



THIRD REGIMENT.

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| 1. Gaston Meares, Colonel. | 5. John F. S. Van Bokkelen, Capt., Co. D. |
| 2. Wm. Lord DeRosset, Colonel. | 6. John Cowan, Captain, Co. D. |
| 3. R. H. Cowan, Lieut.-Colonel. | 7. James I. Metts, Captain, Co. G. |
| 4. William M. Parsley, Lieut.-Colonel. | 8. Rev. Geo. Patterson, D.D., Chaplain. |
| 9. Thomas F. Wood, Assistant Surgeon. | |

THIRD REGIMENT.

BY

JOHN COWAN, CAPTAIN COMPANY D.

JAMES I. METTS, CAPTAIN COMPANY G.

The Third North Carolina Infantry, like all of the other regiments sent by North Carolina to the field in the late civil war, wrote for itself and the people from whom it came, upon the field, retrieving lost but perilous positions in battle, in the bivouac, upon the march, as well as in its number of slain and wounded, a history, which hitherto locked up in the memory of its members, remains as yet, a score and a half of years since the eventful Appomattox, to be recited.

A proud boast it is of the sons of the "Old North State" that they are not trumpeters of their own achievements, whether in the forum, in legislative hall, or upon the field of battle; and who can gainsay, since the colonization of the area which is now bounded by the State lines of North Carolina, that they have stood the peers of any with whom they came in contact? So especially did the spirit of Christian charity, "in honor preferring one another," inspire her soldiers from 1861 to 1865. Fired by an emulative zeal to attain unto the highest perfection of duty, they recognized the common cause of all Confederate soldiers. They were so imbued with that spirit of magnanimity, that rather than pluck one laurel from the crown which adorned the brow of their fellow-soldiers, they vied with each other in adding to that emblem of triumph.

So, the history of one regiment of North Carolina Troops is the history of another, save in the details which mark their respective achievements in the different spheres in which fortune called them to move. If encomiums of commanders, congrat-

ulatory orders for duty under the most disheartening and adverse circumstances, and the indisputable facts of deeds accomplished count for naught, then only are the North Carolina soldiers without a record. Histories may have been published, false in conception and untrue in statement, "the conceits of a warmed or overweening brain," but the steadfast faith, the admiring gaze has been riveted upon the soldiery of North Carolina from Maryland to Texas.

Yea, more; some who have written from another than our stand-point, who saw the conflict, its course and operations through different lenses than those of the Southern side have, in their impartial judgment, accorded the highest word of praise to North Carolina Troops. The hillocks of Virginia, the swamps of Georgia, the sands of the beach are mute cenotaphs of her dead. Unparalleled in their devotion to the Union, they were devout; loyal to the cause of the Confederacy, they were sincere.

Figures are the most potent arguments in establishing the truth or falsity of any proposition or cause.

This regiment, one of ten authorized by the Constitutional Convention, enlisted for the war, and was composed of field officers, Gaston Meares, Colonel; Robert H. Cowan, Lieutenant-Colonel; William L. DeRosset, Major, all of Wilmington, N. C., and comprised the following companies:

COMPANY A was raised in Greene county, and commanded by Captain Robert H. Drysdale.

COMPANY B was raised in Duplin, and commanded by Captain Stephen D. Thruston, M. D.

COMPANY C was raised in Cumberland, and commanded by Captain Peter Mallett.

COMPANY D was raised in Wilmington, and commanded by Captain Edward Savage.

COMPANY E was raised in Onslow, and commanded by Captain M. L. F. Redd.

COMPANY F was raised in Wilmington, and commanded by Captain William M. Parsley.

COMPANY G was raised in Onslow, and commanded by Captain E. H. Rhodes.

COMPANY H was raised in Bladen, and commanded by Captain Theo. M. Sikes.

COMPANY I was raised in Beaufort, and commanded by Captain John R. Carmer.

COMPANY K was raised in New Hanover (now Pender), and commanded by Captain David Williams.

The several companies were ordered to assemble at Garysburg; and in the latter part of May they began to report to the officer in charge of the camp. A portion of the Third was ordered to Richmond early in July, where it was joined some weeks later by the remaining companies. A few days after the first battle of Manassas the regiment was ordered to report to Major-General T. H. Holmes at Acquia Creek, and went into camp near Brooks' Station, on the Richmond, Fredericksburg & Potomac Railroad, later moving camp to a point near the Potomac River. As winter approached, having meantime built substantial quarters, they took up their abode therein immediately in rear of the lower battery of those constructed for the defense of Acquia Creek. Upon the evacuation of the line of the Potomac, the Third North Carolina, with the First, was ordered to Goldsboro to meet an expected advance of Burnside from New Bern, remaining thereabouts until early in June, 1862. In May, Lieutenant-Colonel Cowan having been promoted to the colonelcy of the Eighteenth North Carolina Infantry, Major DeRosset was made Lieutenant-Colonel and Captain Savage, Major.

It was with sincere regret that the regiment parted with Colonel Cowan; the officers and men of the command loved him, and he was recognized as the one as much as any other by whom the regiment had been brought to its efficiency in discipline and especially in drill. The esteem in which he was held was manifested by the regiment by the presentation upon his departure of a magnificent horse.

The First and Third North Carolina Troops were under the

same brigade commanders from first to last; but, unfortunately, were brigaded with troops from other States until the capture at Spottsylvania Court House, 1864, of so many of the regiment, and never received proper meed for their achievements. First, Colonel John G. Walker was assigned to command the brigade, then consisting of the First and Third North Carolina and the Thirtieth Virginia and First Arkansas. The regiment having been ordered to Richmond, arrived on the battlefield of Seven Pines just after the battle had been fought. Here it remained for several weeks, chiefly on picket duty, with an occasional skirmish with the enemy, losing several of its men. While here a new brigade was formed, composed of the First and Third North Carolina, the Fourth and Forty-fourth Georgia, and Brigadier-General R. S. Ripley was assigned to its command, Major-General D. H. Hill being in command of the division.

The march from Richmond was most trying to the raw troops of the brigade, who had not then received their baptism of fire. Passing thousands of dead and wounded from the time they left the cars until they arrived on the battlefield, the groans and cries of the wounded were not calculated to inspire the boys with a martial spirit.

During the period from that date to the opening of the battles around Richmond the command was in camp about six miles from Richmond, drilling and preparing for the summer campaign.

Late in the evening of June 25, 1862, Colonel Meares received orders to march, and proceeding early next morning in a northerly direction, we halted on the high hills on the south of the Chickahominy where it is crossed by the Mechanicsville pike.

On the 26th of June, after a circuitous and fatiguing night march, the regiment arrived in the vicinity of Mechanicsville. Here a detail of one company from each regiment was made, and Lieutenant-Colonel DeRosset, of the Third, was placed in command. The object of this select battalion was to clear the way and examine the bridge across the Chickahominy. (A mine was

thought to have been placed under it by the enemy). In order to understand its duties more fully, its officers were sent to the top of the hill near by, from which could be seen the route intended, etc. On this hill, and in range of the enemy's guns, a group of distinguished Confederates were assembled, composed of President Davis, Mr. Randolph (Secretary of War), Generals Lee, Longstreet and D. H. Hill, waiting to hear General Jackson's guns on the north side of Mechanicsville before ordering an advance.

General Jackson being delayed, General Lee ordered an advance of this portion of the line after hearing the guns of General A. P. Hill at Meadow Bridge. After the battalion alluded to had examined and crossed the bridge, and cleared the field of skirmishers, Ripley's Brigade having been selected as the assaulting column, was ordered across the bridge and to form a line of battle. It advanced to the attack in front of the splendid artillery of the enemy strongly posted across the pond at Ellyson's Mills. The regiment pressed forward in the face of this heavy fire in open field for more than a mile, advancing steadily to what seemed inevitable destruction, until it reached the top of the hill, when a halt was ordered, bayonets fixed, and a charge, led by Colonel Meares, was made down the hill, which was checked by the canal; and after lying down a short while, the regiment was ordered to the right and rear, and up the hill, taking shelter in a skirt of woods, where we remained until just before daybreak. We were so near the enemy that the least noise, even the snapping of a twig, provoked their fire. From thence, before day, we marched to Mechanicsville and were placed in line of battle under a heavy artillery fire in the rear of the Eighteenth North Carolina Infantry, until the enemy were driven from their works on the opposite side of the creek. The Third North Carolina lost perhaps less than either of the other regiments, Major Savage being the only one of the field officers wounded.

Joining, after the battle, the forces of General Jackson, the command was marched by a circuitous route to Cold Harbor, or

Gaines' Mill, where the battle took place on the afternoon of June 27th. Here the regiment, under the command of Colonel Meares, with the exception of a small portion which had somehow become detached, was exposed to a musketry and a very severe artillery fire, and endured the ordeal known among all soldiers to be the most trying to which they are subjected, that of being under fire without being engaged in the fight. Marching thence, after two or three days' delay, the brigade found itself in front of one of the bridges over the Chickahominy, which had been destroyed by the enemy on the south side, who had crossed the day before on the famous "grape-vine" bridge, some distance above.

Here, being exposed to the enemy's fire of artillery without the means of replying, Ripley was withdrawn into a heavy woods on the northwest side of the road, lying there all day under the artillery fire, at times very annoying, but with little loss. This was the day of the battle of Frazer's Farm, a few miles lower down the stream.

Next day, the enemy having withdrawn and the bridge having been repaired, Ripley crossed and marched on Malvern Hill, arriving there at noon, and was posted immediately in the rear of what was known as the Parsonage, on the near side of the road leading by Malvern Hill, and on the left of the army. Being ordered to advance, the whole line moved forward up the hill, across the parsonage yard, into the road beyond. Being under a most terrific fire of musketry and canister, and in close proximity to the enemy stationed in an open field in front, the left of the regiment penetrated the woods beyond, into the open field, where it engaged the enemy, making several charges upon him, led by Captain David Williams, of Company K, and causing the battery in front to move back. To Captain Williams and his men great praise should be accorded for their gallantry. The right of the regiment, then in the road, after firing several rounds, was ordered by Colonel Meares to lie down. At this point Captain Parsley, of Company F, was wounded in the neck, fell, and Colonel Meares, being very near, went to him. The

regiment was thrown into some confusion prior to reaching this position, owing to the fact that the Parsonage and yard referred to were an obstruction.

About an hour before dusk word came from the left that Captain Brown, commanding the First North Carolina, was hard pressed, and wanted assistance, when the gallant Colonel Meares gave the command to move by the left flank. He, being on foot in the road in front of the line, upon reaching a point near the left of the Third, stopped, and mounting the bank on the side of the road, was using his field-glass surveying the Federal lines, when he was instantly killed by a slug from a shrapnel fired from a battery directly in front, said to be the Third Rhode Island Battery, not over seventy-five yards distant. Colonel Meares was a dignified and elegant gentleman and a true type of a soldier. Kind, humane, intrepid, he always commanded the admiration of his regiment, for in him they recognized a *leader* who would *lead*.

