

PERSON COUNTY COURIER.

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VOL. 6.

ROXBORO, NORTH CAROLINA, THURSDAY, JUNE 12, 1890.

NO. 43.

THE COURIER

is published in the centre of a fine tobacco growing section, making it one of the best advertising mediums for merchants and warehousemen in the adjoining counties. Circulated largely in Person, Granville and Durham counties in North Carolina, and Halifax county Virginia.

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Very Respectfully, Simpson, Mitchell & Co.

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of Ladies' Misses' and Children's hats and bonnets, Flowers, Ribbons, Vandyke Leers, Trimmings, &c. Hats and Bonnets trimmed at short notice and at low prices.

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T. D. LOTT, Formerly Major 24th N. C. T.

Warden Hicks' Report.

The following official report made by Warden Hicks, of the penitentiary, shows the disposition of all the convicts: Under laws passed by the last legislature there are but few convicts at work on railroads under legislative contracts. The Western North Carolina railroad has 209 at \$190 per year; the Roanoke & Southern 105 at \$125 to \$150 per year, and the Granite Granite and Construction company, 57 at \$150 per year. The remainder are working on state account on farms and railroads. On the Roanoke farm, 300; on the North Carolina Midland railroad, 127; on the Mt. Airy railroad, 207, and at the penitentiary, 206. All forces working on state account on railroads are hired and paid for by the day or by the cubic yard, again in the case of any regular contract work.

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If so, call on me for estimates before giving contract. I am now located in Roxboro, and am prepared to do any kind of Brick Work or Plastering. My work is guaranteed to give satisfaction, and will be done promptly. Give me a trial.

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JAS. W. BRANDON,

The Barber.

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Waiting for May.

"The weary waiting for May, my dear; 'Tis weary waiting for May, When neyer a breath of warm south wind Comes to open a green leaved spray; Sunshine for some, with its glow and light; And for some gray skies—but it must be right. 'Tis weary loving too well, my dear, And finding it all in vain; 'Tis ever the hand we cling to most Can stab with the sharpest pain. And hope dies hard; but the old wounds stay, Heal them, hide them, as best we may. My hair was glossy and bright, my dear, When I watched and waited for May; 'Twas silvered long ere I learned to know I never would come any way. Yes, I know—May blooms wither and fall— To have never had them is worst of all. I should like to have had a time, my dear, To look back on at the close of strife, And warm myself in a ghostly snare Which once had color and life. Oh, never had light; such a golden haze As that which shines through the mist of days! The shadows are falling fast, my dear; The night is coming soon; And I am hastening fast to a land That needs no sun nor moon; And I think beyond the grave I'll see Sunshine and springtime kept for me.

WAR REMINISCENCES.

A HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE BATTLE OF SHARPSBURG.

Prepared by Major T. D. Love, of the 24th N. C. Regiment, at the Request of the New Hanover Confederate Veterans' Association.

It is out of the line of the average business man to write for the eye of the public or to speak to an assembled audience. His vocation in life leads far from the attainments which mark the graceful writer or the elegant evolutionist. Conscious then of my shortcomings, I make no pretensions to literary excellence in attempting to write an historical sketch of the Battle of Sharpsburg, in compliance with the request of the Executive Committee of the Veterans' Association. This writer well remembers his feelings on reaching the Maryland shore in Lee's first campaign in the enemy's territory.

The morale of an army is said to be with the army on the offensive, and we were inspired with all the hope and enthusiasm the aggressive movement imparted. Connected with the 24th N. C. Infantry, General Robert Ransom's Brigade and Walker's Division, composed of Ransom's and Cook's Brigades, we had been transferred from Longstreet's corps and were serving with Stonewall Jackson's foot cavalry. Our position in the line of march was on the right flank of the invading column. Our division did not advance as far as Frederick City, only reaching a point, we were then told, about ten miles distant.

In Maryland we expected much sympathy, many recruits and much encouragement. To our disappointment, we saw no evidences of Southern feeling. The farm houses were closed, the blinds shut, and a death like stillness was our only greeting along the line of march in Western Maryland.

Our orders were to observe the rights of private property, no pillaging to be allowed, no orchards invaded, and the buttermilk rangers kept closely in ranks. Our division, moving towards Washington, had orders to destroy the aqueduct of the Baltimore and Ohio canal where it crossed the Menocacy river and recrossed the Potomac into Virginia. Nearing the approach to the Monocacy and suspecting that the enemy were there guarding the canal, orders were given that our march must be quiet, commands given in whispers, canteens muffled and steps light.

