

NINTH REGIMENT (FIRST CAVALRY).

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| 1. Robert Ransom, Colonel. | 5. W. H. Check, Colonel. |
| 2. L. S. Baker, Colonel. | 6. W. H. H. Cowles, Lieut.-Colonel. |
| 3. James B. Gordon, Colonel. | 7. A. B. Andrews, Captain, Co. B. |
| 4. Rufus Barringer, Captain, Co. F. | 8. W. R. Wood, Captain, Co. B. |
| | 9. W. H. Anthony, Captain, Co. B. |

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BY BRIGADIER-GENERAL, RUFUS BARRINGER.

The formation of the ten regiments of State Troops was a wise step in the organization of the North Carolina forces. These ten thousand men were made up of the very pick and flower of the State—all enlisted for the war, and so forming a model for others.

No one of these ten regiments attracted so much attention as the Ninth, afterwards known as the First Cavalry. In the selection of company officers and the field and staff, Governor Ellis took special interest. The colonel and lieutenant-colonel, Robert Ransom and Lawrence S. Baker, were fresh from the cavalry of the United States Army, while the two majors, James B. Gordon and Victor C. Barringer, represented the best capacity and courage of civil life. The companies were selected with great care, from numerous tenders, all over the State. The enlistments were nearly all in May and June, 1861, and the first rendezvous was early in July at Asheville; but about August 1st the companies at Asheville were removed to Camp Beauregard, at Ridgeway, Warren county, which was made a regular school of drill, discipline and cavalry exercise and life. No troops ever went through a severer ordeal. At times and on occasions there were loud complaints against Colonel Ransom for the rigid rules and harsh measures adopted. Exception was specially taken to the line of promotion as used in the United States Army, instead of the volunteer system; but the great majority of both men and officers bore the severity of the service with patriotic fortitude, and enjoyed the ups and downs of the drill and the jests and jeers of camp-life with infinite humor. So, by the middle

of October all was ready for the march to Manassas, to aid in guarding and holding the rapidly extending lines of General Joseph E. Johnston. The final roster largely reduced the ranks of officers, men and animals alike, as also all surplus baggage and other impediments. Among other changes, the second Major resigned, and the place was left unfilled so as to conform to the other nine regiments.

The several companies were designated and commanded as follows:

COMPANY A—*Ashe County*—Captain, T. N. Crumpler.

COMPANY B—*Northampton County*—Captain, John H. Whitaker.

COMPANY C—*Mecklenburg County*—Captain, J. M. Miller.

COMPANY D—*Watauga County*—Captain, George N. Folk.

COMPANY E—*Warren County*—Captain, W. H. Cheek.

COMPANY F—*Cabarrus County*—Captain, Rufus Barringer.

COMPANY G—*Buncombe County*—Captain, W. R. Wood.

COMPANY H—*Wayne County*—Captain, Thomas Ruffin.

COMPANY I—*Duplin County*—Captain, W. J. Houston.

COMPANY K—*Macon County*—Captain, Thaddeus P. Siler.

The officers represented the best character and military skill of the State—one being an ex-member of Congress. Four of them, Crumpler, Houston, Ruffin and Whitaker, fell in battle. Five of the others were wounded or otherwise disabled in the service. To recount the endless marches and actions in which they were engaged, would exceed the limits of this sketch. It is only proposed to notice briefly the leading battles and actions in which the regiment, as a whole, took part. Here also it is proper to call attention to the use of cavalry—especially in America, where forests and other impediments so often interfered with mounted operations. It was soon found that in this new country, even more than in the old world, that the best use of cavalry was to make it act as the eyes and ears of the army. But with even these limitations, it is estimated that the First Cavalry was engaged in nearly one hundred and fifty actions.

These actions were often far to the front, or on the distant flank, or in covering a retreat, usually without support of which no official reports were made, and of which the main army rarely heard. Yet in this way multitudes of the best youth and manhood in the land constantly perished, and now occupy unknown graves.