Night came at last to end this bloody and disastrous struggle, though the firing was kept up until about 11 o'clock. Darkness revealed the explosive balls which the Yankees fired at us, as they struck the fences in front and rear and the undergrowth. The removal of the wounded back to Bethesda Church, our hospital, was pushed with vigor. So great was the loss of all commands in the field and road that one could walk hundreds of yards on the dead and wounded without touching the ground.

The next day the dead of these two regiments, the First and Third, were found nearer to those of the enemy than were those of any other troops on this part of the line, proving that they approached nearer the enemy's line of battle than any of the regiments that fought on this part of the field. The regiment suffered heavily in this engagement. The Third held its position during the night and bivouacked near that point for several days, when the brigade was ordered back to the old camping-grounds nearer Richmond. Ripley lay in camp for several weeks, while details were made to work on the intrenchments in

our front and for several miles down towards the Chickahominy, and other details gathered arms from several battlefields.

In the latter part of July, Colonel DeRosset returned from Raleigh, and brought with him four hundred conscripts, who were at once divided into squads, and, under command of non-commissioned officers, were drilled several hours daily. This not only helped to discipline the raw levies, but hardened them somewhat, thus enabling them the better to stand the strains incident to the march into Maryland, which soon followed.

About the 9th of August the regiment moved in the direction the army had taken, passing the battlefield of Cedar Mountain, and was in reserve at second Manassas and Chantilly. Afterwards it crossed the Potomac at Point of Rocks and camped near Frederick,⁶ Md., where it remained for several days, then crossed the South Mountain at Crampton's Gap and remained at Boonsboro until the 14th, when it participated in the battle of the gap. Ripley's Brigade marched by a road leading towards the Boonsboro and Sharpsburg pike. On reaching a point on the crest of the hill, just after crossing the Antietam on the stone bridge, the command was placed in line of battle under the hill, the right of the Third North Carolina, in the absence of the Fourth Georgia, on the right of the bridge, and resting on the Boonsboro pike. This was on the evening of the 15th, and the brigade remained in that position until the evening of the 16th, under a heavy artillery fire from the enemy's guns on the side of the creek, but without loss, being well protected by the crest of the hill under which they lay.

We now give in full the graphic account of the battle of Sharpsburg, written by Colonel S. D. Thruston.

COLONEL THRUSTON'S ACCOUNT.

On the evening of the 16th September, 1862, being in line of battle in front of the town of Sharpsburg, a little before sunset we were moved, left in front, from this position, along the Sharpsburg-Hagerstown pike, some distance to the left, until reaching the mouth of a lane (apparently a private

road leading to a farm) leading in a generally perpendicular direction from the pike to the Antietam; following this lane a short distance, we again filed to the left, across the field and halted under the brow of a hill, on which and in front was a white farm-house (Mumma's) about two hundred yards distant. A little to the right and rear of this house was an apple orchard surrounded by a rail fence. In this position we slept, to be aroused at early dawn of the 17th by the guns of the enemy. Before advancing to the attack the house was set on fire by order of General Hill; three men from the Third North Carolina Infantry—Lieutenant Jim Clark was one of the three, also Jim Knight—volunteering to perform the duty.

The order to advance was then given, and we moved up the slope of the hill until reaching the fence around the orchard, where we halted to give time for the left centre of the brigade to pass the obstruction of the burning house. (It was at this fence Ripley was hit in the throat). The house being passed, the Third North Carolina Infantry mounted over the fence and through the orchard, when the order was given to change direction to the left, to meet the pressure upon General Jackson, near what is known as the Dunkard Church, on the Sharpsburg-Hagerstown pike. This change of front was admirable, though executed under a heavy fire of infantry and artillery. Owing to this change our line of battle was five hundred yards further to the left than that of the early morning, when first ordered to advance, which brought us in close connection with the troops of the right, and in the deadly embrace of the enemy. I use the word embrace in its fullest meaning. Here Colonel DeRosset fell, severely wounded, and permanently disabled, Captain Thruston taking command at once.

It was now about 7:30 A. M. Jackson's troops were in the woods around and west of the Dunkard Church and north of the Sharpsburg-Hagerstown pike. As we came up he advanced and drove the enemy back across a corn field and into a piece of woods east and north of the church; here the enemy, being reinforced by Mansfield's Corps of three divisions, returned to the

assault, and the fight became desperate for an hour. The two weak divisions of Jackson and one brigade of D. H. Hill fought and held in check the six divisions of Hooker and Mansfield. So tenaciously did these brave troops cling to the earth, that when re-inforced by Hood and two brigades of D. H. Hill, they were still north of the pike and contending for every inch of ground between it and the corn field in front. At the moment when their ammunition was absolutely exhausted, and all had been used from the boxes and pockets of their wounded and dead comrades, the re-inforcements of Hill and Hood, above referred to, came up and stayed the tide for a short time. Now Sumner, with his three divisions, put in an appearance, when our thin lines were slowly pressed back, by weight of numbers, into the woods and beyond the church to the edge of a field to the south, through which the divisions of Walker and McLaws were hurrying to our assistance. When the Third North Carolina laid down on the edge of the field to allow their friends to pass over them to the front, there was not one single cartridge in the command, and every gun was empty. It was now about 10:30 o'clock A. M., so that the men of this gallant regiment had been fighting vast odds for three hours, never quitting the field until absolutely pushed off, and not then until every cartridge of the living and the dead had been exhausted.

One curious incident of this morning's battle was when Mansfield's Corps came into action a Federal division marched up, and halting in column of battalions in the west woods, part of the time within one hundred yards of the right of the Third North Carolina, made no effort to advance, although for five hundred yards to our right there was nothing to prevent its doing so. Nor did this division make any show of resistance until attacked by Colquitt's and Garland's Brigades (the latter under Colonel D. K. MacRae), when we were re-inforced by General Hill. The only grounds upon which we can account for this are that this division was covering the movements of Richardson and French, who were preparing to assault our centre, now desperately weakened, at a point now known as the

“Bloody Lane.” This conjecture is based on the fact that these two divisions did make an attack at that point a short time after Hill had sent his two brigades from that position to re-inforce the left, and just as Walker came to the relief of Hill. It is a fact, that for five hundred yards on our right, that is, from the right of the Third North Carolina to the left of Hill, there was a gap in our lines, directly in front of which, in the early part of the engagement, a Federal division halted and remained halted until it was filled by a part of Walker’s Division. The gap existed, and the enemy was expected every minute to march through.

In the June “Century” Longstreet (page 313) speaks of Colonel Cooke’s holding a fence without ammunition, while his staff (Longstreet’s) fought two guns of the Washington Artillery. He does not say that while working the guns the Third North Carolina, having refilled its cartridge-boxes, and going to the front a second time, volunteered to relieve Colonel Cooke’s Twenty-seventh North Carolina, and while doing so two more full batteries also came to his relief, from whose duels with the enemy the Third North Carolina suffered severely. He says nothing about my message to him by Lieutenant Craig, who rather exaggeratingly delivered it thus: “Captain sends his compliments, and requests re-inforcements, as he has only one man to every panel of fence, and the enemy is strong and very active in his front,” and his reply: “Tell Captain Thruston he must hold his position if he has only one man to every sixteen panels of fence. I have no assistance to send him.” Nor does he say how faithfully this order was obeyed, by which the regiment remained on that hill and under that fence, with the rails of which the enemy’s artillery played battle-dore and shuttlecock from midday of the 17th until 10 o’clock A. M. of the 18th, with not so much as one drop of water. Yet these are facts, and stand a monument to the soldierly endurance of the Third North Carolina on the memorable field of Sharpsburg.

It was while riding with General D. H. Hill on the morning of the 18th, to obtain a regiment to relieve the Third North

Carolina from that position at the fence, that he said: "Your regiment fought nobly yesterday." The words are well remembered, as we all know that a compliment from General Hill was of the rarest sort.

The tenacity with which the Third Regiment held its ground in front of the Dunkard Church, entirely unsupported on its right, and with a very thin line on its left, with three separate lines of the enemy pelting it mercilessly in front and a reserve column standing like a hound in the leash on its immediate right, waiting its chance to pounce upon it as soon as any wavering was seen; its steadiness when ammunition began to run short, and the cartridge-boxes and pockets of the wounded and dead were emptied to meet its necessities; the sullen backward step, as inch by inch it was pressed from its line, all pronounce it, with voices loud, a fearless, enduring, self-reliant body of as glorious men as were ever led to battle. Every man seemed to know and feel the responsibility of his position; seemed to know that there was no help to send him, and that he must do or die until relief had time to reach him from the rear, or Lee's army was doomed.

And how thoroughly was that duty performed. Twice, before any relief or re-inforcements came, did the regiment, when reduced to a handful, but that handful dauntless, stand and receive the volleys of the Federals at twenty paces, and then, with a yell, dash and drive back the foe. As Colquitt's Brigade dashed in splendidly on our right, the joyful yell: "Come on, boys; we've no ammunition, but we will go with you!" was heard over the din of battle. But human endurance has a limit. At this moment the third re-inforcement, in the shape of Sumner's Corps, was marched to the Federal assistance, and our brave boys were forced stubbornly and sullenly from the field. Their duty was nobly done; their sacrifice had enabled Walker and McLaws to come up, and the day was saved.

Thus was fought, and successfully, the battle of the Third North Carolina Infantry at Sharpsburg; and if it had been retired from service and had not fired another gun, the endurance, fearlessness, tenacity and valor of that day would have been a

crown of glory suitable to adorn the brow of the bravest of the brave. In truth, this one North Carolina regiment was in the vortex of the fire, the pivot upon which success or annihilation turned, and thank God, it stood the test and saved the day.

Of the twenty-seven officers who went into action on that memorable morning all save three were disabled and seven killed. Captain McNair, of Company H, was badly wounded in the leg early in the day, but refused to leave, although urged to do so by the Colonel, and soon after gave up his life-blood on his country's altar.

The official report of the division commander gives the loss in the Third North Carolina, but it is less than was reported at the close of the day by Lieutenant J. S. F. Van Bokkelen, acting Adjutant, who stated that of the five hundred and twenty carried into action only one hundred and ninety could be accounted for.

Ripley's Brigade, after bearing the brunt of the battle, was ordered to retreat, the enemy not pursuing. The manner of this retreat was slow and in order, and under General Hill's personal supervision. Observing an abandoned caisson, he (Hill) ordered the soldiers to remove it from the field, remarking: "We will not leave the enemy so much as a wheel." We continued the retreat to the Dunkard Church, on the Hagerstown road, where, after being supplied with ammunition, our lines were reformed, the enemy making no further demonstration on that day. The following day the troops rested on the field, in plain view of the enemy's lines, and during the night crossed the swollen Potomac at Shepherdstown, marched to Bunker Hill, where they bivouacked for several weeks, being employed in watching the enemy and tearing up the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad at night, near Martiusburg, Charlestown and Harper's Ferry.

