National Tribune.

"To care for him who has borne the battle, and for his widow and orphans.

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BLOODY ROUND TOP.

The Key to the Position at the Battle of Gettysburg.

GENERAL G. K. WARREN.

Death of Weed, O'Rorke, Vincent and Hazlett.

THE HEROIC DEFENSE.

Details of the Occupation and Defense of Little Round Top.

[*By Adjutant Farley, 140th N. Y. Inf.*]

The following letter and accompanying inclosure from General G. K. Warren will be read with interest by his host of friends in the Army of the Potomac:

NEWPORT, R. I., Dec. 6, 1867.

Major-General A. A. HUMPHREYS,
Chief of Engineers, U. S. A.

DEAR GENERAL: There is an account of the circumstances attending the death of O'Rorke on the battle-field of Gettysburg on July 2, 1863, just published in the *Democrat and Chronicle* at Rochester, N. Y., that I have thought of sufficient interest to the members of our corps to cause me to secure copies for them, which I have sent to you for distribution.

O'Rorke was at the time first lieutenant of engineers and colonel of the One Hundred and Fortieth New York volunteers. He had been in command of the brigadeat Chancellorsville, but became second in this command on the assignment of General Weed. The writer of the narrative, Doctor Porter Farley, of Rochester, was adjutant of the regiment at that time. I have been in correspondence with him on the subject, and I believe the narrative to be correct.

I have always regarded O'Rourke's conduct on that day as heroic. I believe it was a time and place when it was most worthy to do what he did at the sacrifice of his life, and, from my knowledge of him, I believe he knew it was, and was fully conscious of his peril. He fearlessly died for his country, and fortunately it was in achieving a success of far-reaching importance.

Captain (or Doctor) Farley informs me of some incidents of his life that but heighten the effect of his death on the battle-field. He says: "He married, immediately after his graduation, a Miss Bishop. This was a consummation of a boy and girl love affair of years standing. He was home but a few days at the time. He saw his wife again in the winter of 1862-3, when he had a ten days' leave. I don't think he was with his wife a month in all after he was married. He left no children.

"Both he and his wife were Roman Catholics, though I never heard him refer to the subject in any way. Very soon after his death his wife renounced the world and entered the convent at Manhattanville, N. Y. She is now Mother Superior in charge of the convent in Detroit, Mich.

"O'Rorke is buried in the Catholic cemetery, on a hill overlooking this city (Rochester). A rather modest headstone marks his grave. In the same cemetery is buried George Ryan, our second colonel, who was killed that Sunday morning, the 8th of May, 1864, near Spottsylvania."

I well remember Ryan, too, and his temporary grave under an apple tree. Alongside of him we buried three other gallant fellows, commanders of regiments or battalions.

If agreeable to you, I would like to have a copy of this letter sent with a copy of the newspaper to each officer of the corps.

Yours, very sincerely, G. K. WARREN.

CAPTAIN FARLEY'S ACCOUNT OF THE BATTLE.

On Wednesday, July 1, 1863, the Fifth Corps, of which our regiment formed a part, having that morning crossed the line dividing the States of Maryland and Pennsylvania, halted about the middle of the afternoon within sight of the town of Hanover.

All the country through which we that day passed had been overrun by the rebel cavalry. The inhabitants hailed the Army of the Potomac as their deliverers from a threatened wholesale desolation. The day before our arrival there had been quite a lively cavalry fight at Hanover. We came in sight of the town at about 3 p. m. and halted in an open field just beyond its suburbs. Our rest, however, was but short. News soon reached us of heavy fighting which had that day taken place some fourteen miles to the westward, at the town then insignificant, but now known to fame as Gettysburg. The only particulars of the action which we could learn were that the First Corps had been engaged and that General Reynolds, its commander, had been killed.

At 6 o'clock that evening we were in motion again, making all possible speed toward Gettysburg, the point upon which the entire army was then concentrating.

ON THE MARCH TOWARDS GETTYSBURG.

This was campaigning under circumstances entirely different from any of our former experiences. We were on the soil of a loyal State and were hastening to meet a presumptuous foe who had audaciously invaded it. The kindly, anxious interest with which the country women and children gazed upon us as they stood at their gates while we marched by, and the alacrity with which they furnished water and food to those who needed it, were incentives to better feelings than those engendered by the sulky faces and contemptuous treatment with which we had been so familiar in our Virginia marches. I have heard and read many stories of the meanness with which the Pennsylvanians treated the Union soldiers during the Gettysburg campaign; of the parsimony which prompted them to charge and take money for water and outrageous prices for food furnished to men whose wants were extreme, but justice compels me to say that I never saw anything of it. On the contrary, I witnessed the exhibition of a great deal of liberality and was the recipient of it in my own person. Doubtless some of the shameful stories we have heard were true; but I feel very certain that the miscreants who were guilty of such meanness were exceptions among the many, and that a few poor, shriveled souls were able by thus abusing common decency to bring reproach upon a kind-hearted and grateful community.

