and Capt. Terrell and their friends. In another part were Maj. Belo and Capt. Cousins and their friends. As soon as Maj. Belo and Capt. Cousins came to their place of meeting, they took the positions assigned to them by the seconds, and at the command, fired their first shot. Maj. Belo's shot passed through Capt. Cousins' hat, and Capt. Cousins' first shot passed through the coat of Maj. Belo just above the shoulder and Maj. Belo's second fire missed Capt. Cousins. In the meantime, in the other part of the field, the friends of Col. Connelly and Capt. Terrell were engaged in an effort to make an honorable settlement of the affair, and Capt. Terrell, who was a gallant officer and true gentleman, became satisfied that he had been mistaken in the report which he had made and which had been the cause of offence, and he withdrew the same, which action prevented any further hostilities between him and Col. Connelly, and came just in time to prevent the exchange of a third shot between Maj. Belo and Capt. Cousins.

On the night of April 30th our brigade was in the front of the town of Suffolk, which was occupied by the Federals, and around which the Union forces were stationed behind formidable intrenchments. About 9 o'clock that night Maj. Belo was sent with four companies of the regiment to relieve the pickets in the rifle pits to our front, with instructions to hold the position in case there should be an attack. The next day, the Federal forces made several demonstrations in front of the rifle pits, and in the afternoon opened upon them with several pieces of artillery. About the same time, two Federal infantry regiments came outside their breast-works, and formed into line. Col. Connelly then ordered Maj. Belo to reinforce the men in the rifle pits with four other companies of the regiment. This was promptly accomplished under a very heavy fire and not without loss. The 55th Regiment was the only

regiment on the line that was armed with the old smoothbore muskets. The others were armed with rifles. This must have been discovered by the enemy during the day, and was the cause of their selection of the part of the line occupied by that regiment for their attack. The two regiments moved forward in splendid order for the attack. The Federal artillery ceased firing upon that part of the field. The soldiers of both armies on the right and left were watching with deep interest the movement. The attacking column had moved so near to our position, that the other troops were beginning to whisperingly enquire of each other what was the matter. But Maj. Belo knew that the effectiveness of the arms, which his men held, depended upon short range, and cool and clear-headed, as he always was, he had ordered that not a shot be fired until he gave the command. The advancing column was now so near, that the features of the men's faces could be distinguished. Every one of the men in the rifle pits had his musket in position and his finger on the trigger, and the word "fire" the last given in Maj. Belo's command, seemed to expand into one grand roll of sound; for there had been the fire of five hundred muskets as if by one man. Not one had snuffed fire and there was not a single belated shot. The shower of leaden hail was too much for human courage. The assaulting regiments fell back in confusion, with some loss. But they were quickly rallied by their officers, and returned to the attack. This time the fire by Maj. Belo's command, was reserved until he had advanced several yards further than before, when again a deadly fire swept them back with greater loss.

Again and yet again they attempted to storm the picket force, but were repulsed each time, until finally abandoning their purpose, they retired from the field. The old smooth bore muskets in the hands of five hundred brave North Carolina patriots had done their work. About this time Lieut. Col. Smith came down to Maj. Belo with Col. Connelly's compliments to inquire if he needed other reinforcements. Maj. Belo returning his compliments to Col. Connelly replied that he thought the battle was over. The 55th Regiment had been but

Lieutenants, Joel J. Hoyle, A. H. Williams, Peter P. Mull, A. Company G—Captain, Walter A. Whitted, Lieutenants, Marcus C. Stevens, Charles R. Jones, Mordecai Lee. Company H,—Captain E. F. Satterfield; Lieutenants, N. W. Lillington, Benjamin H. Blount, W. N. Holt. Company I,—Captain, W. H. Williams; Lieutenants, B. H. Winston, Chas. M. Cooke. Company K,—Captain, R. W. Thomas; Lieutenants, Wilkins Stovall, W. H. Webb, R. McD. Royster.