After resting several weeks in the lower valley the army moved by way of New Market Gap, passing Orange Court House in the direction of Fredericksburg. While in bivouac for the night near Gordonsville, General Hill issued orders requiring company commanders to see that the bare-footed men

made moccasins for themselves of the hides just taken from the beeves, and the brigade continued its march to Port Royal, on the Rappahannock, where it remained for several days. On the morning of the 12th of December the troops moved back in the direction of Fredericksburg, marching the greater part of the night, and reached Hamilton's Crossing on the morning of the 13th. This regiment was in the second line until the evening of the first day, when it took position in the first line. The enemy being driven back, we lay on the field, anticipating another furious battle, and "bitterly thought of the morrow," but no blood was shed this day. The enemy sent a flag of truce on the 14th, asking permission of General Jackson to remove his dead and wounded. The enemy retreated, and thus ended the first battle of Fredericksburg.

After this the regiment built and occupied winter quarters on the Rappahannock, near Skinker's Neck. Here we spent the winter of 1862-'63 on picket duty along the river. While stationed at this point this regiment, which had been in Major-General D. H. Hill's Division, was now changed to Jackson's old division, commanded by Major-General Trimble, and our gallant Georgia comrades, the Fourth and Forty-fourth Regiments, were exchanged for the Tenth, Twenty-third and Thirty-seventh Virginia Regiments. These regiments, with the First and Third North Carolina, formed a new brigade, and Brigadier-General R. E. Colston was assigned to command it.

Lest the continuity in the promotion of the field officers should not be apparent to all, and especially such as are unacquainted with the military gradation below the rank of a general officer, we formulate it with the following result: After the death of Colonel Meares at Malvern Hill, Lieutenant-Colonel DeRosset was promoted to Colonel, Major Savage became Lieutenant-Colonel, and Captain S. D. Thruston, Major. You will observe in Colonel Thruston's account of the battle of Sharpsburg (not report, as it appears, for it was written some years after the war) that he refers to himself as Captain; his commission as Major had not then reached him, owing to the rapid and uncer-

tain direction of the movements of the army, and consequently the greater uncertainty of the mails. It not infrequently happened that commissions were dated months prior to their being received by officers in the Army of Northern Virginia for whom they were intended. Subsequent to the battle of Sharpsburg Colonel Savage resigned on account of ill health, Major Thruston then became Lieutenant-Colonel, and Captain William M. Parsley was promoted to Major. Subsequently Colonel DeRosset resigned his commission, having been disabled by a wound received at Sharpsburg. By regular gradation then Lieutenant-Colonel Thruston became Colonel, Major Parsley became Lieutenant-Colonel, and Captain W. T. Ennett was promoted to Major. Such was the *personnel* of the field officers prior to the battle of Chancellorsville, in May, 1863, and so it remained until the close of the war. The regiment was ever after this time commanded either by Colonel Thruston or Lieutenant-Colonel Parsley, as further narration will show, save for three days after the death of Lieutenant-Colonel Parsley, which occurred April 6, 1865, and until the surrender, April 9, 1865, when Major Ennett was in command.

On the 29th of April, 1863, this regiment, commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel S. D. Thruston, left its camp at Skinker's Neck and marched to Hamilton's Crossing, thence in the direction of Chancellorsville. On the 2d of May, Saturday morning, was commenced that grand strategic movement which has since been the wonder and admiration of the world. Rapidly marching around the enemy's lines to his right and rear, crossing the plank-road and arriving on the old turnpike about 4 o'clock P. M., two and a half miles west of Chancellorsville, having marched in all more than fifteen miles in a few hours, and about five miles in a direct line from the starting point in the morning, Jackson's Corps had been detached from the main body of the army to make this attack.

Regimental commanders were ordered to march in rear of their regiments, with a guard of strong men with fixed bayonets, to prevent straggling. Immediately on arriving at the stone

road the troops were formed in three lines of battle, Colston's Brigade being in the second line. The order to advance was obeyed with promptness. Rushing on toward the enemy's camp, the first scene that can be recalled is the abundant supply of beef and slaughtered rations cooking. The Federal General Schimmelfennig's Brigade suffered heavily as prisoners. The whole affair was a wild scene of triumph on our part. Thus we continued the pursuit until night, when the enemy made a stand within a mile of the Chancellor house. Here great confusion ensued. The two front lines having become mingled, were halted and reformed. Shortly after it was charged by a company of Federal cavalry, which proved to be a part of the Eighth Pennsylvania. The greater portion of them were unhorsed and captured. This was a critical period in the battle, and General Jackson seemed unusually anxious. The fighting was kept up until night, when this regiment was relieved and put in the second line, and during the first part, and even up to midnight, they were exposed to a terrific cannonading. Our men were completely exhausted from the forced march and the three or four hours of brisk fighting. Our position had to be changed from the time that we were placed in the second line until about midnight, and most of the time without avail, until the enemy's fire ceased, before our men could get any rest. They would locate our troops in the second line and so time the fuses that their shells would explode just over our heads.

On Sunday, the 3d instant, the regiment was formed on the right of the road, and, advancing, captured the first line of the enemy's works—a barricade of huge logs with abatis in front. The portion of these works that crossed a ravine and swamp, and which was favorable to the occupancy of the enemy, was assaulted three times by the Confederates before it was finally held. During one of these assaults Colonel Thruston was wounded, and the command devolved upon Lieutenant-Colonel Parsley, who remained in command during the campaign of 1863, known as the Pennsylvania campaign. This regiment participated in the last two of these charges. It was then that

General J. E. B. Stuart, who was in command (Generals Jackson and Hill having been wounded on the evening before), ordered the whole line forward. The enemy's earth-works in front were carried by storm, and many pieces of artillery, which had occupied them, were captured. We were now in full view of the Chancellor house, and the captured guns were turned on the fleeing enemy. Soon the Chancellor house was in flames, and a glorious victory perched upon our banners.

The Confederate line was again moved forward, and executed a wheel to the left, bringing this brigade and regiment immediately to the Chancellor house, hence this brigade, which had been commanded since early in the day by Lieutenant-Colonel Brown, of the First North Carolina Infantry, the other officers of the brigade ranking him having been wounded, was the first of the Confederate troops to reach the Chancellor house. During one of these assaults alluded to above, this brigade became detached from the division, and when it arrived at the Chancellor house was between two of Major-General Rodes' brigades. On the 6th the brigade marched to U. S. Ford. While here the enemy was permitted by General Lee to lay a pontoon bridge and send over about one thousand ambulances to the battlefield of Chancellorsville for his wounded. The officers of this regiment and brigade acted on the part of the Confederates to carry out these negotiations, General Sharp, Deputy Provost Marshal of the Army of the Potomac, acting on the part of the enemy. A whole week was consumed in effecting this object, after which the brigade was removed and operations resumed. The troops now returned to the vicinity of Fredericksburg.

Early in June, 1863, soon after the Chancellorsville battle, Major-General Edward Johnson was assigned to command the Stonewall Division and General George H. Stewart, Colston's Brigade. The division was now composed of Paxton's, or the First Brigade, known as the Stonewall Brigade; Jones', or the Second Brigade; and Colston's, now George H. Stewart's, the Third Brigade, Lieutenant-Colonel Parsley being in command of the Third Regiment.

The army now marched in the direction of Winchester, crossing the Blue Ridge at Chester Gap and participating in the battle of Winchester on the 13th and 14th June, 1863. This brigade marched all night, and by indirect route arrived at daylight on the 15th five miles below Winchester. This movement was intended to intercept and capture the fleeing troops of General Milroy, who had been driven from Winchester on the previous evening. After a sharp contest at Jordan Springs more than twenty-five hundred of the enemy threw down their guns. This engagement, though of short duration, was decidedly of an active character on both sides, and this regiment, as was its wont, was in the thickest of the fray. In this battle George Rouse, of Company D, was killed, and Lieutenant Craig and others wounded. Our position being in a railroad cut, we were in a great measure protected from the enemy's bullets. While Stewart's Brigade *fought* the battle, a guard from the Stonewall Brigade was sent to Richmond with the prisoners, and were highly commended for gallantry, which praise belonged to this brigade.

On the 18th June, 1863, the regiment crossed the Potomac at Shepherdstown and encamped near the Dunkard Church, in a piece of woods embraced in the battlefield of Sharpsburg.

While here and in the quietude of twilight, when all nature seemed to be in repose, and so emblematic of those weary souls which slept peacefully under the sod of this spot, made so memorable by the heroism displayed by them scarcely a twelvemonth ago, the First and Third Regiments assembled, and with arms reversed and to the roll of the muffled drum marched to the battlefield, where the Rev. George Patterson, Chaplain of the Third, read the burial services. A detail of men under the command of Lieutenant James I. Metts (afterwards Captain) had previously during the day fired a military salute over the spot where their bodies were buried. Upon this solemn occasion many tears stole down the bronzed cheeks of the old veterans, and all heads were bowed in grief.

From this camp the regiment, with the brigade, marched *via*

Hagerstown to Chambersburg, Greencastle and McConnellsburg, to the vicinity of Carlisle, from which point we counter-marched, and after a very long and tiresome march, on the 1st of July, 1863, arrived at Gettysburg about 7:30 o'clock, and filed to the left, nearly encircling the town. Here we lay in line of battle until the evening of the 2d, when about 6 o'clock we were ordered forward. We were on the right of the brigade and were ordered to connect our right with the left of Nichols' (La.) Brigade, and at the same time by wheel to the right to properly prolong their lines. We did so, thereby in some degree disconnecting our regiment from the rest of the brigade. We continued to the front, driving the enemy's skirmishers before us without trouble, and with very little loss, until we met his line of battle at his first line of breastworks. He was, however, driven from those, and soon thereafter we received a front and oblique fire from behind his second line of breastworks, to which he had fallen back. He was soon driven from the portion from which we received the oblique fire, and then the fire from the front seemed even more terrific. A steady firing was kept up until 10 o'clock P. M., when, as by common consent, it ceased, re-opening at 4:30 o'clock next morning. We here found our ammunition nearly exhausted, some men having not more than two rounds. We partially refilled our cartridge-boxes from those of the dead and wounded, of whom there was a great number, and held this position that night and the next morning, exposed to a terrific fire until about 10:30 o'clock P. M., when we were ordered to move by the left flank along the line of the captured breastworks, and to cross them and form line with the rest of the brigade to charge the enemy's works on what was supposed to be his right flank. The few men then remaining in the regiment were formed on the right of the brigade and very soon thereafter were ordered forward, the line advancing beautifully under the heaviest fire, until we found our regiment alone moving to the front, unsupported, when the officers and men were ordered to withdraw, which was done slowly and without confusion, the regiment being greatly reduced (one company—

Captain John Cowan's—and part of another being detached to fill up a space between the regiment and the Louisiana brigade). Too much praise cannot be given to the officers and men of our command for their coolness and bravery, for the promptness with which they obeyed all orders given them, and their untiring zeal generally. The enemy was driven back to the Baltimore turnpike in this charge by Stewart's Brigade, which came so near inflicting a critical blow on the enemy's extreme right flank. Had this gallant movement been supported the charge of Longstreet would not have been necessary.

