

GLOBE TAVERN.

A Soldier's Recollection of the Weldon Railroad, Aug. 18-21, '64.

By CORP. W. H. BUCKOCK THREAPLETON, Co. K, 85th Pa.

While Gen. Hancock was amusing the bulk of the Confederate army on the north bank of the James River, Gen. Warren with the Fifth Corps was withdrawn from the lines in front of Petersburg at 4 o'clock on the morning of Aug. 18, 1864, and by a route well away from the enemy's lines sent to seize and hold the Weldon Railroad at the Globe Tavern, some four or five miles south of Petersburg. Globe Tavern was known to the soldiers as the Yellow House, being a very prominent landmark of the vicinity.

The morning of the 18th was a beautiful morning the sun shining with its accustomed Southern brilliancy; but while it might have been fine weather for the buttermilk-buns and the coffee known to the cavalry, had nothing to do but ride along like gentlemen, looking for a scrap, and then leading the infantry fight it out, to the dough-boys who were doing the marching and carrying the equipment, 40 rounds, blanket, tent, and three days' rations, we failed to see where the beauty came in.

The day was a hot one (presumably there were things hotter than the atmosphere), and many of the men were overcome by the heat before we got into the fight. I was somewhat affected by the heat myself, but Dr. Hawkins gave me some cooling drink which was called spirits of lemon, or something like that, and it revived me so much that I was enabled to go into the battle and earn my \$16 a month and roast beef—when I could get it.

The first recollection that I have of the contest was when we formed line of battle in the cornfield east of the railroad. The First Division was in the woods hunting for the Johnnies, and as they were not hard to find the battle was on, brisk firing resounding from the woods in our front. Hearing this I called spirits of lemon, or something like that, and it revived me so much that I was enabled to go into the battle and earn my \$16 a month and roast beef—when I could get it.

The 85th Pa. at this time was commanded by a Major from another regiment, all our own field officers being absent from disabling wounds, and, unfortunately for us, that officer had a canteen full of commissary which did not all remain in the canteen, so when an Adj. Gen. came orders were being read, and the regiment he distorted the instructions into the unilitary order to "stack arms and lay low for black ducks." He was relieved and Capt. Jacob Houder, of Co. H, was placed in command.

After the usual number of preliminary facings and marchings in and through the woods, throwing up light breastworks every time we stopped, we laid out our picket, when the regiment was sent on picket, with no relief, at the extreme right of the line. I will remember that I sat on a small stump with my gun between my knees, and every half hour or so the officer in charge would come to inspect the line, and as I sat there, every once in a while sleep would get the best of me, then I would nearly fall off my perch, which would rouse me up again.

We had orders not to fire unless attacked; but the rebels kept up a spiteful fire all night, I suppose just to let us know that they were there, and ready for business, and every once in a while the zip and whir of their bullets sang overhead.

The morning of Friday, the 19th, after being relieved by some regiment of the Ninth Corps, we marched to the left and rejoined our brigade, then commanded by Col. Wheeler, of the 97th, and consisting of the 94th, 95th, 96th, 97th, 98th, and 85th Pa., all veteran regiments of hard fighters.

We found the brigade building breastworks, and of course we had to pitch in and help. And as we were not yet constructed we were set to work to cut down all the trees in our front, and to cut 30 yards in our rear. The trees in front in just what they were, and a barrier to the Johnnies; but they were to be cut down to make that way.

History states that about 4:30 p. m. Gen. Malone, with his command formed in a column of four battalions, and that the 85th Pa. was on our right, at the place where we had been on picket the night before; then Malone faced to his right and swept down the rear of Crawford's Division, taking his line at a great disadvantage.

I did not know whether it was Malone or some other Johnny reb, but I will remember the commotion it caused when the firing came from our rear.

I will remember Lieut. Sylvester H. Martin calling to Col. Wheeler and asking if we had better get on the outside of the line, because they were being shot at; but I am happy to say that the full force of the rebel impact never reached the 85th's part of the territory, because I imagine they took all the prisoners they were able to get, and reached us. Pardon a personal reminiscence that occurred just here. I happened to see a young Johnny through the woods in the act of picking up a gun. I think he was confused and nervous, but I raised my rifle and shouted to him to "Drop that gun and come back into our lines; all of which he promptly did, and said he had been ordered to do so, and that the war was over, and when I sent him to the rear with some other prisoners he appeared to be the happiest fish in the sea.

After the firing had slackened somewhat, Col. Wheeler, standing on the earthworks, with his revolver in his hand, said to me, "If you will follow me, we will make a way out of this."