We pushed on till 1 o'clock in the morning of Thursday, July 2, and then halted and lay down to rest in the road. Overcome by fatigue the men were asleep almost as soon as they touched the ground. To how many of the poor fellows did this prove the last sleep from which they were ever to arise.

At about 4.30 o'clock we were roused again, and shaking off as best we could the terrible drowsiness which oppressed us, moved still further westward. After marching about two hours we halted, and the regiments of our brigade formed in column by divisions in the rear of other troops who were deployed in lines of battle, with all dispositions made as if in the presence of the enemy.

A HOT PLACE FOR COWARDS.

It was while waiting here that an orderly brought to Colonel O'Rorke a circular addressed by General Meade to the army. O'Rorke and I were both mounted and standing in front of the column. He glanced over the paper, handed it to me and told me to read it to the regiment. It was as follows:

CIRCULAR.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
June 30, 1863.

The commanding general requests that previous to the engagement soon expected with the enemy, corps and all other commanding officers will address their troops, explaining to them briefly the immense issues involved in this struggle. The enemy are on our soil. The whole country now looks anxiously to this army to deliver it from the presence of the foe. Our failure to do so will leave us no such welcome as the swelling of millions of hearts with pride and joy at our success would give to every soldier in the army. Homes, firesides and domestic altars are involved. The army has fought well heretofore. It is believed that it will fight more desperately and bravely than ever, if it is addressed in fitting terms.

Corps and other commanders are authorized to order the instant death of any soldier who fails in his duty at this hour.

By command of Major-General Meade.

S. WILLIAMS,
Assistant Adjutant-General.

West Pointers are not habitual speech-makers, and our colonel was no exception to the rule; but the order just read explicitly directed all commanding officers to "address their troops, explaining to them briefly the immense issues involved in this struggle," and in obedience to it, then and there sitting on his little brown horse in front of the regimental colors, dressed as we all so well remember him in his soft felt hat, long white leather gloves and military cape, Pat O'Rorke made the first and only speech which he ever addressed to his regiment. It was short and to the point and I regret that I cannot repeat the whole of it, but his closing words I remember very well, when he said, "I call on the file-closers to do their duty, and if there is a man this day base enough to leave his company, let him die in his tracks—shoot him down like a dog." Those were the words of a man who meant to do his duty, and was resolved that everyone under his command should do the same. The episode was dramatic to the highest degree. The sentiment and the occasion were not such as to elicit boisterous applause; but a low murmur of approval throughout his audience showed that as a body they were ready to follow wherever a brave man would lead.

MOVING INTO POSITION ON THE LEFT.

The whole army, with the exception of the Sixth Corps, had by this time arrived upon the field. In the disposition of the troops our corps was held as a reserve within the curved range of hills whose crests formed our chosen line of battle. During the day we were moved from place to place according as different parts of the grand line seemed more exposed or threatened. Thus early in the morning we were behind the extreme right; later in the day we were massed on Rock Creek, near the point where it is crossed by the Baltimore pike. This position was in rear of our main line, which has generally been described as shaped like a horseshoe with its convexity turned toward the enemy, but which may more properly be compared to a fish-hook, its shank beginning on the northern slope of Round Top and running almost due north along the crest of Little Round Top and Cemetery Ridge, its curve beginning at the cemetery and its barb and point represented by Culp's Hill.

Late in the afternoon we were ordered to move to the left of the line, where the booming of artillery admonished us that the bloody work of the day had begun in earnest.

We soon reached the sloping ground where the ascent began on our side up the ridge beyond which the battle at that time was raging. I have said that we could hear the artillery, though it still had a distant sound, but now the rifle balls coming over the hill began to whistle through the air high above us, and in the woods to our left on the hillside we saw the surgeons at work over the wounded; and yet, strange to say, we could but very indistinctly hear the sound of musketry. It must have been owing to the intervening hill or the direction of the wind, or both causes combined, for we were even then upon the very verge of the battle, and when we mounted the ridge two or three minutes later its full fury burst upon us.

GENERAL WARREN ORDERS THE 140TH NEW YORK TO LITTLE ROUND TOP.