That last charge on the third day was a cruel thing for the Third. They had borne their full share of the engagement, not even enjoying the protection of the works they had captured from the enemy, by reason of their position, other regiments of the brigade happening by the fortunes of the battle to have them (breastworks) in their front. There they stood, heroes, holding their ground unprotected, receiving a most deadly fire, giving in turn, like true soldiers, what they could from their decimated ranks, most of their comrades being already down, dead or wounded, until ordered to the right to join the balance of the brigade to participate in the charge.

The battle of Gettysburg is generally conceded to have been the hardest fought battle of the war on either side; at least of those in which General Lee's army was engaged. This regiment certainly suffered more in killed and wounded than in any of the many battles in which it was engaged. What fearful slaughter it endured is shown beyond peradventure by the figures. Entering the battle with three hundred guns, it was greatly reduced by the killing and wounding of two hundred and twenty-three men. When the regiment was mustered after the battle, seventy-seven muskets were all that could be gotten in the ranks, and it lost no prisoners and had no stragglers. The loss was within a fraction of seventy-five per cent. Colonel Parsley, Captain E. H. Armstrong and Lieutenant Lyon were the only officers, perhaps, not killed or wounded.

Next day we turned our faces toward Virginia, and after sev-

eral skirmishes and hard marches, arrived at Williamsport, Md., and forded the swollen Potomac on the 15th, the men having to put their cartridge-boxes on their bayonets to keep them above the water. After various marches *via* Front Royal and Page Valley, and with some skirmishing, we reached Orange Court House early in August and participated in the Bristow campaign in October, 1863, with an occasional skirmish with the enemy.

Prior to going into winter quarters, while in bivouac, the order was given about noon of November 27th for the march *instanter*, probably to go in force on a reconnoitering expedition, as the sequel would seem to show. However, on the first and only day of the march, about 3 o'clock P. M. on November 27, 1863, the battle of Payne's Farm was fought by Johnson's Division, of which this regiment formed a part. This was decidedly one of the most unique battles, in all the details connected with it, in the annals of warfare, being conducted, seemingly, regardless of tactical evolutions. A body of troops marching slowly along a country road, with no idea that their progress would be impeded or their right to proceed peaceably questioned, indulging in the characteristic chat which was usual among troops of the "same persuasion," passing two or three cavalymen dressed in gray, who had reined their horse to the side of the road and were quietly at a stand-still, ostensibly waiting for the column to pass, and when questioned by the men, as they would reach them, as to the whereabouts of the enemy, or in the usual vernacular, "have you seen any Yankees around this way?" with the utmost assurance replying, "No, there are no Yankees within miles of this place." Imagine that under such conditions, and within a few minutes after the rear of the column had passed the point where the cavalymen, who doubtless were spies, were stationed, this small body of troops being suddenly fired upon; what consternation, demoralization, is likely to ensue among any troops, raw or veterans, and yet these heroes of many a hard-fought battle, who had been in so many perilous positions, stood the test of this hazardous situation. Skirmishers are at

once thrown out, and meet with a hot fire. They are confronted either by a line of skirmishers vastly outnumbering them, or by a close line of troops; they are checked and have to be re-inforced to enable them to hold their ground. The enemy, which proved to be French's Corps of infantry, has evidently flanked us, for our line of battle is immediately formed perpendicular to our line of march, and facing the direction from which we were marching, and then begins as warm a contest as this regiment was ever engaged in for the same length of time. It seemed as if the enemy was throwing minnie-balls upon us by the bucket-full, when the battle got fairly under way. The First and Third North Carolina Regiments charged across a field and routed the men who were there in a skirt of woods and in their front. Our casualties were many for a fight of such short duration. General Johnson's horse was killed under him; he immediately mounted the horse of a courier and continued the direction of the battle. We drove the enemy back, completing the job by nightfall, and then pursued our way to Mine Run. So adroitly did General Johnson handle his troops at Payne's Farm, and so successfully did he extricate them from the chaotic situation described, being further successful in repelling the enemy who were, numerically, by long odds superior to his command, that he was complimented in a special congratulatory order by General Lee.

Reaching Mine Run, we remained in line of battle several days. Pickets in force were of course kept out day and night. The weather was as cold as we ever experienced; raining, too, which added to the disagreeableness of the situation. The men on the picket-line were almost benumbed with cold, for fires were prohibited by special order, as if to emphasize the precarious situation at this particular juncture. Officers in command of the picket-lines did endeavor, and successfully, to keep up the spirits of the men; not that the men were wanting in patriotic fervor, or that their characteristic fortitude had abated one jot or tittle, but human endurance hath limits, and poorly fed, and worse clad, their suffering was intense. When the men were stationed on the picket-line after dark, they remained sta-

tionary until relieved the next night, and were expected to be the eyes and ears of that particular post or point; for the interval between the pickets was short, and each man was required to exercise the extremest surveillance over that part assigned to him individually. There was a consolatory reflection even at that time, founded upon the hypothesis that "misery loves company," to-wit, the enemy were in the same plight we were. There we lay, watching each other for several days, and beyond an occasional artillery duel, for a short time, and an occasional fire of musketry from one side or the other at some soldier who was sent out from one of the flanks to ascertain what he could, nothing occurred. The temperature was well down to zero and the biting cold was such as to chill the warmest resolution, and when both sides marched (or stole) away, each was glad.

This ended the campaign of 1863, and the regiment built and occupied winter quarters near the Rapidan River and did picket duty along that river at Mitchell's Ford during the winter 1863-'64. The writers again find themselves under special obligations to Colonel S. D. Thruston, who has so vividly described events from the 4th to the 10th, when he was wounded; and as he says in an elaborate account covering those seven days: "The only object is simply to put upon record, for history, those men and comrades who at the time had no one to do that duty for them."

On the morning of May 4, 1864, the brigade, commanded by General George H. Stewart, being on picket along the Rapidan, discovered the columns of the Federal army in the distance, moving to the right, and apparently to the river below. The order soon came to be ready to move, and at midday the brigade took up the line of march in the direction of Locust Grove, a point on the old stone pike running from Orange Court House to Fredericksburg. This point was reached and passed in the evening of the same day, and the brigade went into bivouac about two and one half miles beyond. The night was passed in quiet. The next morning (May 5th) about 10:30 o'clock, a few

scattering shots being heard in the front, the troops were called to arms and put in motion towards the firing. We soon discovered that the Sixth Corps of the Federal army was posted in line of battle, while the remainder of the Army of the Potomac was passing on the right, along the road from Germania Ford, immediately in the rear of this line to cover the movement. Ewell's Corps, our brigade forming a part, and the Sixth Federal Corps were then both in what was known and always called the Wilderness, the name being derived from the character of the land, which is described as "covered with a matted growth of scrub oak, stunted pine, sweet-gum brush and dogwood," and the two corps of which we write were only separated by a few hundred yards. Stewart's Brigade was in column on the pike a very few minutes after the firing began at 10:30 o'clock A. M. Line of battle was immediately formed in the following order: The Third North Carolina to the right, the First North Carolina across, and the Virginia regiments to the left of the pike. It was now 10:30 o'clock A. M. The line advanced and struck a stout line of Federal infantry in a thicket of pines skirting a field. This line of Federals was assaulted, and after a hard fight the Third North Carolina Regiment and the First North Carolina Regiment captured two pieces of artillery and more than one hundred prisoners. Here Colonel Jenkins, of the One Hundred and Forty-sixth New York Regiment, was killed. Lieutenant Shelton, commanding the battery (Battery D, New York Light Artillery), the captain, Winslow, having been wounded, at last surrendered two guns, howitzers, the other two escaping. We attempted to bring off the two guns captured, and did get them some distance, but the enemy, being re-inforced, made an advance, and we were in turn driven back to our first position, leaving the guns between the lines. Preceding and up to the capture of the howitzers referred to the fighting was desperate, muskets and their butt-ends and bayonets being used. At one time there was such an intermingling of troops that confusion decidedly predominated; every man was going it on his own hook, for it was a hand-to-hand contest. We recall that

in a gully which formed a part of the topography of this battlefield, and which ran for more than a brigade front, Confederates and Federals were so nearly on even terms, or at equal advantage, that they were simultaneously demanding each other to surrender. However we succeeded in establishing the superiority of our claim, and came off victors. It was now about 2 o'clock P. M. No more fighting was done on this front, save a few picket shots and a feeble attempt of the enemy late in the afternoon to recapture the two guns, which still remained between the lines and at a point to which we had pulled them in the morning. This was a signal failure, and the repulse was largely assisted by the men of the First and Third North Carolina. After dark the two howitzers were brought in by details from the two North Carolina regiments.

We would like just here, and in connection with the joint capture of a section of that battery, to emphasize the affinity which obtained between the First and Third North Carolina Infantry. Beginning their military career together, fate had not separated them for now three years; military duty of whatever kind that was assigned to one befell the other also; the glory of the one was the boast of the other, the misfortune of one the sorrow of the other; they achieved renown in common, they suffered defeat together.

In the early morning of the 6th, Stewart's Brigade was closed in to the left, until its right rested on the pike, with Jones' (Virginia) Brigade on its right, which connected with the left of Battle's (Alabama) Brigade. Several vigorous attempts were made during the day by the enemy by attack upon that quarter, to force the line to the left, but they were as vigorously repulsed, and then we would return to our position of the morning.