Night came on before we reached our destination, and as we neared it, no funeral procession ever moved more silently, certainly not so swiftly as we hurried forward to surprise, if possible, the enemy if we found them. The moon shone dimly, with scattered and swiftly moving clouds anon obscuring her beams. Our Brigade was in advance, our regiment being the vanguard; Company K marching a few yards in advance of the whole column. I do not remember that Cook's Brigade was with us. I am inclined to believe it was not. Nearing the aqueduct, General Ransom rode to the front, whispering as he went along, death to the first man who makes a noise. About 10 o'clock we reached the canal where it crosses the river. A death-like stillness, only disturbed by the swiftly running

river or a hooting owl, surrounded us. But to perform our mission of destruction, the river must be crossed, and the enemy, if found on the opposite shore, driven off. High above the river bed was the canal aqueduct and the narrow ledge of the canal, perhaps five feet broad, our only pathway. A shrill voice came across the river, "Halt! Who comes there?" and we felt at last that we were in hearing of the enemy. Two men were sent across from Co. K, ordered to answer the summons, and fire, if they proved to be the enemy. They were captured, the enemy allowing them to pass, and sending them from the rear. Five men under a sergeant, followed by Capt. J. H. Baker with his company, then moving rapidly across, the cry, "Halt! Who comes there?" was repeated at quick intervals and receding as they advanced. Safely over, our regiment was then thrown across, and followed by our old friends and rival regiment, the gallant 25th, under Col. Rutledge; our regiment being under the command of Lt. Col. Harris. Five brave men with Spencer rifles could hold the pass, so scant was our footway. Safely across, this writer was given three companies and ordered to occupy an eminence to the right, while Col. Harris moved forward in line with the remaining companies of the regiment, supported by the 25th. Meeting no opposition and hearing an ambuscade, a halt was made, and Co. B., Capt. Geo. Duffy in command, was thrown forward to reconnoiter. Advancing a few hundred yards, Capt. Duffy espied a body of mounted troops, and halting his company, advanced fifty or sixty yards, and shouted to them, "Do you fight for the North or the South?" "We fight for the Union!" was the reply, accompanied by a rattling fire of carbines; and gallant Capt. Duffy fell, pierced by their shots, and as we thought, mortally wounded. The enemy retreated rapidly, leaving us to perform the work of destroying the canal, but before our drills had gone into the rocks, orders came for us to withdraw and recross into Virginia. We left Capt. Duffy at a farm house, believing that he could not live but a few hours and too badly wounded to be moved. A year afterwards, he hobbled into camp on crutches, to the delight of his old comrades. Brave spirit, we hope he still lives. Just as day was breaking the following night, we crossed the Potomac at Point of Rocks, the stream fast swelling, but not quite enough to prevent our boys from wading through.

Resting on the Virginia shore for a day or two, we moved westwardly to take part in the capture of Harper's Ferry.

We halted at the confluence of the Shenandoah with the Potomac, and threw cut pickets along the southern border to guard that point. I think we remained here a day or two, our artillery and Cook's Brigade occupying Loudon Heights, and actively participating in the investment of Harper's Ferry. We had a good rest here.

Beneath the hot midsummer sun, The troops had marched all day, And now beside a rippling stream Upon the grass they lay. Harper's Ferry having capitulated, we took our line of march towards Sharpsburg, fording the Shenandoah a few miles above its mouth. Reaching Shepherdstown, a village on the southern side of the Potomac, the 16th of September, we heard the guns of Boonsboro; D. H. Hill holding McClellan in check till Lee concentrated his troops. Wading the Potomac for the third time, we again planted the flag of the "Starry Cross" on Maryland soil.

At dusk we stacked arms and bivouacked about one mile from Sharpsburg, eating our scant rations for supper, little dreaming that on the morrow we would be participants in one of Lee's greatest victories, and witnesses to so great a carnival of death and suffering. Awakened from our sleep about three o'clock A. M., many a soldier's dream of a happy home and dear native bowers was broken for the last time. The dawn of day found us in line of battle, and as the gray-eyed morn peeped over the eastern hills the desultory picket fire became a rattle, and soon the forth-monthed cannon began to belch its thunder on our left. I remember distinctly going to the extreme right of our line, and as far as