On the march to Manassas nothing special occurred, except that at Richmond President Davis reviewed us in person and the people turned out *en masse* to see the parade. All agreed that, up to this time, no such trained Confederate cavalry had been seen in Virginia.

At Manassas we did duty on the advanced lines in front of Centreville, with a constant round of alarms, surprises and distant picket shots, often attended with amusing incident and personal adventure. On the 26th of November occurred our first regular fight near the village of Vienna, fifteen miles out from Alexandria. Colonel Ransom, with about two hundred chosen men, managed to surprise a Yankee scout of about the same number, and effectually routed them, killing several and taking twenty-six prisoners. This was a great feather in our cap, and a source of much rejoicing, both in camp and among friends at home.

Up to December the cavalry at Manassas was without brigade organization; but in that month General J. E. B. Stuart formed the First Brigade, composed of the First, Second, Fourth and Sixth Virginia, the Ninth North Carolina (First Cav.) and the Jeff Davis Legion. Stuart went at once to work, and on the 20th of December sent a large number of wagons to secure a valuable supply of forage near the enemy's lines at Dranesville; all under an escort of both infantry and cavalry. The Yankee general, Ord, however, was too fast for Stuart; a severe action ensued, with a narrow escape of the trains and a loss to Stuart of one hundred and ninety-four men. An incident on this occasion, gave quite a reputé to the regimental wagon-master, Jacob Dove, of Company F. When Colonel Ransom heard of the disaster, and asked if his teams were safe, the reply was: "Yes; Jacob

Dove not only brought out his teams, but brought them loaded, and even made them jump fences."

Early in March, 1862, General Johnston evacuated Manassas, and about the same time it was found that Burnside was sailing for an attack on the coast of North Carolina. So the Ninth Regiment was at once ordered to that State, and took position near Kinston, where we remained until about the middle of June, when we were ordered back to Richmond to co-operate in the battles threatening that city. On the 29th of June a portion of the Ninth with the Third Virginia Cavalry, both under Lieutenant-Colonel Baker, was ordered to make a *reconnaissance* around McClellan's army. The North Carolinians were in front, and struck the Yankee line at Willis' Church. A mounted charge was immediately ordered, which led through a long lane up to the Yankee camp. In an instant the artillery and infantry of the enemy opened upon our devoted heads, all huddled up in the lane, where orders and maneuvers were alike impossible. At the first round sixty-three of the Ninth North Carolina were put *hors de combat*, and the whole command was forced to retire in utter confusion. Among the mortally wounded was the gallant (now) Major T. N. Crumpler, universally lamented. This disaster served as a wholesome lesson in making mounted charges.

During the next two days we were in the dreadful battles of Frazier's Farm and Malvern Hill, and then took an active part in the pursuit of McClellan to Harrison's Landing. For a month following we covered the main front of Lee's army below Richmond, fighting almost daily—especially at Phillips' Farm, Riddle's Shop and Turkey Creek.

During this time Colonel Ransom had been promoted and transferred to the infantry—making Baker Colonel, Gordon Lieutenant-Colonel, and Whitaker Major. And on the 25th of July the cavalry was reorganized under Stuart as Major-General, with Wade Hampton and Fitzhugh Lee as Brigadiers. We were in the Hampton Brigade, composed as follows:

First, Ninth North Carolina (First Cav.), Colonel Baker.

Second, Cobb Legion, Lieutenant-Colonel Young.

Third, Jeff Davis Legion, Lieutenant-Colonel Martiu.

Fourth, Hampton Legion, Major Butler.

Fifth, Tenth Virginia, Lieutenant-Colonel McGruder.

We were soon called to the stirring scenes attending Pope's retreat at the Second Manassas and Jackson's great flank movement—fighting severely at Fox's Farm and at Fairfax Court House—where we fell, during a night march, into another ambushade.

Immediately followed the first invasion of Maryland. And now came, almost daily and hourly, contests with the Federal cavalry—notably at Urbana, Frederick, Middletown, Catocin Creek, Buckittsville and Pleasant Valley—culminating in the capture of Harper's Ferry by Jackson and the drawn battle of Sharpsburg, the Ninth Regiment being in all of these.