We then formed a thin line of battle and marched directly to our rear, in the mean time receiving the fire of one of our own batteries, who, supposing we were all captured and the woods being full of rebels, were shelling them out.

We came out of the woods directly in front of the cornfield, where we met Gen. Crawford, who asked what regiment that was, and Wheeler replied, Second Brigade, Second Division, Fifth Corps, Crawford asked why we had left our position in the woods, and we were sent into the woods again to retake the woods, but had not gone far when we received a brisk fire directly from our front, which became so heavy that we were compelled to lie down. It was here that our commanding officer, Capt. Jacob Houder, was killed by a rifle ball, making the fifth officer in command of the regiment. I was very close to him when he fell.

As this firing continued, it perplexed Col. Wheeler very much, because, coming from the woods we had just left, he couldn't tell whether it was from friend or foe, and he called for volunteers to go and find out what it all meant. Lieut. Martin, privates Hugh McMullin and William Buckock Threapleton, of Co. K, and a member of Co. I, whose names I do not remember, were the fortune-hope. Wheeler promising that we should all be rewarded if we got back alive, and if we didn't, why, our names should go down to posterity as patriots who sacrificed their lives for their country. In passing I rise to say that we have neither been rewarded nor sacrificed as yet.

When we got to our old works we discovered a thin line of our own men engaged with the rebels in the cornfield, and it was this fact that caused our own men to come up to the rear. Martin saw the situation he left us

to entertain our erring brethren and went back to bring up the regiment, which presently came up with a cheer, many of them jumping over the works, going for the rebels, who kindly fell back out of sight, but not out of range.

I raised all night on the just and unjust, Yank and reb alike, and if misery likes company we were comforted by the thought that there was enough misery to go around and lots left over. At the hour which in better times we called supper time we munched a hardtack or two buttered with a piece of raw fat pork, sucked a mouthful of warm water out of our canteens and called it supper; then while some kept up a desultory fire all night others sat on the wet ground in the rain, pulled their gum blanket over their shoulders and called it going to bed.

At roll-call we found besides the killed and wounded that many of our men had been captured; among them I recall John M. Wallace, Morris Robbins and Henry Hunter and Alexander Peoples, of Co. K, seriously wounded.

I sadly remember missing Duffer, because he was my tentmate, and he carried all the sugar and coffee, while it was my lot to carry the hardtack and pork, and consequently I was short on coffee until rations were again issued, while I think it was the day after the 20th that we were relieved and took a position in the cornfield fronting the railroad and a few hundred yards north of the Globe Tavern.

We threw up breastworks here, and lay low all day, nothing disturbing us except an occasional stray shot in the woods; but we did not care much for that, so long as they were not shooting at us. Sunday, the 21st, Gen. Hays and some more of the big guns on the Dixie side of the line tried to work a big surprise party on Gen. Warren and the boys who were the blue and followed Old Glory; but this time they were not entangled in the dense woods, we had a free field and a fair fight, and when the returns were all in the surprise was with the other fellow and not with us.

I think it was about noon when they opened on us with about 30 pieces of artillery, though there wasn't a man in the 85th but would make a pile of affidavits that every battery in the entire southern army was firing on the right, while they attacked the left flank, and this brought their fire right in our rear. At Martin's suggestion we got on the outer side of the works, which were not very hard to coax over either.

Martin always had a cool head on him, and he exercised rare good judgment now, because there was no enemy in our immediate front, and a perfect torrent of shells of kind of missiles howled and shrieked spitefully and wrathfully to, screamed and maddly bowed and plunged in from the left. Some of the boys were so nervous that they were nearly driven entirely knocked out of them, and they hadn't grown any since, though George Armstrong said it was only a lack of rations that retarded their growth; at any rate, for I do not remember that one of our regiment was injured by that fierce fire, though it was stated that 20 cannon balls came within a radius of 100 yards of where we were lying. I think this was the heaviest artillery fire that I ever experienced, and after these dogs of war had hurled to their satisfaction, then came the infantry charge.

They came up with the familiar yell of Ki-yi! Ki-yi-yi! long drawn out and said to be so demoralizing to new soldiers that they would not even try to fire so much for the rebel yell if the Quartermaster wouldn't forget us and go back on us with our rations.

I think they made three charges, but were handily repulsed every time with heavy loss, for I never saw in all my soldier experience so many dead men on either side in so small a space as I saw in the cornfield. Some of them had engaged the flank of a line of our breastworks about 100 yards in front of the railroad, and were killed in close proximity to our line. Gen. Warren says his men buried 211 of the enemy's dead at this point, and I have no doubt that this statement is true, as they report a total loss in these operations of over 3,000, most of them being killed and wounded.