the eye could reach no troops were visible; our regiment being on the right of our division, was the extreme right of Lee's whole line. The sun rose brightly as at Ansterlitz, and being in an open field we were struck with the beauty of the landscape. The roar of battle became more furious on our left till about nine o'clock, when we were ordered to support the extreme left, which was being sorely pressed and nearly out of ammunition. We moved by the left flank, Cook's Brigade leading, Ransom's following. An occasional shell would burst over us as we double-quickened in rear of our line, and we could see the battle between the artillery of the opposing forces. Bringing up the rear, our regiment was the last of the division to form line and charge. How the other regiments went in I do not know. I imagine that as each came up it double-quickened into line on the left company as the pivot company. Whatever evolution was performed, the tide of battle was turned and the enemy driven back half a mile or more farther than our original line. Our regiment being the very last to come to the rescue, and speed being imperative as we came under musketry fire, Capt. Rowland, Ransom's Adjutant-General, fearlessly riding up, shouted to Col. Harris, "Charge, Colonel, charge." We found ourselves under an enfilade fire, as well as from the left and rear, and facing the rear our men gave a yell and dashed forward in line, gradually wheeling to the right, rear in front. A new way of going into battle, to be sure—rear rank and file closers in front—but we had no time to maneuver or counter-march, the position of the enemy requiring us to charge in a direction at right angles from the other portion of the brigade. It would appear that he had reached our flank, and our brave comrades, charging in their front, had an able successor in the 24th Regiment as it brushed the enemy off their left flank. The 24th, in charging dashed over open ground, and then struck a field of full grown corn, surrounded by a stone fence. Unable to force their horses over the wall the field officers leaped from them, leaving them to the mercy of friend or foe and to the dangers of the pelting bullets the enemy were shooting at the gray line advancing on them. We pushed through the corn field, the bullets splitting the corn blades and crushing the stalks, making a peculiar noise we shall always remember.

Emerging from this field of nearly ripe grain we came to a freshly plowed ground, giving us a full view of the situation, the vision being unobstructed. We saw the blue coats giving away before us, not in flight, but stubbornly. To our right we saw one of their batteries on an eminence, turning their guns upon us. Halting at a fence to rest a moment and straighten our line, which we found to be at right angles to, rather than fronting the enemy, we made a right wheel and faced the battery, getting in point blank range. We remember the explosion of one shell at this juncture which killed and wounded nine of our men near the color-bearer; Philip M. White and John McNair, an uncle of our esteemed townsman, S. P. McNair, and Lieut. Downing, Company F, were killed, the other names I have forgotten. Col. Harris again ordered a charge and we came nearer to the battery, halting at a fence, knowing it to be useless to attempt to capture the battery without support and finding ourselves completely detached; not only our brigade but so far as we could see the whole army. No enemy was to be seen except the battery, and pausing to consider as to how we could best communicate with our brigade commander, coming from our left, and nearly midway between us and the battery, rode a solitary horseman, with a long feather in his hat, who seemed not to discover us. The gunners turned their guns upon him and enveloped horse and rider in dust and smoke from bursting shells in and over the newly-plowed ground over which they came. Seeing some of our men aim at him, they were ordered not to fire on so brave a man, though we took him to be on the other side. Just then he espied us, and riding up, asked to see the commanding officer, Col. Harris responded, when he said to him: "Colonel, in the scope of yonder woods," pointing to our front and a little to

the left, "is a body of troops; charge them and drive them out." The Colonel replied, "I don't obey commands unless I know from whom they come," when the horseman replied, "I am Gen. J. E. B. Stuart, my cavalry force is guarding the flank, and these woods are too dense for my horsemen to charge them; and I want you to charge them and drive them back." Col. Harris replied, "General, we have not more than 300 men," and until then I did not realize how many of our brave men had fallen. "Your force is sufficient, Colonel, and I will help you lead it," Harris shouted, "Charge those goods, boys!" and we jumped the fence and dashed towards the woods, led by Stuart and Harris, equally brave.

The enemy fired and fled, offering but feeble resistance. Going through the woods to the edge near the enemy, we saw no enemy save the battery, which again turned its guns upon us, and being in closer range they fired upon us with grape and canister.

Gen. Stuart having retired to his command, and finding the shots from the enemy were thinning our ranks and some sharpshooters in ambush were picking them off, we withdrew to a ravine a few paces to the rear for protection, this position being under shelter of the woods and being a strong one in case of attack. Not long afterwards a section of our batteries, we think sent by Stuart, came up on our left and a little in front, just beyond the woods and opened on the battery, which continued its fire on us.

Brave boys they were who manned those guns, but the superior position of the enemy and the greater number of pieces, soon disabled the two guns and almost annihilated men and horses, completely silencing their fire. The Federal battery again turned its guns upon us, doing some deadly work. I remember that it was about this time that John J. McNeill, of Co. G, received his death wound from a fragment of shell piercing his side.