The regiment, as it marched from the railroad depot to take its place in the line, with its bright arms gleaming in the sun of that beautiful day, with quick martial step, its company officers splendidly dressed, as if for a grand parade, its field officers mounted on fiery chargers, and its magnificent band playing first "Dixie" and then "Maryland, My Maryland"—presented one circumstance of war, that is, its pomp, and if not its most impressive, certainly its least horrible. Little did it occur to any of us, that the aspect of this organization, would be so completely and so unhappily changed within a few weeks.

The regiment crossed the Potomac with the Army of Northern Virginia in fine spirits, and when it reached Cash-town on the night of the 29th of June, it was in splendid condition. The regiment marched out of Cash-town early into morning of the 1st of July going down the Chambersburg turnpike toward Gettysburg. We came in sight of the town about 9 o'clock a. m. The Union forces were on the ridge just outside of the town and formed across the turnpike to dispute our advance. Marye's battery was placed by General Heth on the south side of the turnpike and opened fire on the enemy. Davis' brigade was immediately thrown into line of battle on the north of the road and ordered to advance. Archer's brigade was formed on the south of the road and was ordered forward about the same time. There was a railroad track which ran parallel with the turnpike and about one hundred yards from it. The 55th regiment was on the left of the brigade, and owing to the character of the ground was the first one to come into view of the

fresh troops from the left. We formed in line with them on their right and were hotly engaged in the battles of that afternoon, driving the enemy before us and capturing a number of prisoners. At sundown we were in the edge of Gettysburg, and the regiment was placed behind the railroad embankment just in front of the seminary. In the afternoon Lieut. Col. Smith, while the regiment was waiting in reserve, walked towards the right to reconnoitre and was mortally wounded and died that night. Maj. Belo was also severely wounded in the leg just as the battle closed that evening. Davis' brigade, during the night, was moved from its position on the railroad cut near the seminary to a piece of woods across Willoughby Run, west of the mineral springs, and there rested during the 2d. On the night of the second it was moved to its position on the Confederate line known as Seminary Ridge, on the right center, and stationed in McMillan's woods. Our division being on the left of Longstreet, and our brigade being the left center of our division. Gen. Heth had been wounded on the 1st, and Gen. Pettigrew was in command of our division. Gen. Pickett's division of Longstreet's corps was on the right of our division, and occupied a position just in the edge of Spangler's woods. And it was from these positions that we moved out to that last fatal charge, on the afternoon of July 3d. Our division was not supporting Longstreet as has been repeatedly published, but was one line with his troops. Our regiment had suffered so greatly on the 1st that in this charge it was commanded by a captain, and some of the companies were commanded by non-commissioned officers. But the men came up bravely to the measure of their duty, and the regiment went as far as the night would permit, and we had good proof of the claim that a portion of the regiment led by Capt. Satterfield, who was killed at this time, reached a point near the Benner barn which was more advanced than that attained by any other of the assaulting columns. Lieut. T. D. Falls, of Company G, residing at Fallstown, Cleveland county, and Sergeant Augustus Bartley, of Company E, residing at Everetts in Martin county, who were with Capt. Satterfield, have recently visited the battlefield, and have made affidavit as to the point reached by them. The place has been marked by the United States commission, and the map below will show the position attained by these men of the 55th Regiment, in relation to other known objects on the battlefield such as the Benner barn and the Bronze Book which marks the high-water mark of the struggle for Southern independence. The measurements for the map were made by the late Col. Batchelder, of the United States commission, and by Col. E. W. Cope, United States engineer, for this field.