The morning of the 7th revealed the enemy gone, and the day was spent by the men in congratulations. Late in the evening of this day the brigade began closing or extending—cannot call it marching—to the right, which continued during the entire night, the men having no time for rest or sleep. The morning of the 8th dawned bright and hot. The line of march was

taken up and pushed with vigor, notwithstanding the heat, dust, parching thirst and smoke and fire of burning woods. The nature of the march was sufficient to convince those heroes that their presence was required to meet the foe on some other field, and gallantly did they toil through the day. As the sun was hiding behind the western wood the brigade was thrown in line to the support of General Rodes' Division, in front of the Spottsylvania court-house, but was not engaged. After dark it marched and counter-marched in search of a position, and at 10 P. M. was formed in line and ordered to throw up works in that salient which proved so disastrous on the 12th following. By daylight of the 9th, in spite of the fatigue and loss of sleep on the night of the 7th and the terrible march of the 8th, the entire brigade, with no tool except the bayonet and tin plate, was intrenched behind a good and defensible rifle-pit. This day was spent in strengthening the lines, scouting to the front, and that sleep, so much needed. The works or fortifications referred to assumed the shape of, and were always designated as, the "horse-shoe." The morning of the 10th found the brigade closed to the right, connecting with the left of Hill's Corps, with Jones' Brigade on our left, occupying the works in the salient proper. Late in the afternoon Doles' Brigade, whose position was on the left of Jones' Brigade, was attacked about sunset, and was pressed back upon Stewart's rear, followed closely by the exultant enemy. Orders to "Fall in," "Take arms," "Face by the rear rank," and "Forward" were repeated in quick succession. The brigade responded with alacrity, and soon was moving steadily, though moving in line of battle by the rear rank, through a small strip of woods into a field (in which stood a dwelling), and there meeting the enemy, immediately attacked. The work here was sharp and quick, resulting in the repulse of the Federals across and out of Doles' works and their occupation by Stewart. It was, however, soon discovered that Stewart did not cover Doles' entire front to the left, and fifty or more of the enemy were having a happy time enfilading the lines. Lieutenant Robert Lyon, with Company H, Third North Carolina—

the then left company—was formed across and perpendicularly to the line, and, moving promptly down the left, drove them off. Before this could be accomplished the Third North Carolina, on the left, had suffered severely. Many men were wounded, including Colonel S. D. Thruston, seriously, and Lieutenant Cicero H. Craige and Sergeant-major Robert C. McRee were killed. Lieutenant-Colonel Parsley, of course, after Colonel Thruston was wounded, was in command of the regiment. The brigade was then moved back to its original position and remained inactive throughout the 11th. Just after night-fall of the 11th the artillery, for some reason or other which was never apparent to those not high in authority, if to them, was removed from their position on this part of the line, and for aught we know, from all parts, the direct effect of such withdrawal, commencing to be felt on the 12th, was never fully recovered from. We had great generals, but they were human, and “to err is human.” At the peep of dawn on May 12, 1864, dark and rainy, an attack was made by the Federals *en masse* on Jones’ Brigade, occupying the salient angle of this doomed “horse-shoe,” the shock of which was felt throughout the entire Confederacy. No pen can adequately portray what occurred then and there. The weather, thus early, was a fitting prelude to a day that eventuated in so great sorrow and anguish. The elements seemed to portend impending fate—hopes blasted, aspirations crushed. The First North Carolina was on the right of Jones’ Brigade, and their commander, the brave Colonel Hamilton A. Brown, says: “For a short time the fighting was desperate. The terrific onslaught of this vast multitude was irresistible, there being a rectangular mass of twenty thousand Federal troops, not in line of battle, but in column of regiments doubled on the centre, supported by a division on each flank—in all more than thirty thousand concentrated against this one point. The portion of the works assaulted by this formidable column was little more than four hundred yards wide. The Confederate troops occupying this angle were Jones’ Brigade

and the First North Carolina Regiment, numbering about two thousand." The clash of arms and the murderous fire around this bloody angle are indescribable.

The enemy sweeping to the right and rear of the fortifications and striking the Third North Carolina Regiment, which adjoined the First North Carolina, and capturing that entire regiment, with very few escapes, pursued their way into the lines of A. P. Hill's Corps, making many captures there. Lieutenant-Colonel Parsley, commanding the Third North Carolina Infantry on that morning, and who was captured in his works, says: "Stewart faced the rear rank and continued to fight inside the lines until a second column attacked him in front, when, finding himself between two fires at short range, he was compelled to surrender." At what particular point the enemy was checked on our right we do not know, as we were captured with Lieutenant-Colonel Parsley. The prisoners of war hauled in by the Federals on that morning we have heard estimated at three thousand, including Major-General Edward Johnson, Brigadier-General Stewart and other brigadiers, and very many field and line officers. Captain E. H. Armstrong was killed. Some aspersion has been cast, and that, too, by one high in command, upon Jones' Brigade, for not holding their ground when attacked that morning (12th). Such a judgment, in our opinion, is not only at fault, but has a tinge of garrulous fatuity, or is predicated upon malevolence. In the name of all that is reasonable, fair, or an equitable decision as to another, how could about two thousand men, probably less, withstand the combined attack of thirty thousand men, concentrated upon a point of four hundred yards, and resist them successfully, and that, too, without an important arm of the service (the artillery) aiding them, for, as we have said, it had been removed from their front? Remember this was in an open space. The breastworks referred to were trenches, in depth not more than four and one-half or five feet. We have said this much in sheer justice to Jones' Brigade, for we do not believe that any similar number of troops could be

found anywhere who could have done more than was done by them. We count any brigade fortunate which was not exposed to such a test.

At this time such portions of the First and Third Regiments as were not captured on May 12th were consolidated and placed in General W. R. Cox's Brigade.

On the night of May 21st the army was withdrawn from its position to meet the enemy, who had retired toward the North Anna. On the morning of the 23d we confronted the enemy near Hanover Junction, where the line of battle was formed and earth-works thrown up. May 24th the enemy attacked the sharpshooters and drove them from their position, but after a sharp and hand-to-hand fight for several minutes they were driven to the opposite side of the breastworks and the assault was continued several hours. The enemy several times attempted to recapture the works, but were as often repulsed. A heavy rain having set in and darkness approaching, the enemy retired. Shortly after dark the army retired towards Richmond to meet the enemy, who were moving in the same direction. Nothing save frequent skirmishing occurred until the afternoon of May 30th, on which the battle of Bethesda Church occurred. Further skirmishing took place May 31st, June 1st, and the battle of Gaines' Mill, June 2d, and Cold Harbor, June 3d, in all of which the First and Third (consolidated) participated. After the battle of Cold Harbor, June 3d, the Second Corps, composed of Ramseur's, Rodes' and Gordon's Divisions, under the command of General Early, was directed to proceed to the Valley of Virginia for the purpose of destroying or capturing Hunter, who was in camp near Lynchburg. General Breckinridge and Major-General Robert Ransom, commanding the cavalry, were awaiting our arrival. Hunter, upon learning of the arrival of the Confederates on the 18th, under the cover of night, made a hasty retreat. Early on the morning of the 19th we commenced pursuit, and just before night overtook the enemy's rear at Liberty, where a skirmish ensued, and again at Buford's Gap, on the afternoon of the 20th. The pursuit was continued on the 21st through

Salem, Va., where another skirmish took place. After resting a day, we resumed the march in the direction of the Potomac River, reaching Staunton on the morning of the 27th, then marched in the direction of Harper's Ferry, which was reached on the morning of July 4th. Here Bolivar Heights was captured about 10 o'clock A. M., and about 8 o'clock P. M. the enemy were driven from Harper's Ferry across the river to Maryland Heights. On the 6th the corps crossed the Potomac at Shepherdstown, and engaged the enemy in the rear of Maryland Heights. The battle continued nearly all day. We moved through Crampton's Gap toward Frederick, and after many skirmishes reached Frederick Md., on the morning of the 9th, where General Wallace's Division of Federals was strongly posted on the eastern bank of the Monocacy River. After a stubborn fight the enemy was driven from the field, leaving in our hands six or seven hundred prisoners, besides killed and wounded. Our loss in killed and wounded was severe. The march was resumed on the 10th in the direction of Washington City. As the weather was hot and the roads dusty, it was very trying to our troops, who arrived in front of Fort Stevens on the evening of the 11th, within sight of the dome of the Federal Capitol. After reconnoitering and skirmishing a couple of days, and upon hearing of the arrival of two additional corps at Washington from the Army of the Potomac, our troops were withdrawn on the night of the 12th, and we crossed the Potomac on the night of the 15th near Leesburg, followed by the enemy's cavalry. We then moved towards the Valley of Virginia, crossing the Blue Ridge at Snicker's Gap on the 17th of July, the Federals slowly following. On the afternoon of the 18th Rodes' Division attacked the enemy at Snicker's Ford, driving them in the Shenandoah River, where they lost heavily in killed and drowned. On the 19th the division moved towards Strasburg, and on the afternoon of the 20th to the support of General Ramseur, but arrived after the engagement had ceased. The division then retired to Fisher's Hill, remaining until the enemy was attacked at Kernstown, on the 24th, and driven across the

Potomac into Maryland. Rodes' Division then marched and counter-marched between the Potomac and Fisher's Hill until September 22d, during which time it was engaged almost daily in skirmishing, and took part in the battles of Winchester, August 17th; Charlestown, August 21st; Smithfield, August 29th; Bunker Hill, September 3d; second battle of Winchester, September 19th; Fisher's Hill, September 22d. On the morning of September 19th this division, while moving in column up the Martiusburg road to the support of General Ramseur, who was engaged with Sheridan's army near Winchester, was unexpectedly called to attention, faced to the left and moved forward to engage the enemy, who had advanced to within one hundred yards of the road. After a brief and vigorous assault the Federals commenced falling back, and were driven through the woods and the open fields until Cooke's Brigade was brought to a temporary halt and Cox received orders to push forward his brigade. At this time General Rodes was shot in the head by a ball, and fell from his horse. The troops pushed on, unaware of this calamity, and struck a weak line of the enemy. At this point the Federals were severely punished, and fell back, leaving their killed and wounded. A large number of officers and men, who were secreted in a ditch, were captured. We pursued the enemy with a hot fire beyond the crest of a hill, on which Grimes had established his line. Here Evans' Brigade, upon meeting a heavy fire, fell back, which exposed this brigade to a concentrated, direct and left-oblique fire. At the request of General Cox, a battery was placed on a hill in our rear, and the brigade fell back and formed behind it, which opened with telling effect upon the enemy's heavy lines. They laid down, and the victory appeared to be ours. While our loss in men and officers had been severe, the troops had good spirits. Here Colonel S. D. Thruston was severely wounded, the command devolving upon Lieutenant-Colonel Parsley. After remaining until about 4 o'clock in the afternoon, we discovered that the Federals were in our rear, and fell back in good order to the Martinsburg pike and formed on the left of our troops. Here we were exposed,

without any protection, to a heavy artillery fire, which was telling upon our men. We were then faced about and commenced retiring deliberately to the hills, all the troops conforming to this movement. General Early, through a staff officer, directed General Cox to return, when we were faced about and moved to the front. Upon reaching the turnpike, we were ordered by General Early to fall back, which we slowly accomplished. Our troops now retreated toward Fisher's Hill. While retreating in column, this brigade was ordered to protect the artillery then passing. Facing about, we were deployed, and advanced between the enemy's cavalry and our artillery, which was done with great spirit and promptness. In this manner we moved on, protecting the artillery until near dusk, when we found General Ramseur with his division thrown across the turnpike to prevent pursuit. About the time this brigade and the artillery crossed his line the enemy made a spirited charge to capture the guns, which was met with a well-directed fire from Ramseur's men, which stopped further pursuit. After our defeat at Winchester we fell back and formed line of battle behind Fisher's Hill. After the fall of General Rodes, General Ramseur was placed in charge of his division. On the 22d we had a skirmish with the enemy. About dusk the brigade was promptly formed across the road to cover the retreat. We advanced rapidly to a fence, where we met the enemy in a hand-to-hand encounter, repulsed him, and stopped pursuit for the night. Here Colonel Pendleton, of the artillery, fell, mortally wounded. After the defeat at Fisher's Hill we fell back up the Valley as far as Waynesboro, where re-inforcements were received. October 1st we returned down the Valley, reaching Fisher's Hill on October 13th, and there formed behind breastworks. A flanking movement was directed by General Early, and we commenced moving soon after dark. The night was consumed by a very fatiguing and exhausting march, which was conducted with the greatest secrecy. We crossed Cedar Creek at early dawn, being joined here by Payne's Cavalry, who at full speed advanced upon and captured Sheridan's headquarters. But for his ab-