In a dilemma as well as a rayne we were at loss what to do, to move forward or retreat, being entirely detached and receiving no orders. We saw a courier, Ashley Devane, of Gen. Ransom's staff, approaching us from our right, but we saw his horse fall from a shot and the rider was lost to view in the smoke and dust.

From the extreme right we became the extreme left of the Sharpsburg line of battle, an unusual experience; but not more so than being led by the great cavalryman, J. E. B. Stuart. It is the calm that precedes the storm, and for a few moments there was a lull in the battle which had been continuous from left to center since daylight. About 3 o'clock A. P. Hill came up on the right and opened simultaneously with forty pieces of artillery and charged. The rattle of musketry now became a roar along the whole line and the roar of artillery became deafening thunder.

Then shook the hills with thunder given, Then rushed the steeds to battle driven, And louder than the bolts of heaven, Far flashed the red artillery. At last we heard the Confederate yell; we knew what that meant—the bayonet and advance; and the noise of battle told us that they were driving everything before them. Stepping out from the woods, I could see in the distance to our right columns of the enemy moving into battle. We counted thirteen regiments as they marched in line of battle. They did not falter, and I could not but admire their steadiness and good alignment; though I do not think they were as yet under fire. They moved, I thought, more slowly than our men in going to battle. From my idea of the position of these troops I saw, they were assaulting our own division. I shall not attempt a line of sentiment in this paper, or to tell of the horrors or pomp and circumstance of glorious war. I am only endeavoring to give a truthful statement of what I saw of the battle of Sharpsburg. We took no further part in the conflict—fired not another shot. We remained in the woods where Stuart left us, and withdrawing at night to find our brigade halted by Stuart's videttes as we came in, and with difficulty made them believe we were Lee's army.

Our ambulance corps with their stretchers did good service in caring for our wounded. I remember one

heroic soul whose life blood was fast ebbing away, saying to them, "don't take me, boys, I'll soon be out of pain. Carry those whose life you can save." Brave private soldiers who fought without mention, who died without fear, I salute you forever! Remaining in line the following day we withdrew with the army that night to Southern soil, crossing the Potomac the fourth time.

The next day I met many friends whom I had not seen since the opening of the strife. I saw many Wilmingtonians and heard the fate of many. If my memory is not treacherous, 'twas here at Shepherdstown I met the late A. H. VanBokkelen, whose handsome and manly son received his death wound at Sharpsburg.

When but an idle boy in the happy long ago I played around the Rock Spring and drank of its historic waters; containing a love powder, so to speak, in solution. I feel endeared to the Wilmington boys who drank at the same fountain, and commended to others by its waters, Willie Parsley, Bob Calder, Jimmie Wright, John Dunham, John Barry, Willie Winstar, Wm. Quince, Fred Moore, and others, the flowers of this city by the sea. Wilmington's best, truest and bravest gave their lives to the cause.

"Bring flowers to decorate the graves, Where Wilmington has laid her braves, With all their country's wishes blest, The martyred heroes calmly rest. They bravely fought, they nobly fell, And fame thro' coming years shall tell Their noble deeds, their daring life, Their stern resolve to do or die."

My friend, Col. Hall, after this sketch was written, handed me a volume of the official reports of the battle of Sharpsburg. In the interest of truth I found it necessary to make a correction—for none was needed. I will mention, to show that the 24th Regiment did its duty, the official records show more casualties than any other of our brigade in the battle of Sharpsburg.

I see that Col. Hall is mentioned in the general's report for his courage and gallantry while commanding his brigade on that memorable day. Time has dealt very gently with him, as his upright and manly form this day attests, and as a member of the Army of Northern Virginia from first to last, I can truthfully say that the most gallant deed I ever witnessed was by a Wilmingtonian. Need I tell you it was Col. Hall, in front of the 46th Regiment marching down Marye's Heights, at the battle of Fredericksburg, when the storm of shot and shell surpassed anything ever witnessed on this continent.

My task is done, and I trust that the dark cloud of war will never again darken our history, but that henceforth we shall have peace on earth and good will toward men. A few more years, two decades perhaps, and there will be no Veterans' Association; the very last one of us will have been gathered to his fathers. If we meet to fight our battles o'er and yearly meet to grasp the hand which surely grows thinner and palmer day by day, it is in no spirit of hate to those who were our enemies, but of love for ourselves that impels us to assemble. If any are so base as to bear us malice still, to them we say, be content and curb your wrath, for soon, ah, too soon, I fear, the objects of your hate will be numbered among the things and personages of the past, and history must protect our memory.

T. D. LOTT, Formerly Major 24th N. C. T.