The forces engaged in this last charge which settled not only the result of the battle of Gettysburg, but the fate of the Confederacy, were as follows: Longstreet's Corps, composed of: Pickett's Division, Kemper's Brigade, 1st, 3d, 7th, 11th and 24th Virginia regiments, Garnett's Brigade, 8th, 18th, 19th, 25th and 56th Virginia regiments, Armistead's Brigade, 9th, 14th, 38th and 57th Virginia regiments. Heth's Division, commanded by Brigadier General Pettigrew, Archer's Brigade, commanded by Col. Fry, 19th Alabama regiment, 5th Alabama battalion, and the 1st, 7th and 14th Tennessee regiments. Pettigrew's Brigade, commanded by Col. Marshall, 11th, 29th, 27th and 52d North Carolina regiments. Davis' Brigade, 2nd, 11th and 42d Mississippi regiments and the 55th North Carolina regiment. Brockenborough's Brigade, 40th, 47th and 55th Virginia regiments, and 22d Virginia Battalion. One-half of General Pender's Division. Scales' Brigade, commanded by Col. Lawrence, 13th, 16th, 22nd, 34th and 38th North Carolina regiments. Lane's Brigade, 7th, 18th, 28th, 33rd and 37th North Carolina regiments. So there were eighteen regiments and one battalion from Virginia, sixteen regiments from North Carolina, three regiments from Mississippi, three regiments from Tennessee, and one regiment and one battalion from Alabama, in the assaulting columns.

The contention between Pickett's division and Heth's division, the latter commanded then by Pettigrew, has doubtless arisen from the following: The portion of the enemy's forces just in front of Pickett's division was behind a low rock wall which terminated at a point just about opposite Pickett's left. About eighty yards to the rear of this point there was another stone wall which commenced the battle line, and ran along by the right towards the cemetery, and the enemy, instead of continuing his line to his right from the termination of the first wall, and through the field, dropped eighty yards to the second wall, and continued his line behind that. So to have reached the enemy in our front, we must have marched eighty yards beyond a continuation of their line from the point where Pickett reached the enemy in his front. Some of Pickett's men passed over the first line of the enemy and a few of them reached a point some forty yards in the rear of the line and near the Federal battery.

Some of our regiment reached a point within nine yards of the rock wall in front of us. That was seventy-three yards beyond a continuation of the line of the first wall, and showing two yards for the height of the first wall, and adding to that the forty yards beyond the rock wall to the point reached by some of Pickett's men, and running a line parallel with the first wall so as to strike the most advanced point reached by Pickett's men, and continuing beyond to the most advanced point reached by the men of the 55th Regiment, it will be found that the latter point is thirty-one yards in advance of that line. The 55th Regiment was a part of the rear-guard on the retreat, and in the attack made upon them at Falling Waters, they lost several killed and wounded. The loss of the regiment at Gettysburg amounted to 64 killed and 172 wounded, including the dead and captured about 200 added to these, made an aggregate of more than one-half the number of men in the regiment. All of the field officers and all the captains were either killed, wounded or captured. Lieut. M. C. Stevens, of company G, was the ranking officer, and commanded the regiment on the retreat until it reached Falling Waters, when Capt. Whitted had sufficiently recovered from his wound to take command. Capt. R. W. Thomas, of company K, however, returned to the regiment soon after we went into camp on the Rapidan, and commanded the regiment with great acceptability until Lieutenant-Colonel Belo's return the following winter. In the official report of his division at Get-

tsburg made by Gen. Heth, and found in the records published by the United States government, Col. Connelly, Lieut. Col. Smith, and Major Belo are particularly mentioned for gallant and meritorious conduct, but Col. Connelly was so severely wounded that he was never able to again command the regiment. This was a great loss, for he was not only brave and loyal in his support of the Southern cause, but his spirit and conduct were so chivalric, that he impressed the men and officers of the regiment with his own lofty ideals, and Lieut. Col. Smith was dead. The very soul of honor, he was older and less impetuous than Col. Connelly, but gentle and refined as a woman; he was conscientious and painstaking in the discharge of every duty and enforced among the men the same rigid rule of attention to duty he prescribed for himself. No hasty utterance and no unclear word crossed his lips, and by his daily life, he taught us what a beautiful thing it is to be a christian gentleman.