The First division of our corps, commanded by Brigadier General Barnes, had preceded us. Our division, the Second, under Brigadier General R. B. Ayres, followed it. Our brigade, under Brigadier General Stephen H. Weed, led the division, and though my recollection of the order in which the regiments were marching does not agree with that of other officers present, I think that our regiment was the rear one of the brigade and that the leading regiments of our brigade were just passing over that slightly elevated ground north of Little Round Top when down its slope on our left, accompanied by a single mounted officer and an orderly, rode General G. K. Warren, our former brigade commander, then acting as General Meade's chief engineer. Warren came straight toward the head of the regiment, where I was riding with the colonel. He called out to O'Rorke, beginning to speak while still some eight or ten rods from us, that he wanted us to come up there, that the enemy were advancing unopposed up the opposite side of the hill down which he had just come, and he wanted our regiment to meet them. He was evidently greatly excited and spoke in his usual impulsive style. O'Rorke answered: "General Weed is ahead and expects me to follow him." "Never mind that," said Warren, "bring your regiment up here and I will take the responsibility." It was a perplexing situation, but without hesitating O'Rorke turned to the left and followed the officer who had been riding with Warren, while Warren himself rode rapidly down the stony hill, whether in the direction from which he had just come or to overtake the rest of our brigade I cannot say, but evidently to find and order up more troops. The cause for this haste is graphically described by General Warren himself in a letter which he kindly wrote me under date of July 13, 1872, from which I here take the liberty to quote. He says:

A LETTER FROM GENERAL WARREN.

"Just before the action began in earnest on July 2d, I was with General Meade near General Sickles, whose troops seemed very badly disposed on that part of the field. At my suggestion, General Meade sent me to the left to examine the condition of affairs, and I continued on till I reached Little Round Top. There were no troops on it and it was used as a signal station. I saw that this was the key to the whole position, and that our troops in the woods in front of it could not see the ground in front of them, so that the enemy would come upon them before they would be aware of it. The long line of woods on the west side of the Emmettsburg road (which road was along a ridge) furnished an excellent place for the enemy to form out of sight, so I requested the captain of a rifle battery just in front of the Little Round Top to fire a shot into these woods. He did so, and as the shot went whistling through the air the sound of it reached the enemy's troops and caused every one to look in the direction of it. This motion revealed to me the glistening of gun barrels and bayonets of the enemy's line of battle, already formed, and far outflanking the position of any of our troops, so that the line of his advance from his right to Little Round Top was unopposed. I have been particular in telling this, as the discovery was intensely thrilling to my feelings and almost appalling. I immediately sent a hastily written dispatch to General Meade to send a division, at least, to me, and General Meade directed the Fifth Army Corps to take position there. The battle was already beginning to rage at the Peach Orchard, and before a single man reached Round Top the whole line of the enemy moved on us in splendid array, shouting in the most confident tones. While I was still all alone with the signal officer, the musket balls began to fly around us and he was about to fold up his flags and withdraw, but remained at my request and kept waving them in defiance. Seeing troops going out on the Peach Orchard road, I rode down the hill, and, fortunately, met my old brigade. General Weed, commanding it, had already passed the point, and I took the responsibility to detach Colonel O'Rorke, the head of whose regiment I struck, who, on hearing my few words of explanation about the position, moved at once to the hill-top. About this time First Lieutenant Charles E. Hazlett, of the Fifth artillery, with his battery of rifled cannon, arrived. He comprehended the situation instantly and planted a gun on the summit of the hill. He spoke to the effect that though he could do little execution on the enemy with his guns, he could aid in giving confidence to the infantry, and that his battery was of no consequence whatever compared with holding the position. He stayed there till he was killed.

SLAUGHTER OF U. S. TROOPS IN THE PEACH ORCHARD.

"I did not see Vincent's brigade come up, but I suppose it was about this time they did, and coming up behind me through the woods and taking post to the left, their proper place, I did not see them. The full force of the enemy was now sweeping the Third Army Corps from its untenable position, and no troops nor any re-enforcements could maintain it. It was the dreadful misfortune of the day that any re-enforcements went to that line, for all alike—Third Corps, Second Corps and Fifth Corps were driven from it with great loss. The earnest appeals for support drew, I suppose, the troops of the Fifth Corps away from their intended position—that is, Little Round Top—out on the road to the Peach Orchard, and so it was that the Fifth Corps reached this vital point in such small detachments.

"I was wounded with a musket ball while talking with Lieutenant Hazlett on the hill, but not seriously, and seeing the position saved, while the whole line to the right and front of us was yielding and melting away under the enemy's fire and advance, I left the hill to rejoin General Meade, near the center of the field, where a new crisis was at hand."

So much, as explaining what Warren had seen when he came riding down on the head of our regiment and detached us so unexpectedly from the rest of our brigade. And now to resume the narrative of the part we took in the struggle which ensued for the possession of Little Round Top.

"FORWARD!" UP THE SLOPE TO THE CREST.

We turned off the road to our left and rushed along the wooded, rocky, eastern slope of Little Round Top, ascending it while at the same time moving towards its southern extremity. It was just here that some of the guns of Hazlett's battery came rapidly up and plunged directly through our ranks, the horses being urged to frantic efforts by the whips of their drivers and the cannoneers assisting at the wheels, so great was the effort necessary to drag the guns and caissons up the ragged hillside.