At Sharpsburg we were on the extreme left, and when General Lee recrossed the Potomac we were cut off from the regular ford, and had to seek a blind crossing, which we made at night in water over girth-deep and filled with rock, brush and every possible obstruction. This was even worse than fighting.

At last there came to both armies some weeks of much-needed rest. Once only General Pleasanton crossed the river and made an attack on our lines at Martinsburg, which being promptly met he soon retired.

During this time the Phillips Legion, from Georgia, was added to the Hampton Brigade. On the 9th of October Stuart started on his famous horse raid into Pennsylvania. The force consisted of one thousand eight hundred picked men and animals, with four guns and five days' rations. It was at that time a most daring and entirely novel achievement. In three days and two nights this small force crossed the Potomac, made a circuit of the Federal army, and, by means of special details, gathered up and safely brought out one thousand two hundred led horses.

At Chambersburg we destroyed immense army stores and at other points inflicted serious damage to trains and telegraph lines. But so admirably was the expedition planned and carried out, that our only loss was one man wounded and two captured,

though often assailed by the enemy. On the march the Ninth North Carolina was called on for much conspicuous duty. Lieutenant Barrier, of Company I, was in charge of the advance party in crossing the Potomac above Williamsport, while Captain Cowles, of Company A, covered the recrossing near Poolsville, in each instance under severe firing. When Stuart was approaching his old headquarters at Urbana on his midnight march a fancy struck him to make a call on some rebel lady friends at that place, two miles off the regular line of march, and he called for Captain Barringer, with his squadron detail of C and F, and safely made the venture, though almost surrounded by Yankee cavalry.

Shortly after this, General McClellan crossed his army over the Potomac below Harper's Ferry and started for his new base at Fredericksburg. This was followed by almost daily and nightly conflicts with the Federal cavalry at Gaines' Cross Roads, at Little Washington, Barbee's Cross Roads, Amisville, and a dozen other sharp actions. At Warrenton, on the 7th of November, McClellan was superseded by Burnside, and the fighting again measurably ceased till the battle of Fredericksburg, December 13, 1862. Meantime the Hampton Cavalry held the upper fords and we made several successful raids on the Yankee rear at Dumfries and Occoquan, capturing wagon trains, sutlers' stores and all sorts of Christmas good things.

After Burnside's terrible repulse at Fredericksburg there was no serious work between the two armies until May, at Chancellorsville, but, nevertheless, the cavalry was kept busy, and the Hampton Brigade from its camp, near Stevensburg, continued to raid the enemy at every available point—on one occasion penetrating as far as Burke's Station and Fairfax Court House, and on another the North Carolinians fighting nearly single-handed, under Colonel Baker, the hot action at Kelly's Ford. So, also, on the 17th of March, at Kellysville, occurred one of the heavy cavalry battles of the war. Here the gallant Pelham, of the Stuart Horse Artillery, was killed.

As the summer opened it was observed that each army was

concentrating large bodies on the upper Rappahannock—indicating offensive movements. Stuart was in Culpeper county, around Brandy Station, one of the few large open plains admirably suited for cavalry movements. On the 8th of June General R. E. Lee had a grand review of all his cavalry at that point—numbering eight thousand to ten thousand men. That night Stuart also gave a splendid ball at Culpeper Court House. The next morning he was to cross the Rappahannock and take position so as to cover the initiatory movement of General Lee in his march to Pennsylvania, but Pleasanton was too quick for him. At early dawn the Federal cavalry, with infantry supports, forced the passage of the Rappahannock at all available points and fell upon Stuart while the men were still at breakfast. The main action began at Beverly Ford, above the railroad, and while Stuart was arranging to meet this attack it was suddenly discovered that the lower column, at Kelly's Ford, had succeeded in driving off all opposition, and was now actually in the Confederate rear.