The regiment, after its return to the line of the Rapidan, was engaged in drilling and picketing at the ford until October, when it went with the Army of Northern Virginia to Manassas and became engaged in the battle of Bristow Station. The position of our regiment in that battle was on the left of our brigade, which was just to the right of Cooke's brigade. A piece of forest was in front and consequently our loss was slight as compared to the loss of some of the regiments of Cooke's brigade. The regiment was also with the army at Mine Run and was a part of a line that was formed for the charge upon the enemy's left flank in the early morning, when it was discovered after throwing out a skirmish line that Gen. Meade, during the night, had withdrawn his right flank. Col. Belo returned to the command of the regiment late in January, 1864, but he had not entirely recovered from his wound received at Gettysburg. It was made on the leg by the fragment of a shell, and in his determination not to be captured he fell back with the army from Gettysburg. A portion of the time he was in such danger of capture that he exposed himself greatly, and by the time he reached Winchester, the condition of the wound was so serious that for several days it was feared that amputation would be necessary.

Soon after his return to the regiment, our brigade, one severely cold night, was ordered out of camp, and marched to Gordonsville. As soon as we reached that point, the 55th Regiment was sent out to picket the roads on the south. The rain was falling and deep, and the clothing on the men was frozen. The next day the regiment with the brigade was marched some distance to the south-west and bivouaced for the night with orders to have very few fires, the purpose being to intercept a raiding detachment of the Federal army, but the detachment went around us, and after enduring the intensest suffering that night, we returned to camp.

On the 4th of May, 1864, the regiment, Col. Belo, now recovered of his wounds, commanding, left its camp near Orange Court House, and commenced its march to the Wilderness. It was going down the plank road towards Fredericksburg about half past 2 o'clock in the afternoon of the 5th, when it was discovered that the enemy were advancing upon the road. We were formed into line of battle, not for the purpose of advancing or bringing on an engagement, as Gen. Lee said to A. P. Hill, but to hold the enemy in check until Longstreet's corps and Anderson's division of ours. A. P. Hill's corps, should come up. Davis' Brigade was formed on the left of the road; our regiment was the right center of the brigade and on the crest of a small hill or ridge. It was in a dense forest of small trees; the hill in our front sloped gradually to a depression or valley which was a few yards wide, and then there was a gradual incline on the opposite side until it reached a point of about the same altitude as that occupied by us, about one hundred yards from our line. We had 340 men including non-commissioned officers in our regiment. About half past three o'clock, our skirmish line was driven in, and the first line of the Federal forces charged us, but they got no further than the crest of the hill in front of us, and were repulsed with great loss; from then until sunset, they charged us with seven successive lines of battle, but we repulsed every one of them. Our line never wavered. The officers and men of the regiment realized that the safety of the army depended upon our holding the enemy in check until the forces left behind could come up, and there was a fixed determination to do it, or to die. About half-past five o'clock, the enemy were pressing us so heavily with their successive lines of fresh troops, it was thought that they would annihilate us before night fall, and a conference of the general officers of the field determined that it would probably become necessary as a last resort to make a vigorous and impetuous charge upon them with the hope that we might be able to drive them back. Col. Belo, who was sitting just in the rear of the regiment by the side of a little poplar tree, sent his orderly to the writer to the writer of this sketch, C. M. Cooke, instructing him to report to him immediately. I went at once. He then stated to me that the necessity of a charge seemed apparent and that the order for making it would probably soon be given, and he desired that I return to the line and notify the men that they were to be prepared for it, and take the command of my own company, C, which was the flag company, the commanding officer of which had been a few moments before severely wounded, and to see that the flag was kept well to the front, and to make the charge with all the dash that was possible. I went back to the line and gave the men the information. They expressed the hope that it might be necessary to make the charge, but there was no disposition to shirk the duty if it

had been imposed. But the order for the charge was not given, and about sunset the firing had nearly ceased in our front, and Thomas' Georgia brigade of Wilcox's division came in and relieved us, and we were sent to the right of the road where we rested for the night. We had held the enemy in check. Not one yard of our line had given away one foot during the three hours the fearful onslaughts had been made upon us, but of our 304, 24 lay dead on the line where we fought and 107 were wounded. The sergeant of the ambulance corps counted the next day 157 dead Federal soldiers in front of the line.