As we reached the crest a never-to-be-forgotten scene burst upon us. A great basin lay before us full of smoke and fire, and literally swarming with riderless horses and fighting, fleeing and pursuing men. The air was saturated with the sulphurous fumes of battle and was ringing with the shouts and groans of the combatants. The wild cries of charging lines, the rattle of musketry, the booming of artillery and the shrieks of the wounded were the orchestral accompaniments of a scene like very hell itself—as terrific as the warring of Milton's fiends in Pandemonium. The whole of Sickle's corps, and many other troops which had been sent to its support in that ill-chosen hollow, were being slaughtered and driven before the impetuous advance of Longstreet. But fascinating as was this terrible scene we had no time to spend upon it. Bloody work was ready for us at our very feet.

"DOWN THIS WAY, BOYS."

Round Top, a conical hill several hundred feet in height, lay just to the south of us, and was separated from Little Round Top, on whose crest we were now moving, by a broad ravine leading down into the basin where the great fight was raging. Right up this ravine, which offered the easiest place of ascent, a rebel force, outflanking all our troops in the plain below, was advancing at the very moment when we reached the crest of the hill. Vincent's brigade, of the First division of our corps, had come up through the woods on the left and were just getting into position, and the right of their line had opened fire in the hallow on our left when the head of our regiment came over the hill. As soon as we reached the crest bullets came flying in among us. We were moving with the right in front and not a musket was loaded, a fact which Warren of course knew nothing about when he rushed us up there. The enemy were coming up from our right and to face them would bring our file-closers in front. The order, "On the right, by file into line," would have brought us into proper position; but there was no time to execute it, not even time to allow the natural impulse which manifested itself on the part of the men to halt and load the instant we received the enemy's fire. O'Rorke did not hesitate a moment. "Dismount," said he to me, for the ground before us was too rough to ride over. We sprang from our horses and gave them to the sergeant-major. O'Rourke shouted, "Down this way, boys," and following him we rushed down the rocky slope with all the same moral effect upon the rebels, who saw us coming, as if our bayonets had been fixed and we ready to charge upon them. Coming abreast of Vincent's brigade, and taking advantage of such shelter as the huge rocks lying about there afforded, the men loaded and fired, and in less time than it takes to write it the onslaught of the rebels was fairly checked, and in a few minutes the woods in front of us were cleared except of the dead and wounded. Such of the rebels as had approached so near as to make escape almost impossible dropped their guns, threw up their hands, and upon a slight slackening of our fire rushed in upon us and gave themselves up as prisoners, while those not so near took advantage of the chance, left them, and retreated in disorder.

DEATH OF THE GALLANT O'RORKE.

The fire for a few minutes was very rapid and the execution on both sides was fearful. Captain Starks, of the leading company, received four wounds, but with splendid pluck stayed by his men till the affair was over. Captain Sibley, of the second company, was shot through both legs, and lay perfectly helpless till carried off. O'Rorke exposed himself with the greatest gallantry, not taking the least advantage of the partial shelter which the rocks afforded. He was shot in the neck and dropped instantly dead without a word. Captain Spies, of company B, was shot through the body and desperately hurt. Lieutenant Chas. Klein of the same company, and Lieutenant Hugh McGraw of company K, were both wounded in the leg and both died in consequence. Of the enlisted men there were twenty-five killed and about eighty-four wounded. Klein and McGraw died, Spies and Sibley were so badly hurt that they never could rejoin us, and Starks, with his four wounds, all of which were slight, fully recovered and after a few weeks rejoined us, to meet a soldier's death the following spring in the fight near Spottsylvania Court-House.

Our losses were much more severe than they would have been if our muskets had been loaded and if the regiment had been formed in proper line of battle before it rushed over the crest of the hill. This remark must not be construed as reflecting on any one. Warren did not know that our guns were empty, and if he had known it, or if he or O'Rorke had halted the column for the purpose of loading, it would have caused a delay which might and probably would have been disastrous beyond all calculation.

THE KEY OF THE BATTLE-FIELD SAVED.

In a word, Gettysburg might have been the greatest disaster of the war, and might have turned the scales in favor of the rebellion. This may seem an extravagant statement; but every one who was there will corroborate the assertion that the One Hundred and Fortieth regiment reached the crest of Little Round Top in the very nick of time and before any other troops were there, except a part of Hazlett's rifled battery, and that if we had not reached it first, thirty or sixty seconds later Hood's Texas brigade, which was the force we met, would have seized the hill which was the key to the whole Union line. The disorganized remnant of Sickles' routed corps would have been surrounded on three sides. Hazlett's battery would have been taken and its guns turned upon the Union troops in the field below. The principal ammunition train, which was parked about half a mile in the rear, would have been lost, the general line of battle would have been doubled up, and a disastrous defeat would have been almost inevitable. Vincent's brigade of the First division of our corps, which was just getting into position on Round Top still further to the left, might have done something to avert this disaster; but to do it they would have had to change their front under fire and on ground the most unsuitable for such an evolution. We of the One Hundred and Fortieth regiment are so self-gratulatory as to think that the arrival of the Monitor in Hampton Roads just when and as she did was a circumstance no more fortunate for the Union cause than was our timely arrival to fill the gap just when and as we did on Little Round Top at Gettysburg.