sence they would have captured him. The first warning Crook's Corps had of our presence was the rebel yells and volleys of our musketry, which sent them hastily from their camp, leaving all behind. This victory was delightful to our troops, after so many repulses. So great was the demoralization of the enemy after this little brigade drove back a division ten times its number, meeting with but slight resistance, that by 8 o'clock we had captured all of their artillery and from one thousand five hundred to two thousand prisoners. The Federals were in retreat. About 3 o'clock in the afternoon Sheridan, having joined and rallied his troops, the tide of battle was turned, and the Confederates were driven up the Valley to New Market. Here Major-General Ramseur was killed endeavoring to rally his troops, where they remained until about the 22d of November, when Ramseur's Division routed General Sheridan, commanding a considerable body of cavalry, between New Market and Mount Jackson. This ended the Valley campaign of 1864, and Brigadier-General Bryan Grimes was promoted to Major-General, and assigned to the command of this division. About a week before Christmas this regiment and other troops composing the Second Corps returned to Petersburg and went into winter quarters at Swift Creek, about three miles north of the city. About the middle of February, 1865, we moved to Southerland's Depot, on the right of the Army of Northern Virginia. Here the regiment remained until the middle of March, when it was ordered into the trenches in front of Petersburg, where it remained until the night of the 24th of March, when General Gordon's Corps, this brigade forming a part, was massed opposite Hare's Hill, where the distance between the lines was one hundred yards. On the morning of the 25th the division corps of sharpshooters, commanded by Colonel H. A. Brown, surprised and captured the enemy's pickets and entered his main lines. This regiment, with the other troops of the division immediately following, occupied the enemy's works for some distance on either side of Hare's Hill, and held them against great odds for about five hours, during which time the enemy poured a deadly fire into the

Confederates from several batteries, and having massed large bodies of infantry, forced the withdrawal of the Confederates, with considerable loss in killed, wounded and prisoners. We then resumed our position in the trenches. About 11 o'clock on the night of April 1st the enemy opened a heavy cannonading all along the line, under cover of which they attacked in heavy forces at several points, making a break in the division on our right. On Sunday morning, the 2d, at daylight, they made a breach in the line held by the brigade of the left centre of the division, and occupied our works for some distance on either side of Fort Mahone. The division attacked the enemy at close quarters, driving him from traverse to traverse, sometimes in a hand-to-hand fight, until the works were retaken up to a point opposite Fort Mahone, which was finally captured. The Confederates thus regained the entire works taken from the division in the early morning. The enemy, however, promptly moved forward and recaptured the Confederate line and Fort Mahone, leaving Grimes' Division still in possession of that portion of the line retaken from the enemy in the early part of the day, and which was held until the lines in front of Richmond and Petersburg were opened, when we, with the army, commenced to retreat. Marching day and night, with only short intervals of rest, we reached Amelia Court House on April 4th, where the exhausted troops rested a few hours. Being closely pursued by the enemy, the march was resumed that night.

General Bryan Grimes, then Major-General commanding the division, was assigned to the position of rearguard, General Cox still commanding our brigade and Lieutenant-Colonel Parsley the regiment. The enemy's cavalry, elated over their successes, frequently rode into the Confederate lines, making it necessary to form a line of battle across the road in column of brigade, while the others continued to march. This running fight continued until the afternoon of the 6th, when at Sailor's Creek, near Farmville, Va., a general engagement ensued, where the Confederates, overwhelmed by superior numbers, retreated along the bridge at

Farmville. Here the gallant hero, Lieutenant-Colonel Parsley, gave up his life, being shot in the head with a minnie-ball.

Who ever knew Willie Parsley, that did not love him? We write not the empty words of the mere panegyrist; we speak the words of a candid soberness and truth. He so impressed all with whom he came in contact that no one who ever met ever forgot him. He was the soul of honor. Without fear, he was without reproach. Knowing how to obey, he was the better fitted to command. There was not the semblance of dissimulation in any trait of his character. You always felt after an interview with him that he was guided and controlled by an honesty of purpose. He commanded in an especial degree the esteem and confidence of his superior officers. A report emanating from Colonel Parsley, they knew, told the exact status of the subject-matter upon which they were seeking information. They frequently came to his headquarters socially and enjoyed his hospitality. On duty he was the officer; duty done, he was the kind, genial gentleman and friend. Strictly conscientious in the discharge of his religious obligations, no asceticism marred the beauty and symmetry of a well-ordered life. The scales of justice in his hands were well poised between his company officers and the rank and file in their commands. Every man in his regiment could appeal to him and be heard. Young in years, he was experienced in true wisdom, and would have been a most capable officer in any of the gradations of rank. Killed in the battle of Sailor's Creek, at the early age of twenty-four, no Confederate soldier who yielded up his life was more sincerely mourned, and no one remembered with more grateful recollection.

Beyond Farmville, on the morning of the 7th, the division charged the enemy and recaptured a battery of artillery which had been taken by him. We continued the march towards Lynchburg upon a parallel road to that the enemy had taken for the purpose of intercepting us. We reached Appomattox Court House on Saturday evening, the 8th, where the exhausted troops bivouacked until about the middle of night, when this division

was ordered from the position of rearguard to the front to open the road towards Lynchburg, now occupied by the enemy in large force. About sunrise on Sunday morning, April 9, 1865, this division (Grimes') engaged a large body of the enemy's cavalry, supported by infantry, and drove them more than a mile, capturing a battery and several prisoners. While engaged in this pursuit, they were ordered back to a valley. This brigade was commanded by the veteran soldier, General W. R. Cox, who, as his men were retiring, ordered a halt, and the command was given: "Right about, face!" to meet a cavalry force which was coming down upon him. It was promptly obeyed, and once more and for the last time, these valiant, ragged, foot-sore and half-starved North Carolinians withstood in the strength of their invincible manhood the men whom they had met and driven back on many a bloody field. In the clear and firm voice of the gallant Cox the command rang out: "Ready, Aim, Fire!" and the last volley fired by the Army of Northern Virginia was by these North Carolina troops, this regiment among the number. Defeated, but not dishonored! On leaving the valley, we learned the sad intelligence that the Army of Northern Virginia had surrendered. Sad and gloomy indeed were the faces of those noble heroes, who could not realize that General Lee would ever surrender.

The fragment of the First and Third Regiments, commanded by Major W. T. Eunnett, since the loss of Colonel Parsley on the 6th, was bivouacked with the brigade (Cox's), Grimes' Division, Gordon's Corps, and prepared the muster-rolls for the final capitulation. On the morning of April 12th they laid down their arms, dispersed on foot, many ragged and without shoes, and made their way to their desolated homes.

And now let us recite the "roll of honor": Colonel Gaston Meares, killed in the battle of Malvern Hill; Captain Thomas E. Armstrong, killed in the battle of Chancellorsville; Captain John F. S. Van Bokkelen, wounded in the battle of Chancellorsville, died within a month afterwards.

It was with grief, and that, too, without alloy, that the death

of Captain Van Bokkelen, which occurred in Richmond, Va., was announced to the regiment while on the march in the campaign of 1863. He was universally popular and almost idolized by his own men. But twenty-one years of age, and full of youthful ardor, intelligent, with an acute conception of his duties and an indomitable energy in pursuing the line of conduct which a discriminating judgment dictated, to him, possibly, more than to any other officer of the company which he commanded, was due the high *morale* to which that company attained.

Captain David Williams, Captain E. H. Rodes, Captain E. G. Meares, Lieutenants Duncan McNair, Thomas Cowan and William Quince, killed in the battle of Sharpsburg; Lieutenants Tobias Garrison, Henry A. Potter and Thomas Kelly, killed in the battle of Gettysburg; Captain E. H. Armstrong, Lieutenant Cicero H. Craige and Sergeant-major Robert C. McRee, killed in the battle of Spottsylvania; Lieutenant-Colonel W. M. Parsley, killed in the battle of Sailor's Creek, near Farmville; and that host of non-commissioned officers and privates (would that their names were accessible to us, that we might locate each individual as to company and record his merit) who yielded their lives under the banner of the Confederacy. Good soldiers and true men they were, discharging duty under any and all conditions. Their hearts' blood flecked the soil of Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania, and the fields of battle in those three States attest their prowess.

Nor yet would the history of the Third North Carolina Infantry be complete without reciting the names of Dr. J. F. McRee, Surgeon, and Doctors Josh C. Walker, Kenneth Black and Thomas F. Wood, the well-beloved and faithful physicians, Captain Roger P. Atkinson, Captain R. S. Radcliffe, Captain William A. Cumming, Major W. T. Ennett, Lieutenant Amos Sidbury, Lieutenant Ward, Lieutenant-Colonel Edward Savage, Captain Richard F. Langdon, Lieutenants I. J. Pickett, S. P. Hand, George B. Baker, N. A. Graham, L. Moore, W. H. Barr and Robert H. Lyon, who have all died since the capitulation. Adjutant Theodore C. James has also crossed "the narrow

stream of death." Our pen falters when we attempt to pay tribute to his memory: companion of our youth, friend of our manhood. For him to espouse a cause was to make it a part of his very self. Intrepid, no more courageous soldier trod the soil of any battlefield upon which the Army of Northern Virginia encountered a foe. The impulses of his nature were magnanimous; no groveling thoughts unbalanced the equity of his judgment. True to his friends and to principle, he remained as "constant as the northern star, of whose true, fixed and resting quality there is no fellow in the firmament." Leaving his right arm upon a battlefield of Virginia, and exempt for that cause from further military duty, he disdained any privilege which such disability brought to him, but continued in active service until the last shot had been fired and "arms stacked" forever.

We have endeavored to compile a correct history of the regiment with which we served as Confederate soldiers. If errors of commission have crept in, or if there be any of omissions, it is with sincere regret on our part; nor should they have occurred, save that we were ignorant of them. The memories of the martyrs of the "lost cause" are too precious to be relegated to oblivion through any laches on the part of those who could prevent it, or whose duty it is to preserve them. A duty owed first to the dead—and to the living.

JOHN COWAN,
JAMES I. METTS.

WILMINGTON, N. C.,
9th April, 1900.

ADDITIONAL SKETCH THIRD REGIMENT.

BY COLONEL W. L. DEROSSET.