This ended the fighting at the Globe Tavern; Lee knew when he had enough, and all appetite for further fighting at this point was effectually and forever knocked out of him, and the gallant Warren was left victor of the field; and no braver man were the stars in the Army of the Potomac than the little black-haired Gen. Joseph Holt, Judge-Advocate and Recorder; Bvt.-Col. C. H. Tomkins, U. S. A.—EDITOR NATIONAL TRIBUNE

With Weitzel in Texas. EDITOR NATIONAL TRIBUNE: In a recent issue of your issue, W. Pittner, of Bridgeport, O., refers to my article which appeared in The National Tribune of Oct. 31, and which gave a somewhat detailed account of my experience while in Texas with Gen. Weitzel's command, in the Summer of 1865. Comrade Pittner pays me the compliment of pronouncing my article both truthful and interesting, as he "twas there" at the time, as a member of the 77th Ohio. But he says I failed to mention in my narrative some events which came under his observation. This is not surprising. While I kept my eyes and ears open at that time, and put my observations into diary form, no doubt many things occurred of which I took cognizance. Comrade Pittner mentions as one of my omissions the circumstance of a French gunboat firing upon the neutral side of the Rio Grande at the siege of Matamoros, if he will carefully read my article again he will discover that I did make mention of that occurrence. Here is what I said about the affair in question:

"As the Liberals charged one of the forts on the east of the town, our men became rather enthusiastic, gave vent to their feelings in hearty cheers. A little French gunboat, called the Pizarro, which

had run down the river to aid in repulsing the attacking party, being naturally incensed at this display of Liberal sympathy on the part of the Americans, turned her guns and fired several shots at the insulting crowd, fortunately without serious effect."

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SHERIDAN'S RIDE. Gen. Hays's Orderly Writes of the Battle of Cedar Creek.

EDITOR NATIONAL TRIBUNE: The battle of Cedar Creek, Oct. 23, 1864, will ever be known as one of the most important and exciting in the war for the Union; it was victory wrought from defeat. The Army of West Virginia held the advantage, but the Confederates, under Gen. Jackson, Pickett, and the Sixth Corps, the Pike separating the Nineteenth and Sixth Corps from Gen. Sheridan's command, shot us down upon the merits of either corps. The men who stood by their guns on that October morning were as brave a body of men as ever trained.

I believe the Army of West Virginia, as a body, has felt grateful to the Sixth and Nineteenth Corps for their timely assistance rendered on that occasion; but, for the sake of the brave and gallant soldiers sleeping in their tents, surprised and volley after volley fired into them, how can any reasonable being expect that the Nineteenth Corps should be the Army of West Virginia? The soldiers that formed that body were too well known, the inscriptions on their flags represent many battlefields, and speak eloquently of their valor, and those especially drilled under our much-loved and admired Maj.-Gen. George Crook.

The writer remembers how dense the fog was that morning and how the men were shot down before getting in line. In falling back David McComb, Chief Bugler at Gen. R. B. Hayes's Headquarters, and myself, thinking it best to go to the rear, instead of going toward the deployed skirmish lines of the enemy, had dismounted to pick up an article or two, and were remaining when the fog cleared away. We were then counted a dozen of our men stripped of their clothes, all shot on the picket line that morning, and a number of our men could be seen all day with gun in hand and bayonet fixed to the muzzle, and they put on clothes only time to grab a gun and get in line.

Since the war I have noticed in art stores and in the homes of collectors of military relics, Gen. Sheridan as he appeared at the battle front. I have heard people talking and looking at these pictures, and school boys speaking of Gen. Sheridan as the hero of the battle. I have made to the front. Those false impressions made by the poet give rise to the belief of the school boy, as well as older minds, as to the distance he occupied in the army. I have written a poem written by Buchanan Road, and recited at Pike's Opera House, in Cincinnati, Ohio, Nov. 1, 1864, by James E. Murdoch. A memorial tablet in honor of the fact that he occupied the position in front of the Garret homestead, East Eighth street, Cincinnati, Ohio, with the following inscription: "Here T. Buchanan Road wrote 'Sheridan's Ride' Nov. 1, 1864."

Now as to the panic before Gen. Sheridan rode up. The truth is our lines were formed a good while before Gen. Sheridan rode up. He was not the first to come when he was dismounted at Gen. R. B. Hayes's Headquarters, near the Valley Pike. There were at that time lying on the grass Maj.-Gen. Geo. Crook, Gen. Duval, and Gen. Hays. I had a long conversation at that time pertaining to a move on the enemy, when Gen. Sheridan appeared. Gen. Sheridan dismounted and asked Gen. Crook what the news was. Gen. Crook replied in the affirmative, and said all was ready for an advance.