That was our first really bloody engagement, and in all the subsequent experiences of the regiment upon many other desperate fields, the service there rendered upon Little Round Top must be regarded as the supreme event in its existence.

DEATH OF VINCENT AND HAZLETT.

Vincent's brigade on our left fought splendidly and lost heavily. Vincent himself was killed. Hazlett's battery, which was stationed on the crest above and behind us, had not been able to do any execution upon the force which actually assailed us, but it played upon the rebel masses who were driving Sickles' corps in the plain below, and after our engagement was over it still kept firing upon any considerable body of rebels that remained in sight. What their losses had been during the heat of the engagement I cannot say, but after our fight was over and we had secured pretty good shelter behind the rocks on the western slope their cannoneers were much exposed and many fell by the bullets of the sharpshooters, who seemed swarming in the tree-tops and behind the rocks over in the direction of the Peach Orchard. Man after man fell under this murderous sharpshooting, while those thus exposed were serving their guns directed upon an enemy not engaged in an attack upon our immediate front. For a better understanding of the part which this battery took in the action of that afternoon, it may be remarked that they did little or nothing in repelling the assault of the Texan brigade which fell upon us. Our men and the enemy were at too close quarters for that, and the nature of the ground did not permit the artillery to be of any immediate service to us. But Hazlett got his guns into position just at the time when Sickles' corps was falling back in great disorder before an overwhelming force, and it was against these advancing and for the moment victorious lines that he poured in an effective fire. Here, too, he met his death in a manner dramatic to the last degree and yet to be described.

WEED RECEIVES A MORTAL WOUND.

When Warren detached and sent us up the hill, word was sent to our brigade commander, General Stephen H. Weed, notifying him of the fact, he having gone at the head of the brigade directly to the front to the support of Sickles' corps. Upon receiving this word, Weed brought back the regiments with him as hastily as possible and put them in position to our right along the crest of Little Round Top, not however arriving till our bloody affair was over. But the sharpshooters were still doing their best against Hazlett's gunners, and it was while standing among them that Weed received a mortal wound. Believing that he was about to die, he was in the very act of committing his last messages to his friend Hazlett, who stooped over him, when there came the whiz and thud of another bullet as it sunk into Hazlett's brain, and that brave artilleryman fell a corpse across the body of his dying friend.

Thus had fallen our brigadier, the commander of the battery which we supported, and our gallant young colonel. In honor of the first of these three the name of Little Round Top has been changed, and it is now known as Weed's Hill.

The General was carried at once behind the shelter of the rock, and was soon taken in an ambulance to the farmhouse of Louis A. Bushman, which, as well as his barns and outhouses, had been taken possession of and was being used as our division hospital. Weed suffered intensely, but for some time after he was hurt was entirely conscious and able to communicate the messages which he had begun to give to Hazlett. This he did to Lieutenant William H. Crennell, quartermaster of our regiment, who with the other quartermasters of our brigade had served during this campaign as Weed's aids. Among other things, Weed asked that when he was dead the ring which he wore might be taken from his finger and, with the pocketbook containing his private letters, be carried to the young lady to whom he was engaged to be married. As the father of that young lady has for many years been a public character it may not be inappropriate to state that she was the daughter of Simon Cameron, of Pennsylvania.

"AS DEAD AS JULIUS CÆSAR."

Weed's bravery even unto death, and his bluff, outspoken manner, were well exemplified by the clearness with which he made his dying requests, well knowing they were such, and by the emphasis with which he spoke, particularly in a reply which almost epitomises the character of the man, made to Crennell when he said to him, "General, I hope you are not so very badly hurt." Said Weed, "I'm as dead a man as Julius Cæsar." He soon became delirious and died at about 9 o'clock that evening.

During the fight our surgeons, Drs. Dean and Lord, had been stationed but a few rods in rear of the regiment, just over the crest of the hill. Here they gave the wounded such immediate attention as they needed before being sent to the division hospital at Bushman's farm. To this place, when the fight was over, Sergeant Wright and three other men of company A carried our young colonel and there laid him on the ground. I went with them. He had fallen instantly dead. A bloody froth on each side of his neck showed the fatal track of the bullet.

BRAVE AS A LION; GENTLE AS A GIRL.