Stuart's headquarters were at the Fleetwood house, about midway between the two advancing Federal columns. Never was a crisis more critical for a great cavalry leader. But Stuart was always equal to the emergency. With a mere handful of cannoners and a single small Virginia regiment at Fleetwood, he boldly met the rear attack under Gregg, while with equal boldness he withdrew Hampton and Jones from the front advance of Buford, leaving W. H. F. Lee to resist Buford as best he could. And now opened the grandest cavalry fight of the war—from eighteen to twenty thousand mounted men charging and counter-charging all over the immense plains of Brandy, and through the long hours of a summer's sun and with ever-varying results. In the thickest of the fight and the longest in the field were the Ninth North Carolina (First Cav.) and the Jeff Davis Legion, led respectively by Colonel Baker and Lieutenant-Colonel Waring. The Confederate dash and valor at last carried the day. Late in the evening Pleasanton was forced to retire and recross the river, with a loss of nine hundred and thirty-

six men killed and wounded and five hundred prisoners. The Confederate loss was five hundred and twenty-three. The loss was unusually heavy in Confederate officers. Colonel Sol. Williams, of the Nineteenth North Carolina (Second Cav.), and Lieutenant-Colonel Frank Hampton, of the Second South Carolina, were killed; Brigadier-General W. H. F. Lee, Colonel M. C. Butler, Colonel A. W. Harmon and (acting) Major Rufus Barringer, with many others, were severely wounded. Major McClellan, of Stuart's staff, in his life of Stuart, makes special mention of the "splendid work done by the First North Carolina Cavalry." He also gives the Federal force as ten thousand nine hundred and eighty; Stuart's, nine thousand five hundred and thirty-six. Next followed the advance into Pennsylvania, Stuart covering Lee's right flank, and for ten days resisting incessant attacks of Pleasanton at Aldie, Middleburg, Upperville and Fairfax. Again the loss was heavy in North Carolina officers; Colonel Peter G. Evans, of the Sixty-third North Carolina (Fifth Cav.), Major John H. Whitaker and Captain W. J. Houston, of the Ninth North Carolina (First Cav.), were killed.

Immediately followed in rapid succession, the great movement culminating at Gettysburg, July 1st—3d. While the main army was crossing the upper Potomac near Shepherdstown, Stuart was still east of the Blue Ridge, watching the movements of Hooker. On the night of the 27th Stuart also crossed the Potomac at Rowser's Ford, only eighteen miles above Washington, his immediate force being the three brigades of Hampton, of Fitzhugh Lee and W. H. F. Lee. But Stuart now found himself between Hooker and Washington, and it was difficult to tell what might be the result of future movements, and he at last resolved to attempt the entire circuit of the Federal army. At Rockville he succeeded in capturing a Federal supply train of one hundred and twenty-five wagons and teams; also four hundred prisoners, some in full view of Washington. He paroled the prisoners, but decided to take the wagons and teams with him. This incumbrance proved a serious drawback in his future movements and probably prevented his rejoining General Lee

until the second day of the Gettysburg fight, July 2d. On this account General Stuart had been severely criticised, but it is certain that his action was within the discretion given him. The wagons and teams proved of great help to General Lee in his forced retreat after the battle.

Beginning at Brookville, on the 28th of June, this small cavalry force of less than three thousand men penetrated the enemy's country as far as Carlisle, Penn., where it burned the Federal barracks, and in five days and nights fought more than a dozen actions, and finally came out successful on the afternoon of the 2d of July at Gettysburg. The principal fights were at Sykesville, Littletown, Hanover, Hunterstown and Carlisle. In front of Gettysburg, too, the Hampton Brigade bore the brunt of a severe fight, in which General Hampton himself was twice painfully wounded, and the command devolved on Colonel Baker, of the Ninth North Carolina (First Cav.), leaving Lieutenant-Colonel Gordon in charge of the latter. Here also a gallant North Carolinian, Sergeant Fulghum, succeeded in rescuing the wounded Hampton, in the very nick of time, from capture and possible death.