I held Gen. Sheridan's horse till his Orderly man, Mr. No. 10, Gen. (I came with Gen. Sheridan to Gen. Hayes's Headquarters. Farther down the line Tony Forsythe, his Chief of Staff, joined him, and no reinforcements came to our aid. The Sixth Corps, which was changed some prior to the general advance, as the Army of West Virginia lay near and to the right of the National Pike, and the Sixth Corps, which was the village of Middletown, and as Gen. Sheridan rode from Winchester to the front, it being only 12 1/2 miles to the north of the town and 1 1/2 miles, south, to Gen. Hays's Headquarters, which was then, now, from north end of Middleton to the Cedar Creek Bridge is two and a half miles, and from the bridge to Strasburg is three miles; by the route he took that day he had to have covered the 20 miles to the front he would have had to ride two miles beyond, or south, of Strasburg, or seven, and a half miles, if he had ridden the direct line to Cedar Creek Bridge, on the National Pike.

I have written articles for different papers on the fight of the 19th of October for the 18th of October, and I have had laid on the banks of the river and watched the boats run the blockade at Vicksburg, and watched the gunboats try to break the rebel lines, and I have been a letter I have before me, from a Mr. James W. Larrick, of Middletown, Va. He says: "You would scarcely know this country now by what it was in 1864. Much of the timber has been cut away, other fields have grown up in bushes, new farms have been laid off and new buildings built, and to the eye scarcely a trace of that terrible carnage is to be seen. I have been to the place in which I now live, where my father lived and also my grandfather before him, in what is known as Larrick's Hotel, although it is not a hotel, but a fine residence, and Phil Sheridan stopped over night at this house on his last visit to the Valley a short time before his death. Senator Cameron, of Pennsylvania, was with him, and most of us as he rode nearly so when some staff officers rode up on the old bridge, where some of the boys were lying asleep. As the horses' feet struck the bridge they jumped up, and as he gave would almost raise the dead. Then another yelled: 'Look out for the cavalry,' and about that time 'bang' went some fellow's gun. The first thing we thought of was to clear the road, and we jumped to the sides, not knowing the ditches were there, and as I raised up my file leader with his gun around in such a manner as to strike me on the head, and I landed clear over one ditch, and there is where I got that bump on my head. It was as dark as Egypt. The officers called to fall in, that all was right, and the road was cleared, and we went south side to the ditch where most of the company had gone. Down in that ditch was a terrible commotion. The language used was not very choice, only for such occasions. I could hear Sergeant Hays, who seemed to be in the bottom layer, say in a snatched voice (which he told me afterwards was made with a mouth full of chalk) 'Take your own knee off my ear.' It was something like a modern college football game going on down in that ditch.

After a time we got back into ranks, and daylight soon appeared, and such a sight and appearance that regiment made! The mud and water in the bottom of the ditches was about six inches deep, worked up into lumps, and looking up reflected an amount of it distributed over the regiment. We moved on until we came to a creek, just as the sun was coming up, and we built a fire of rails and put on the coffee pot to boil, and Sergeant Hays, who seemed to be in the bottom layer, say in a snatched voice (which he told me afterwards was made with a mouth full of chalk) 'Take your own knee off my ear.' It was something like a modern college football game going on down in that ditch.

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EDITOR NATIONAL TRIBUNE: In a recent issue of your issue, W. Pittner, of Bridgeport, O., refers to my article which appeared in The National Tribune of Oct. 31, and which gave a somewhat detailed account of my experience while in Texas with Gen. Weitzel's command, in the Summer of 1865. Comrade Pittner pays me the compliment of pronouncing my article both truthful and interesting, as he "twas there" at the time, as a member of the 77th Ohio. But he says I failed to mention in my narrative some events which came under his observation. This is not surprising. While I kept my eyes and ears open at that time, and put my observations into diary form, no doubt many things occurred of which I took cognizance. Comrade Pittner mentions as one of my omissions the circumstance of a French gunboat firing upon the neutral side of the Rio Grande at the siege of Matamoros, if he will carefully read my article again he will discover that I did make mention of that occurrence. Here is what I said about the affair in question:

"As the Liberals charged one of the forts on the east of the town, our men became rather enthusiastic, gave vent to their feelings in hearty cheers. A little French gunboat, called the Pizarro, which

had run down the river to aid in repulsing the attacking party, being naturally incensed at this display of Liberal sympathy on the part of the Americans, turned her guns and fired several shots at the insulting crowd, fortunately without serious effect."

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