Up to that time in my life I had never felt a grief so sharply, nor realized the significance of death so well as then, when the wild excitement of our fight was over and I saw O'Rorke lying there so pale and peaceful. To me and all of us he had seemed so near the beau ideal of a soldier and a gentleman, all that he had been and the bright promise of what he was to be was so fresh in our minds, and now, in an instant, the fatal bullet had cut short the chapter of that fair life. I choked with grief as I stood beside his lifeless form. I had known and loved him well, and in these last few weeks better than ever, my position as his adjutant naturally leading to intercourse of the most familiar kind, as day by day we ate our soldier's fare together, and often at night slept with the same blanket covering us. For him to die was to me like losing a brother, and that brother almost the perfection of the manly graces. What a blow was such a death to the young wife and loving family who far away waited for the news from Gettysburg; what was it to us of that regiment whose fortunes he had shared, whose wants and wellfare he had watched over, and who had been the witnesses of the last gallant effort of his life when inspiring every one who heard him with an enthusiasm which only master minds can impart, he started his men with their empty muskets full in the face of a withering fire, and springing to their front in the wild "rapture of the strife," fell dead among them.

It was only natural that his so sudden death should most deeply affect us. But time and place alike forbade the comfort which comes to the heart when it yields to its grief.

I took from his pockets his watch and some trifles, pulled from his hands the long gloves which he had worn and slipped them in his belt, helped compose his supple form in fitting way, collected the men who had brought him and others to the surgeon's station, and taking a last look at poor O'Rorke went back to the regiment.

Sturgis at Mossy Creek.

FORT MAGINNIS, MONT., April 13, 1883.

To the Editor NATIONAL TRIBUNE.

SIR: I have, with much interest, read your accounts, published in THE TRIBUNE of February 8th and 15th, of the brilliant campaign of the cavalry corps of the army of the Ohio, commanded by General S. D. Sturgis, in East Tennessee, during the winter of 1863-64.

I was General Sturgis' acting assistant adjutant-general at the time, and in view of the apparent exceptions taken by General Elliott as to the fact that General Sturgis commanded on the field at Mossy Creek, December 29, 1863, I beg to add my testimony, in order that none of the glory belonging to my old chief, for what was accomplished, should be belittled or that he should be deprived of any portion of it. General Sturgis, as I have already stated, was the commanding general on the field at Mossy Creek, and directed the engagement, in person, from its very beginning to its close. In support of this, I send you an old war relic, viz: An original copy of the order organizing the cavalry corps of the Army of the Ohio, which made General Elliott General Sturgis' subordinate.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE OHIO,
KNOXVILLE, TENN., Dec. 13, 1863.

General Field Orders, No. 41.

The exigencies of the service requires that all the cavalry forces in this department should be consolidated ihto a separate corps. Officers in command of divisions, brigades and detached regiments of cavalry, will report to General Sturgis who has been placed in command by orders from these headquarters. General Sturgis will report directly to these headquarters.

By command of Major-General Foster.

JOHN F. ANDERSON,
Major and A. D. C.

The letter quoted by General Elliott, signed by General Sturgis, was written by him in acknowledgment of the affair of La Grange with the enemy, which occurred between New Market and Mossy Creek, December 24, 1863, where General Sturgis came up while La Grange was falling back; after providing for Garrard and Campbell, then in much trouble, and which General Elliott describes as "the affair *near* Mossy Creek," but had no reference whatever to the battle of Mossy Creek fought *five* days later, on the right bank of that stream by General Surgis. If I am wrong, it would be very easy to make the correction by either General Elliott or General Sturgis publishing the entire letter, showing dates and circumstances calling it forth.

The letter of General Thomas can hardly have any bearing on this controversy as testimony The letter was written nearly seventeen months after the occurrences related, and is purely of personal interest to General Elliott. General Thomas was in another department, commanding an entirely separate army, many miles away; he could, therefore, only have written it under some *peculiar* circumstances, since official reports of all operations by subordinates were forwarded by General Sturgis to the commanding general of the Army of the Ohio, General Foster, his superior.

Very respectfully, yours,

WM. C. RAWALLE,
Captain Second U. S. cavalry, &c.

PITTSBURG LANDING.

The Historic Battle Ground of Shiloh Revisited.

THE CEMETERY.

The Spectre Regiments Drill on the Brink of the Bluff.

THE SPRING.

Ancient Landmarks Still Exist After Twenty-one Years.

[*By C. A. Kuhl, 14th Ill. Inf.*]

Several vain attempts have been made to organize excursions to the great battle-fields of West Tennessee. The remoteness of most of these historic fields from ordinary routes of travel makes it seem difficult to reach them except at great expense of time and money, and thus far the visitors have been from the near neighborhood only.

Having long felt a great desire to visit Pittsburg Landing, and despairing of being able to go in company of a large number of veterans, I set out alone to spend a vacation in once more roaming over the old battle-field.