With the exception of the action referred to there was no severe fighting of mounted troops at Gettysburg. The work of death in those three dreadful days was chiefly from entrenched infantry and artillery on fortified heights, assailable only by bayonet charges and hand-to-hand conflicts. So, likewise, there was no serious engagement during the retreat of General Lee until the 13th of July, at Falling Waters, below Williamsport, when a large body of Yankee cavalry made a sudden attack on the guard of our wagon trains. This guard consisted mainly of dismounted men called "Company Q." The latter, aided by teamsters and others, under General Pettigrew, did good fighting and saved the trains, though at the lamentable loss of General Pettigrew himself.

As after Sharpsburg in 1862, so now, after Gettysburg, both armies sought much-needed repose, and there were no active operations of importance in which the Ninth North Carolina (First Cav.)

participated until the Federal advance at Culpeper. After that came the hard fights at Jack's Shop and the second and third Brandy Station, resulting in a highly complimentary order from General Stuart to Colonel Baker for the part taken in these actions and leading to Colonel Baker's promotion; but in consequence of a wound he was assigned to special duty. This also caused the promotion of Lieutenant-Colonel J. B. Gordon to Brigadier-General, who was put in charge of a North Carolina brigade composed of the Ninth (First Cav.), Nineteenth (Second Cav.) and Fifty-ninth (Fourth Cav.) Regiments. Captains Thomas Ruffin and W. H. Cheek had succeeded to the respective positions of Colonel and Lieutenant-Colonel of the Ninth, and the former was now in command.

On the 8th of October began the flank movement of General Lee on Meade, known as the Bristoe campaign, when occurred two of the most striking cavalry events of the war, and in both of which the First North Carolina Cavalry led the charge with drawn sabres in a most heroic manner:

First. On the 13th Stuart got caught in a very tight place, under the following circumstances: In the very rapid marches of Meade on several converging roads, with Stuart in hot pursuit, the latter, at night-fall, found himself completely hemmed in between two parallel corps of the Federal army. Escape seemed absolutely impossible, and as his command had, as yet, been unobserved, he resolved on the policy of a painful silence to await what the morning would bring forth. At early dawn both of the Federal columns were put in motion and concealment was no longer possible; so, as a last desperate resort, he ran his horse artillery up an elevated point and opened upon the camp at Auburn Mill, as furnishing the best point of escape, and hoping to throw the Yankees into confusion and panic, but the latter were all ready for action, and in an instant three heavy lines of infantry skirmishers advanced upon his guns and threatened his whole command with capture. Stuart ordered Gordon to charge, and Gordon called for the First North Carolina Cavalry. Colonel Ruffin led the charge, but at the

first fire the gallant Colonel fell mortally wounded, and there was a recoil of the ranks, when Major Barringer dashed to the front and rallied the command; and again the charge was made, and now with complete success, scattering the Federals in all directions. In the wild disorder and turmoil of these charges, Stuart limbered up his guns, struck a gallop and escaped round the Federal rear without loss, save those who fell in the charges—about fifty. Major Barringer and about thirty of his men charged clear through the Union lines and joined Stuart down the Run. One of the thirty, private Carver, Company G, came out with seven wounds, but gallantly stuck to his saddle. Gordon and Barringer were both slightly wounded, but each continued on duty.

Second. A few days afterwards, on the 19th of October, Stuart and Kilpatrick fought at Broad Run, on the Warrenton pike, near the village of Buckland, eight miles from Warrenton. After a few rounds Stuart feigned a retreat, but he arranged with Fitzhugh Lee, who was at Auburn, a few miles off, at a proper hour to attack the Yankees in flank and rear with both carbine and artillery. Stuart then retired, with slight skirmishing, to within three miles of Warrenton, when he paused for the expected signal. At the first gun Stuart's whole command faced about with drawn sabres with orders to charge. Gordon was in front, with Rosser and Young on either flank, a little to the rear, as supports. The First North Carolina Cavalry again held the lead and occupied the pike. General Gordon now rode to the front and simply said: "Major Barringer, charge that Yankee line and break it." The Federals were about three hundred yards down the pike, in splendid array. Barringer gave the commands: "Forward, trot, march!" After a few paces, seeing the ranks all well aligned, he added the command: "Gallop, march"; and after a few more paces, he turned to the regimental bugler ("Little Litaker") to sound the charge. This was answered with a similar call from every regiment and a terrific yell. In a few moments more the whole command was down upon the Federals with drawn sabres. The latter stood their ground until the