On the 6th day of May, early in the morning before sunrise, the Federal forces opened the battle on our left before we were in line, and while our arms were yet stacked, and forced the troops to the left of us, and us along with them back upon and along the road. These were fresh troops which Gen. Grant had moved into position during the night, and they were attacking the troops of A. P. Hill's corps which had been fearfully depleted by the engagements of the day before. But just at this time, Longstreet's corps came up and Kershaw's division relieved our division. Our regiment was not engaged further during the Wilderness fight. Our brigade composed part of the rear guard of the army in its march from the Wilderness to Spotsylvania, and consequently, the regiment did not reach Spotsylvania until the 9th of May. We had some skirmishes along the march--nothing serious. On the afternoon of the 10th of May, our regiment was part of the force which made an attack upon the enemy's right near Talley's mill. We charged and captured a piece of artillery and drove the enemy across the battlefield. The regiment upon this occasion, behaved with great gallantry, charging for a half of a mile up the hill-side through an old field. Though subjected during this charge to a fire from both artillery and small arms, the loss was not very great; we were charging up hill and the fire of the enemy went over our heads. On this charge, three color bearers were shot down in succession before we captured the artillery. We were engaged in the battle in the battle of the 13th at Spotsylvania, but as we were behind temporary breast-works, and some distance to the right from the point where Grant broke the Confederate lines, our losses on that day were comparatively small. At the second battle of Cold Harbor, we reached the field late in the afternoon on June the 2nd. The Federal troops were attempting to occupy an advanced position upon our left for the battle of the next day. Our brigade was put in to prevent this, and charged them just about sunset. We checked the advance of the enemy, but it was a fearful charge we made. The ground was unfavorable on account of a thick undergrowth and the loss was considerable. Col. Belo was seriously wounded in this charge and was never able afterwards to take command of the regiment. We were engaged in the battle all the next day, but we were protected by temporary breastworks, and we did not suffer as heavily as some of the regiments, but the punishment we inflicted upon the enemy was fearful.

Colonel Belo's wound was in the arm, half way between the elbow and the shoulder joint; the bone was shattered and the operation of re-section was performed. The loss to the regiment was irreparable. He had been with the regiment in all its hard-fought battles, and

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a short while in Davis' Brigade, and it was their first engagement since then, and the cordial words of commendation of the gallant behavior of the regiment expressed by the Mississippians, was very gratifying to us. Thence forward they were as jealous of and as quick to defend the honor of our regiment as we were ourselves. Some years after the war, Maj. Belo met an officer of one of the regiments engaged in this attack, and he informed Maj. Belo that the terms of enlistment of the men of those two regiments was to expire the next day and they were to be marched out of service, and that it was at their own request they were ordered to make the attack, but that it proved a very sad experience to them.

Shortly after this, Longstreet returned with his command to the Army of Northern Virginia, our brigade accompanying him. When the 55th Regiment left the cars at Hamilton's crossing, near Fredericksburg, to take its place in its brigade in Heth's division, A. P. Hill's corps, of the Army of Northern Virginia, it was both in respect to its discipline and its appearance one of the finest regiments in the army. Col. Connelly was a fine tactician and was without a superior as a disciplinarian. He was admirable on the field in his handling of his regiment. The time which had been spent in Eastern North Carolina had allowed the opportunity for the drilling of the regiment, and it had been faithfully attended to. The regimental band, composed of 17 pieces, led by Prof. Charles E. Jackey, educated at Heidelberg, was a very fine band. The men of the regiment were well clad, and the ranks of each company were full. It was well officered, and all had full confidence in its field officers, and no volunteer regiment, in the opinion of the writer, ever had three better field officers. They were all young men--erect and soldierly in their bearing, proud of their regiment and enthusiastic in their patriotism. Lieutenant Colonel Smith, the eldest, not yet thirty years of age--was from Granville county. He was an accomplished gentleman and had been a member of the Granville North Grays in the 2nd regiment of North Carolina Volunteers. Maj. A. H. Belo, was a fine specimen of young Southern manhood, and had seen service before as captain in the 11th volunteer regiment of North Carolina.