At Evansville, Ind., I embarked on the Tennessee River packet "Clyde," Captain Duncan, and a day's ride brought me to Fort Henry, which is the first point of interest to those who were engaged in the campaign of 1862. The old fort is unrecognizable. Immense cottonwood trees have grown up along the river bank and, while the earthworks along the river are plainly visible, a large cotton field has obliterated the rest of the fort. From Fort Henry to Pittsburg Landing the country has changed very little. Savannah, the place where General Grant established his headquarters before the battle, has become quite a thriving town, and a large business is done there. I met several of the oldest inhabitants and found their conversation replete with reminiscences of Grant's stay at their town. In most of their stories, however, the interest centered around and in the guard-house.

THE NATIONAL CEMETERY.

It was by the early light of Thursday, April 5th, that I caught sight, from the steamer's deck, of the tall flag-staff in the cemetery at Pittsburg Landing. The staff stands on the spot, almost, where the old log hospital once stood, and around it are arranged, in regimental groups, the remains of the soldiers who were killed in the battles and skirmishes and who died in the hospitals between Fort Henry and Florence, Ala. I was met at the Landing by Captain L. J. Doolittle, superintendent of the cemetery and a veteran of the Ninety-sixth Illinois infantry. After a short stay at the Captain's beautiful home, just outside the cemetery walls, I took a stroll through the cemetery. After entering through the massive iron gate and passing an immense cannon set on end, I stood in the midst of fallen heroes. The first grave is that of little Harry Burke, of Ohio, better known as the "Drummer Boy of Shiloh." On the 30th of May of each year the Union people from far and wide assemble here, to the number of many thousands, to decorate the graves. Do you wonder when I tell you that on these occasions the little hero's grave is fairly smothered in flowers? A little farther on are two iron slabs, one of which contains these lines:

"The muffled drum's sad roll has beat
The soldier's last tattoo.
No more on life's parade shall meet
The brave and fallen few."

The other slab contains this legend: "Established 1866. Interments, 3,590; known, 1,229; unknown, 2,361." All were Union soldiers, except four women, who lie buried under some beautiful evergreens, on the outside line of graves. These heroines lost their lives by disease while attending the wounded after the battle, but for some reason the War Department has refused to put headstones over their graves. Beautiful as this cemetery is by daylight, it has a solemnly weird look by night. The dark green grass and evergreens contrasted with the innumerable white headstones are calculated to make the visitor, if he is at all superstitious, think of spectres and ghosts. One of the boats on this river has a mate, a large, powerful man, whom neither threats nor entreaties can induce to go ashore here at night. He tremblingly relates how, one dark night, he saw several soldiers in full uniform come aboard the boat and disappear over the bow. He also strongly claims to have seen whole regiments of spirit soldiers drill on the brink of the bluff, and to have heard the hollow, solemn voices of the officers giving commands.

THE CONFEDERATE DEAD.

The Confederate dead remain where they were buried. A few years ago the leading men in this part of the country arranged an immense mass-meeting and barbacue at the spring, near the old Shiloh Church. Resolutions were passed, subscriptions raised and committees appointed to take up and reinter all the Confederate dead that could be found. Many thousand people came here from far and wide, and the undertaking would have been a grand success, but about noon a most terrible storm arose and dispersed the crowd. In attempting to get home a number of people, among them several children, were killed, and others badly hurt. This dampened the ardor of the projectors, and stopped, perhaps forever, the project of reintering the Confederate dead.

I spent two delightful days at Shiloh, the last being April 6th, the twenty-first anniversary of the fight, and I was during that time accompanied in my rambles by Captain Doolittle and Rev. Thomas Cotten, late chaplain of the One Hundred and Twenty-ninth Illinois infantry. Naturally enough, the first spot I wished to see was my own old camp ground, (that of the Fourteenth Illinois infantry,) and I found it without much trouble, for all the old camps are in a good state of preservation. There, in front of our quarters, is the old cotton field where we drilled and went through dress parade. Still plainly to be seen is our company well, now still two feet deep. Plainly visible are the circles of our Sibley tents, with here and there a tent-pin remaining. The most remarkable relic of the past is a tin cup I picked up in our company quarters. Although badly rusted, it is still plainly recognized as an army tin cup, and bears on the bottom the initials "J. L. A." rudely scratched on with a pointed instrument. It no doubt belonged to my old comrade, John L. Alver, of company A, and he is welcome to the relic if he is still alive.

RELICS OF THE BATTLEFIELD.

I very readily found the camps of Logan's, Prentiss' and Sherman's divisions, and where the ground has not been plowed up the field is still littered with the very slowly decaying débris of the army. The old field where General Hurlbut's headquarters were located was especially familiar to me. On account of a defective title it has no owner and has not been plowed up since the battle. The tent squares and circles, cess-pools, wells and bake-ovens are plainly visible, while innumerable tent-pins, camp-kettles, leather straps, cartridge boxes, canteens, shoes, beef bones, harness, camp stoves, bayonets and other war material cover the ground. I found several well-preserved fragments of army clothing, tin plates, cartridge boxes and brass shoulder-straps. The field where General Grant reviewed the army a few weeks before the battle is in cultivation and is now owned by Mr. Thomas Walker, who has lived here, grown well off, and raised a bright family since the battle.