column came within less than fifty yards of the extreme front, when the whole line emptied their pistols and carbines upon our devoted heads, and then deliberately wheeled about and galloped off. The volley, of course, checked our speed and produced some confusion all through our advanced lines; but in an instant more the charge was again sounded and the pursuit continued. The Yankees, however, preserved good order, wheeling and firing at occasional intervals for more than a mile. At last Major Barringer ordered the dashing Captain Cowles, of Company A, to break their ranks. This was speedily done, and the whole retreat became a rout. In the meantime Fitzhugh Lee had also routed the rear, in reserve, at Broad Run. This completed the panic, extending several miles and late into the night, with the capture of Custer's headquarters train, many prisoners and horses and a large amount of arms and equipments. This action is known as the "Buckland Races," and for it the First North Carolina Cavalry was highly complimented by General Stuart and others; and in a special letter to Major Barringer, shortly afterwards, General Stuart refers to his command "as a pattern for others."

During the fall occurred the mishap at Rappahannock Station, with heavy loss to General Lee, and forcing him back to the Rapidan, the North Carolina brigade doing severe fighting at Stevensburg and other points. Then came the Mine Run movement, in which Meade attempted to cross the Rapidan and force General Lee to fight; but within three days he himself recrossed the river, the First North Carolina Cavalry fighting at Parker's Store, Raccoon Ford and elsewhere.

Both armies now went into winter-quarters, our brigade at Milford Station, but still picketing the Rapidan, over twenty miles off. During the winter no special cavalry movements occurred until about the 1st of March, when the Kilpatrick-Dahlgren raid occurred, and three hundred men from the North Carolina brigade, under Colonel William H. Cheek, made a night attack on the raiders, near Atlee's Station, and completely routed them, capturing many prisoners, with valuable arms, etc.

This was really one of the most brilliant feats of the war, and Colonel Cheek was highly complimented for it.

On the 4th of May, 1864, began the Wilderness campaign under General Grant. Just at this time the North Carolina brigade was transferred from the division of Hampton to that of Major-General W. H. F. Lee, and the Forty-first North Carolina Regiment (Third Cav.), Colonel John A. Baker, took the place of the Fifty-ninth North Carolina (Fourth Cav.), then in Eastern North Carolina recruiting and picketing under Lieutenant-Colonel R. Barringer, by special detail. At the time of Grant's advance the First North Carolina Cavalry was on picket along the Rapidan, and both Colonel Cheek and Major Cowles rendered valuable service to General R. E. Lee in checking the advance and in watching and reporting hostile movements; and also in capturing some four hundred prisoners.

On the 9th of May, 1864, Sheridan, with twelve thousand cavalry and a long train of horse artillery, started from near Fredericksburg on his famous raid upon Richmond. The North Carolina brigade, under Gordon, was hastily drawn in from scattered points and joined in the pursuit; the whole under Stuart in person. To meet this most formidable movement, Stuart could take from the army only three of his brigades—Wickham's, Lomax's and Gordon's—say four thousand men, or one to three, trusting to Richmond itself to make the main defense. Stuart, with the brigades of Wickham and Lomax, sought to get ahead of the raiders by forced marches, while Gordon, with his North Carolinians, almost alone, undertook the work of harassing the enemy and impeding his progress. This involved incessant fighting, both night and day, with heavy losses of both men and animals. The First North Carolina Cavalry especially suffered severely, among the wounded being Colonel Cheek. Fortunately Stuart got ahead of the raiders, and at the Yellow Tavern, near the city defenses, with Gordon in their rear, the final conflict closed with the retreat of Sheridan, but with the irreparable loss of our great leaders, Stuart and Gordon, both mortally wounded and both soon to die.