Gaston Meares, of Wilmington, N. C., was appointed by Governor Ellis to the command of the Third Regiment of State Troops, and Robert Harper Cowan and William Lord DeRosset were commissioned, respectively, Lieutenant-Colonel and Major of the same regiment.

Steps were at once taken to form the regiment, first from material already partially organized into companies and partly by regular enlistments under company officers likewise appointed by the Governor.

This regiment, one of ten authorized by the Constitutional Convention to be raised, enlisted for the war, and all officers were appointed by the Governor, with the understanding clearly had that all vacancies should be filled by promotion or appointment by recommendation of the commanding officer.

[The companies, with names of their respective captains, and counties from which raised, are given in the sketch of Captains Cowan and Metts, page 178, *ante*.]

The several companies were ordered to assemble at the camp of instruction at Garysburg as fast as their ranks were filled, and in the latter part of May they began to report to the officer in charge of the camp.

Colonel Meares and Lieutenant-Colonel Cowan reported at the camp about June 1st. Major DeRosset, having been ordered to Fort Macon to relieve Colonel C. C. Tew, of the Second North Carolina Regiment, of the command of that post, was delayed in joining his command until some two weeks later. Meanwhile, the men were being drilled in the school of the soldier, preparatory to company drill; and so soon as Major DeRosset reported

for duty he was ordered to take charge of the drilling and disciplining of the force.

Colonel Meares moved West from Wilmington, where he was born, when quite a young man and settled in Arkansas, whence he went into the war with Mexico as Adjutant of one of the first regiments raised in that State; subsequently being elected to command on the death of its colonel (Yell). At the beginning of our late difficulty he reported for duty to the Governor and was at once commissioned as Colonel.

Lieutenant-Colonel Robert H. Cowan was also a native of Wilmington, and was prominent in the politics of the State, both locally and as a Representative in its legislative halls. Upon the reorganization of the twelve months regiments, he was elected Colonel of the Eighteenth, thus severing his connection with the Third in May, 1862.

Major DeRosset, likewise a native of the same place, had been connected with the local military for seven years, most of the time as an officer of the Wilmington Light Infantry, having carried that company into service, which was later assigned to the Eighteenth.

A portion of the Third was ordered to Richmond early in July, where it was joined some weeks later by the remaining companies which had been left at Garysburg under Major DeRosset.

A few days after the first battle of Manassas the regiment was ordered to report to Major-General T. H. Holmes, at Acquia Creek, and went into camp near Brooks' Station, on the Richmond, Fredericksburg & Potomac Railroad, later moving camp to a point near the Potomac River, and, as winter approached, having meantime built substantial winter quarters, they took up their abode therein, immediately in rear of the lower battery of those constructed for the defense of Acquia Creek.

Upon the evacuation of the line of the Potomac the Third North Carolina, with the First, was ordered to Goldsboro to meet a supposed advance of Burnside from New Bern, remaining thereabouts until early in June, 1862. In May, Lieutenant-

Colonel Cowan having been promoted, Major DeRosset was made Lieutenant-Colonel, and Captain Savage, Major.

The First and the Third North Carolina Troops were under the same brigade commanders from first to last, but, unfortunately, were always brigaded with troops from other States, and never received the deserved meed for their achievements.

First, Colonel John G. Walker was assigned to command, the brigade then consisting of the First and Third North Carolina and the Thirtieth Virginia and First Arkansas; but Colonel Walker proved to be the junior colonel in the brigade, and General Holmes asked for and obtained a commission for him as brigadier-general, and he continued in command.

Brigadier-General Roswell S. Ripley next had its command, and upon reaching Richmond on the evening of the last day's fight at Seven Pines a change was made in the composition of the brigade and the Fortieth and Forty-fourth Georgia Regiments took the places of the Virginia and Arkansas troops.

The Third reached the battlefield only in time to be held in reserve late in the evening, but were not ordered to participate.

The march from Richmond was most trying to the raw troops of the brigade, who had not then received their baptism of fire, passing thousands of dead and wounded from the time they left the cars until they arrived on the field; and the groans and cries of the wounded were not calculated to inspire the boys with a martial spirit. During the period from that date to the opening of the battles around Richmond the command was in camp about six miles from Richmond, drilling and preparing for the summer campaign.

Late in the evening of June 25, 1862, Colonel Meares received orders to march, and proceeding early next morning in a northerly direction, was halted on the high hills on the south of the Chickahominy where it is crossed by the Mechanicsville pike.

Lieutenant-Colonel DeRosset was here again detached and ordered to take charge of a battalion composed of one company from each regiment, and to advance, crossing the stream, to Mechanicsville; but after reaching the middle of the creek he was

ordered to assemble his command and cross on the bridge. The battalion was thus thrown on the left of the brigade, advancing left in front, and, on being drawn up in line of battle on the north side, went into action, charging the enemy's position, which was well fortified on the further side of a small stream about one-half mile from the pike. The brigade suffered severely in this attack, mainly from the stupid manner in which it was put into action. The Forty-fourth Georgia was almost annihilated, having lost heavily in killed and wounded, the others mostly routed. The Fortieth Georgia lost its colonel early in the action, and were more or less demoralized. The First North Carolina perhaps suffered in killed and wounded more than either of the regiments, if not of all combined. They had the misfortune to be immediately in front of the heaviest of the Yankee batteries, which swept the approaches with grape and canister continuously. The Third North Carolina lost perhaps less than either of the others, Major Savage being the only one of the field officers wounded.

Joining after that battle the forces of General Jackson, the command was marched by a circuitous route to Cold Harbor, or Gaines' Mill, where the battle took place on the afternoon of June 27th. Here but a small fraction of the Third was exposed to direct musketry fire, for reasons none but General Ripley could explain, and the officers of the command are not known to have said that any explanation was vouchsafed. Marching thence, after two or three days' delay, the brigade found itself in front of one of the bridges over the Chickahominy which had been destroyed by the enemy on the south side, he having crossed the day before on the famous "grape-vine" bridge, some distance above. Here, being exposed to the enemy's fire of artillery without the means of replying, Ripley was withdrawn into a heavy woods on the northwest side of the road, lying there all day under the artillery fire, at times very annoying, but with little loss. This was the day of the battle of Frazer's Farm, a few miles lower down the stream.

Next day, the enemy having withdrawn and the bridge re-

paired, Ripley crossed and marched on Malvern Hill, arriving there at noon, and was posted immediately in the rear of what was known as the Parsonage, on the near side of the road leading by Malvern Hill, and on the left of the army. Being ordered to advance, the whole line moved forward, and from the peculiar conformation of the land in front, the hill up which Ripley moved being almost an isolated knoll, upon reaching the top each regiment was found to be represented in the mass of disorganized troops occupying the yard of the Parsonage and the road in front. The officers of the several commands seemed not to have noted the conformation of the ground, and as each company reached the foot of the hill it would change direction to go up the shortest road, thereby bringing about the trouble as seen at that point. Meantime a terrific fire of artillery and infantry swept the field, and the men involuntarily hugged the ground. Here they lay for some time, men falling every minute, and some leaving the field in search of surgical assistance. There was no possibility of doing anything, so far as could be seen by the field officers, and Ripley had not been seen about the lines after the first order was given to advance. About an hour before dusk word came from the left that Captain Brown, commanding the First North Carolina, was hard pressed, and wanted assistance, when Colonel Meares determined to re-inforce him, and gave the command to move by the left flank. He, going on foot into the road in front of the line, upon reaching a point about opposite the left of the Third, stopped, and mounting the bank on the side of the road, was using his field-glass, surveying the Yankee lines, when he was instantly killed by a slug from a shrapnel fired from a battery directly in front, said to be the Third Rhode Island Battery, not over seventy-five yards distant.

Colonel Meares was a man of marked individuality. Respected by his superior officers, beloved by his subordinate officers, and even by the most humble private, his untimely death was deeply deplored by all alike. It is certain that he would have been recommended for promotion.

The Third held its position until withdrawn sometime during

the night, and bivouacked near that point for several days, when the brigade was ordered back to the old camping-grounds nearer Richmond.

Colonel DeRosset having been promoted to the command of the Third, decided to visit Raleigh for the purpose of recruiting the regiment.

The losses in officers of the Third were numerous, but several were temporarily disabled by wounds. Some vacancies occurred about this time, and the conspicuous gallantry of Cicero H. Craig caused his recommendation for promotion, and he was at once put on duty, by brigade orders, as Lieutenant of Company I.

Just here it is well to put on record an instance showing how the officers of the Third held to the original understanding with the Governor that all promotions and appointments should be made by or upon the recommendation of the commanding officer of the regiment. Upon the report made to Governor Clark in person by Colonel DeRosset, the Governor promised to have the commission for Lieutenant Craig mailed to him without delay, but upon being approached by two officers of Company I, who represented to the Governor that if Craig was made lieutenant of the company the men would resist and disband, he revoked his order for the commission, and ordered an election to be held in the company to fill the vacancy. Upon receipt of the communication from the Adjutant-General, Colonel DeRosset addressed the Governor, declining to hold an election in his regiment, and should he insist upon it, that he could consider his resignation as being before him. Further explanation was made that the parties who informed the Governor of the condition of affairs in Company I had not participated in the late fights, and were hardly in position to form an intelligent opinion of the facts, and that the discipline of the men in his regiment was his responsibility as much as that of the company officers, and he would be responsible for results. As a *finale*, both officers referred to very soon ceased to hold their positions, and, for some forgotten reasons, were allowed to go home. The Governor ex-

pressed himself as fully satisfied, and immediately sent on Craig's commission.

Apropos, as to elections to fill vacancies, while near Goldsboro, in the spring of 1862, a vacancy occurred in the office of Second Lieutenant of Company G. Orders came from headquarters one afternoon to hold an election to fill the vacancy. Colonel Meares, after reading the order, passed it to Lieutenant-Colonel DeRosset, with the instruction that he should see that the order was carried out. Not seeing his way clear, but knowing the feelings of Colonel Meares as to permitting elections, DeRosset walked off in the direction of the camp of that company, hoping for some solution of the problem. Fortunately he found Lieutenant Quince of that company in charge, the captain being absent from camp. Quince had been educated as a soldier in the ranks of the Wilmington Light Infantry, and DeRosset knew he could be depended upon. At once handing the order to Quince, he, Quince, threw up his hands with horror at being called upon to be the instrument in carrying out such an order. DeRosset replied that the opinions of all the regimental, field and staff, as well as most of the line officers, were well known to be against such a system, but the order was imperative, and must be obeyed. Remaining in hearing, and feeling that fun was ahead, DeRosset, standing behind the captain's tent, heard the following, almost literally related:

LIEUTENANT QUINCE—"Sergeant, make the men fall in with arms." This was done quickly, and, addressing the men, he read the order, and remarked: "Men, there are two candidates for the office," naming them, "and there is but one of them worth a d—n, and I nominate him. All who are in favor of electing Sergeant —, come to a shoulder. Company, shoulder arms!" Then, turning to the Orderly Sergeant, remarked: "Sergeant, take charge of the company and dismiss them."