Not far from Mr. Walker's plantation stands the stump of the tree under which General Albert S. Johnston died. Some one has planted a small evergreen tree there to mark the spot. Near the site of the old Shiloh Church I was shown one of the most remarkable landmarks of this historic field. It is the grave of a Confederate major, whom his comrades buried under a beautiful oak tree, then probably eighteen inches in diameter. A round place was cut smooth on the face of the tree and engraved thereon was the inscription, "T. B. Monroe, C. S. A., killed April 6th, 1862." The tree has since then grown in thickness fully six inches and the bark has gradually swelled out and over the tablet, so as to leave now only an aperture of about six inches in diameter, through which the old inscription is plainly visible.

IRON AND LEAD ABUNDANT.

Immense quantities of lead and iron are being gathered on the field. One merchant shipped last year over three thousand pounds of bullets, and the farmers put in a great deal of idle time gathering lead. On the day before my arrival some children found an unexploded shell, which they threw onto a pile of burning brush. While away at dinner the shell exploded, *after being buried twenty-one years.* It is needless to say that in my search for relics I avoided unexploded shells as I would the pest.

The large trees that were so badly scarred by shot and shell still bear the marks very plainly, but the small saplings were all killed and a new growth has taken their places. The spots where minie balls lodged are grown over, but over each bullet there is a slight raise and the bark is smoother than elsewhere, so they can easily be found.

The road cut into the bluff by Buell's army on Sunday night is still in good shape, although never used. Even the indentations made by the steamers in landing are plainly visible in the tough clay bank. Near the top of the hill on the Buell road stand a number of splendid beach trees, cut all over with the names of soldiers. I plainly read the following: "O. F. Smith, Co. D, 24th Missouri, 1862; A. J. Pummer, T. Donahoe, W. P. Dean, 6th La., 1861."

OLD SHILOH CHURCH.

The old Shiloh Church was torn down two years ago, and a neat frame church built in its place. It is needless to say that relic hunters have carried off every vestige of the old one. The new church is owned by the Southern M. E. Church, but to keep matters even the old (Northern) M. E. Church has a little chapel within half a mile of the former.

I quaffed a long, strong draught from the old Shiloh spring, and, sitting on a stump near its brink, I tried to discern in the ground the various deeply beaten paths that once led off to the numerous camps, and to hear the footfalls of the soldiers coming for water; but the paths are obliterated, and the only sound that greeted my ear was the creaking of an approaching cotton wagon on its way to the landing.

I shall never regret the trouble and expense of my visit to Pittsburg Landing. It would have been delightful to have had the company of a number of old veterans in my rambles over the ground, and I hope at no distant day to see a grand encampment of the Grand Army held on the old "Cloud field" at Shiloh.

PEKIN, ILL., April 12, 1883.

Peach Tree Creek.

RED CLOUD, NEB., April 3, 1883.

To the Editor NATIONAL TRIBUNE:

DEAR SIR: I have been reading "Atlanta," by General J. D. Cox, and wish to correct an error in his account of the battle of Peach Tree Creek. He says (on page 157) that the whole of the Confederate line of battle was now deployed, and did not reach Palmer's corps. His left brigade (Colonel Anson McCook's) assisted in repulsing the attack upon Williams' right, *but does not seem to have been itself assailed.* The italics are my own. My recollection of that day is that the left of McCook's brigade was very warmly assailed. The One Hundred and Fourth Illinois was posted on the left of the brigade and had partly finished works. A ravine ran between their right and the balance of the brigade line, which was somewhat retired. The rebels charged that part of the line, driving the two right companies of the One Hundred and Fourth from their works, and planting their colors on the works. Colonel McCook ordered me to tell the commanders of the Tenth and Twenty-first Wisconsin to charge forward from their places in the rear line of the brigade, drive the rebels out of the ravine and support the One Hundred and Fourth in defense of the works. Also, at the same time, to direct the Fifteenth Kentucky and Eighty-eighth Indiana, who occupied the front line of the brigade on the right, to fire by the left-oblique on the rebels in the ravine on their left front. These movements completely repulsed the rebels who were assaulting McCook's brigade. Lieutenant John Thomas, adjutant of the Second Ohio, who was acting as aid on the brigade staff, was killed while rallying the two right companies of the One Hundred and Fourth Illinois, who were driven back at this time.

I would very much like Colonel A. G. McCook, who is now in Congress, to give a full statement of the part taken by his brigade in the battle of Peach Tree Creek.

Yours, truly, W. B. RORY,
Late Lieut. and A. D. C. 1st Div.
Fourteenth Army Corps.

P. S. I should also have stated that the One Hundred and Fourth Illinois held the balance of their works, and that the rebel color-bearer, who planted his flag on their works, was killed and I think the colors captured.

W. B. R.