Changes had taken place in the company officers since the organization, and the following were the officers of the companies at that time: Company A, Captain, Albert E. Upchurch; Lieutenants, B. F. Briggs, T. J. Hadley, T. R. Bass. Company B, Captain, George Gilreath; Lieutenants, John T. Peden, Hiram L. Grier. Company C, Captain, Edward D. Dixon; Lieutenants, George J. Bethel, Philip R. Elam, Thomas D. Falls. Company D, Captain, Silas D. Randall; Lieutenants, Wm. H. Townes, Jas. H. Randall, Joseph B. Cabness. Company E, Captain, Howell G. Whitehead; Lieutenants, James A. Hanrahan, Godfrey E. Taft, William S. Wilson. Company F, Captain, Peter M. Mull;

and received the first fire in the battle. It was a volley fired by the 56th Pennsylvania Regiment, commanded by Col. Hoffman of Cutler's brigade. Two men in the color guard of the regiment were wounded by this volley. The regiment immediately returned the fire and inflicted considerable loss upon the 56th Pennsylvania Regiment. The 11th Mississippi Regiment was on detail duty that morning, so we had only three regiments of our brigade, the 2d and 42d Mississippi Regiments, and the 55th North Carolina. The regiments in our front were the 76th New York, the 56th Pennsylvania and the 147th New York of Cutler's brigade. After the enemy's position became known by their first fire, our brigade charged them in magnificent style. The left of our regiment extended considerably beyond the right of the enemy's line--and at the proper time our left was wheeled to the right. The enemy fled from the field with great loss. From the beginning of this engagement it was hot work. While the regiment was advancing, Col. Connelly seized the battle flag and waved it aloft. This drew upon him and the color guard the fire of the enemy and he fell badly wounded in the arm and hip. His arm was afterwards amputated. Maj. Belo, who was near him at the time rushed up and asked him if he was badly wounded. Col. Connelly replied: "Yes, but do not pay any attention to me; take the colors and keep ahead of the Mississippians." After the defeat of the 55th Regiment in front of us, the brigade swung around by the right wheel and formed on the railroad cut about one-half of the 55th Regiment being on the left extended beyond the cut on the embankment. In front of us there then were the 95th and 84th New York (known as the 14th Brooklyn) regiments who had been supporting Hall's battery, and were the other two regiments of Cutler's brigade, and 6th Wisconsin, of the Iron brigade, which had been held in reserve, when, the other regiments of that brigade were put in to meet Archer's advance. Just then the order was received to retire through the road-cut, and that the 55th North Carolina cover the retreat of the brigade. The Federal Regiments in front of us threw themselves into line of battle by a well executed movement, notwithstanding the heavy fire we were pouring into them, and as soon as their line of battle was formed, seeing a disposition on our part to retire, charged. They were held in check, as well as could be done, by the 55th Regiment covering the retreat of the brigade; a part of the regiment was in the road-cut and at a great disadvantage. One of the Federal officers on the embankment, seeing Major Belo in the cut, threw his sword at him saying, "Kill that officer, and that will end it." The sword missed Maj. Belo, but struck a man behind him. Maj. Belo directed one of the men to shoot the officer and this was done. This somewhat checked their charge, and we fell back to another position. The loss of the regiment was very great in killed and wounded, and a large number were captured in the road-cut. From that time until 3 o'clock in the afternoon we were not engaged. About that time Early came in with

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