Inside of fifteen minutes from the time the order was handed the Colonel, Lieutenant Quince handed in his report: "That an election had been held in accordance with Special Order No. —, and that

Sergeant — had been unanimously elected." This put a stop to all talk about elections for some time, and, after Craig's promotion, the subject was never again mentioned.

Ripley lay in camp for several weeks, while details were made to work on the intrenchments in our front and for several miles down towards the Chickahominy, while other details gathered arms from the several battlefields.

Up to this time the Third was armed principally with smooth-bore muskets, but with the ample supply of the Springfield rifled muskets gathered from the field and captured, there was enough to supply our whole army with the improved gun. Orders came from headquarters that all muskets should be turned in and the troops armed with the rifles. Colonel DeRosset believed firmly in the great efficiency of the smooth-bore with buck and ball cartridges, and, after a consultation with General Ripley, secured a modification of the order as applying to the Third North Carolina, and was allowed to retain muskets for eight companies, arming the two flank companies with the rifles. He always insisted that it was owing to the good use of the buck and ball at close range at Sharpsburg that the Third were enabled to do so much damage, and to hold their position after advancing for so long a time.

In the latter part of July, Colonel DeRosset returned from Raleigh and brought with him four hundred conscripts, who were at once divided into small squads, and, under command of non-commissioned officers, were drilled several hours daily. This not only helped to discipline the raw levies, but hardened them somewhat, thus enabling them the better to stand the strains incident to the march into Maryland, which soon followed.

During this period, awaiting marching orders, the first execution under sentence of a military court took place in the brigade on the person of an Irishman who had deserted and was captured in his efforts to reach the enemy's lines. He belonged to Captain Dudley's company, of the First North Carolina, and the firing party was from his own company, who did their sad duty like true soldiers.

About the time that Jackson was looking for Pope's "head-quarters," from Culpepper to Manassas, Ripley received marching orders, and the brigade went by rail to Orange Court House. Here the brigade bivouacked for several days, officers and men wondering why we were held back, when it was evident that hard work was going on at the front. However, marching orders came at last, and after much time given to preparation, we finally took the road for Culpepper Court House, thence in a northerly direction to the Alexandria and Luray pike, striking that road about sundown at a point called Amisville. To the amazement of the field and line officers, instead of marching toward Warrenton, where it was generally understood Lee had passed, the head of the column was changed to the left. One of the officers here rode up to the head of the column, and accosting General Ripley, asked if he had any objection to saying where we were marching to. His reply was: "I am going to see my sweetheart at Luray." He thereupon ordered a halt, and to go into bivouac at once and prepare rations as issued, having just received by courier orders from General Lee to march at once, and quickly, to Manassas Junction. Next morning, after a deliberate breakfast, the column counter-marched and reached Warrenton about 2 or 3 o'clock P. M. The General repaired to a private house for refreshments, directing the command to proceed to a point a mile or two out on the Manassas road and bivouac, with special instructions to the officers left in command to have the column drawn up in line on the road ready to march at 4 o'clock A. M. next day, but not to move until he came up. The command was on time, and stood in a drenching rain until about 7 o'clock, when Ripley appeared, and the column moved on. Arriving at the Junction about 3 or 4 o'clock P. M., in full hearing of the desperate conflict going on a short distance ahead of us, we were deliberately filed off the road in an opposite direction and halted, bivouacked there that night and next morning crossed Bull Run at Sudley's Ford, having passed over perhaps the bloodiest portion of the field, where the dead and many wounded still lay in the sun. Marching through a country

entirely destitute of water for several miles, we finally reached the Alexandria and Leesburg pike, where a halt was made to allow the men to drink and fill their canteens. Moving on in the direction of Alexandria, which point was understood to be Lee's objective point, we came up while the battle of Ox Hill was being fought, and were held in reserve until its close, falling back next morning to a beautiful country-seat known as Chantilly, where we bivouacked for several days.

The march into Maryland then commenced, and we moved towards Leesburg, where we received rations again and prepared them for another march; bivouacked there for twenty-four hours, and then taking a road direct to the Potomac, crossed at Point of Rocks; thence moving down the bank of the river along the canal to Point of Rocks, where, taking our last view of old Virginia, we took the road for Frederick City direct, halting there for two or more days.

The army moved westwardly along the Great Western turnpike, crossing the mountains, and bivouacked that night a little beyond Boonsboro. On the evening of Saturday, September 13, 1862, the brigade was counter-marched toward the mountain and placed in line of battle on the north side of the pike, near the foot of the mountain, again in reserve. Next morning, Sunday, Colonel Doles, with the Fourth Georgia, was detached and ordered to take position in a gap on the north side of the pike, and the other three regiments were moved up the mountain, and just to the east of the tavern on the summit filed to the right, and moved along the summit road, having, before leaving the pike, passed the body of General Garland, who had just been slain at the head of his command. Leaving this road, they moved by one leading diagonally down the mountain, and, on reaching the foot, were halted some half mile to a mile from the pike, on the south. Here General Ripley concluded that his command and that of General George B. Anderson were cut off from the troops on his left, and assuming command of the division, notified Colonel DeRosset to take command of the brigade. General Anderson seemed to have moved up the mountain very promptly, and

Ripley ordered Colonel DeRosset to do likewise. Lieutenant-Colonel Thruston was ordered to take a company of skirmishers, covering the front of the brigade, and soon reported that troops were in his front, and later that General G. B. Anderson was moving across his front. General Ripley, remaining at the foot of the mountain, was informed of the situation, and at once ordered his brigade to fall back. It was then moved by the left flank up a road leading diagonally up the mountain and halted, occupying that position until quietly withdrawn sometime between 9 o'clock P. M. and midnight.

General Ripley again assumed command of his own brigade and marched by a road leading towards the Boonsboro and Sharpsburg pike. On reaching a point on the crest of the hill, just after crossing the Antietam on the stone bridge, the command was placed in line of battle under the hill, the right of the Third North Carolina, in absence of the Fourth Georgia, on the right of the brigade and resting on the Boonsboro pike. This was on the evening of the 15th, and the brigade remained in that position until the evening of the 16th, under a heavy artillery fire from the enemy's guns on the east side of the creek, but without loss, being well protected by the crest of the hill under which he lay.

Meantime the battle had opened on our left, and as that seemed to be the point at which McClellan would make his greatest effort, General Ripley was ordered in that direction and bivouacked to the east of the Hagerstown pike, directly opposite the Dunkard Church and south of the Mumma farm house, which latter was destroyed by fire early next morning.

About daylight on the 17th the Federal artillery opened, and one of the first guns, from a point near which McClellan made his headquarters, fired a shell which fell just in front of the brigade, wounding some sixteen officers and men of the Third. The advance was soon ordered, and the enemy was first encountered in an open field a little to the south of the famous corn field near the East Woods, and the smooth-bore muskets with the buck and ball cartridges did most excellent service, being at very close

quarters, not over one hundred yards from the first line of the three lines of the enemy.

There being quite a gap in our lines on Ripley's right, a change of front was made to meet a flank attack by the One Hundred and Twenty-eighth Pennsylvania, a new and large regiment, and the Third North Carolina, being still on the right, met with heavy losses from this attack before the movement could be made with assured safety. General Ripley had been slightly wounded in the throat early in the action and the brigade was now under the command of Colonel George Doles, of the Fourth Georgia, the ranking officer.

About the time that the movement in changing from front to rear began, Colonel DeRosset was severely wounded, and permanently disabled. Lieutenant-Colonel Thruston at once took command, and charged the enemy, maintaining his advanced position until forced back by mere weight of numbers. From this time the Third North Carolina was under the command of Colonel Thruston, who succeeded to the full command upon the resignation of Colonel DeRosset, some months later, when it was definitely determined that the wound of the latter had disabled him permanently for active service. There were few, if any, regimental commanders in the Army of Northern Virginia who were the superior of Colonel Thruston, if his equal, in all that goes to make up an intelligent, able and successful leader. He was painfully wounded during this action, but refused to leave the field.

Of the twenty-seven officers who went into action on that memorable morning all save three were disabled and seven killed. Captain McNair, Company H, was badly wounded in the leg early in the day, but refused to leave, although urged to do so by the Colonel, and soon after gave up his life-blood on his country's altar.

The official report of the division commander gives the loss in the Third North Carolina, but it is less than was reported at the close of the day by Lieutenant J. F. S. Van Bokkelen, Acting

Adjutant, who stated that of the five hundred and twenty carried into action only one hundred and ninety could be accounted for.

Of the conscripts who were enlisted in the Third North Carolina about one hundred succeeded in keeping up with their comrades and taking part in the Sharpsburg battle. During this engagement, while the whole line was busily engaged in their deadly work, one of the conscripts was observed calmly walking up and down behind his company, and upon being asked why he was not in ranks and firing, replied: "I have seen nothing to shoot at, and I have only sixty rounds of cartridges; I don't care to waste them." He was instructed to lie down, and being shown the blue breeches under the smoke, his face brightened up at once as he began firing. Seldom was truer courage displayed than by this man, who, under his first experience in battle, having evidently been left behind as his company double-quickened to the front, came up after the smoke from the first volleys had obscured everything, and could see nothing in front. It would indeed be interesting to know this man's name and fate, but such cannot be, for he probably sleeps in a soldier's grave in the famous corn field, unhonored and unsung, where so many comrades lie buried.

Of the original captains of the Third North Carolina:

Captain Drysdale died in winter quarters at Acquia Creek during the winter of 1861-'62, and was buried in Goldsboro. He died of pneumonia contracted in the performance of his duties.

Captain Thruston held each office in succession until he reached the colonelcy. He lives in Dallas, Texas, and is an honored member of the medical profession.

Captain Mallett, having been appointed conscript officer of the State, with the rank of Major and subsequently Colonel, resigned his captaincy. He now lives in New York.

Captain Savage, afterwards Lieutenant-Colonel, resigned after the battles around Richmond. He now resides in New York.

Captain Redd resigned his commission in the early part of 1862. He is now a farmer in Onslow county.

Captain Parsley, rising to the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel of

his regiment, was killed only three days before the surrender at Appomattox, respected and beloved by all.

Captain Rhodes was wounded at Sharpsburg, and as he has never since been heard of, it is supposed he died of his wounds.

Captain Sikes, having absented himself from his command during the seven days' fight, and gone to his home without proper leave of absence, was allowed to resign.

Captain Carmer resigned his commission soon after the battles around Richmond.

Captain Williams, known by his men as "Pap," as brave a man as ever lived, was disemboweled by a rifle shot from the enemy's batteries at Sharpsburg, and sleeps in a soldier's grave, with his blanket for a shroud, in the front yard of the house in rear of the village, which was used as a field hospital near the Shepherdstown pike.

W. L. DEROSSET.

WILMINGTON, N. C.,
9th April, 1900.