During these and the next thirty days were fought the great battles of the First and Second Wildernéss, Spottsylvania Court House and Second Cold Harbor, resulting in the virtual defeat of Grant in his direct attempt on the Confederate Capital and forcing him to cross the James and settle down on the long and tedious siege of Petersburg and Richmond. During this same period were also fought the great cavalry battle between Hampton and Sheridan at Trevilian Station and the lesser actions at Todd's Tavern, White Hall, Haw's Shop, Hanover Court House and Ashland. All of these were in thickly wooded sections, where the men were often required to dismount and fight with carbines. In fact, as the war advanced, the sabre grew into less and less favor, and the policy of the great Tennessee cavalryman, General N. B. Forest, was adopted, of using the "revolver on horse and the rifle on foot." With these he accomplished wonders, and left a name among the first in fame as a mounted leader.

And now, also, came many changes in the North Carolina Cavalry Brigade. Gordon being dead and Cheek absent, wounded, the command of the brigade devolved on Colonel John A. Baker, of the Third North Carolina Cavalry; that of the Ninth Regiment on Lieutenant-Colonel R. Barringer. On the 6th of June the latter received his commission as a Brigadier-General, and the regiment was turned over to Lieutenant-Colonel W. H. H. Cowles as ranking officer present.

This closes the personal connection of the writer of this sketch with his famous regiment, and the remainder of the sketch will consist of his knowledge of it as a portion of the Barringer Brigade.

When General Grant once started to cross the James River it was no time to fight battles other than those forced upon him. The object was rather to gain positions and see who could command the river crossings and best secure any heights overlooking the two beleaguered cities.

On the 7th of June the plan of his movements was fairly developed, and the Confederate cavalry was ordered to harass him

accordingly. My brigade (embracing the First, Second, Third and Fifth North Carolina Cavalry) was detached and hastened to the lower fords of the Chickahominy. On the 13th we had followed the main Federal column to Wilcox's Landing and by the 18th we too had also hastened round by Richmond and taken position two miles south of Petersburg. During these rapid movements we had had several severe skirmishes with the enemy, especially at Malvern Hill, Nantz' Shop, Herring Creek, Crenshaw's and The Rocks, the First Cavalry often leading.

On the 21st of June, while guarding the Petersburg & Weldon Railroad at the Davis farm, just below Petersburg, my pickets notified me of the approach of a large Yankee force of infantry, manifestly with the view of seizing and holding the railroad at that point. We were wholly without support, but the thick undergrowth and other surroundings favored a vigorous resistance in a dismounted fight. I selected a high point for my horse artillery under McGregor, and as far as possible screened it from the enemy's view. I also kept the Fifth Cavalry (Sixty-third North Carolina Regiment) mounted, in reserve to support McGregor and otherwise act as emergency might require. I then dismounted the First, Second and Third Cavalry, and formed two heavy skirmish lines, well concealed in thick undergrowth in front of the railroad, with instructions for the first line not to fire until the Federals were in less than one hundred yards of them, and then after a single volley to slowly retire on the second line, where the real fight was to be made. At this juncture also the full battery of four guns was to open. The plan worked well and proved a complete success. The Federals were not only driven back, but in the panic that followed the Third Cavalry, led by Colonel John A. Baker and my Aid, Lieutenant F. C. Foard, rushed upon the Federal ranks and captured many prisoners; but in the confusion which ensued both Baker and Foard were also in turn captured. The Yankee force in front of us turned out to be Barlow's Division of infantry, *four thousand strong*, and were driven back with a loss of forty dead

on the field and twenty prisoners, including a Lieutenant-Colonel and two Captains taken. My own loss was twenty-seven killed, wounded and missing.

I am thus particular with the details of this little action because a question was afterwards raised as to the good faith and fidelity of Colonel John A. Baker, of the Third, in so advancing his lines and thus exposing himself and command to the risk of capture. As a matter of fact, Colonel Baker was never regularly exchanged as a prisoner of war, nor did he ever return to his regiment, and he was afterwards openly accused of having taken the oath of allegiance, while in prison, to the United States Government; but I do not think any one, at the time of the fight, dreamed of treachery, and he was highly complimented by all for the spirit and skill with which he led his men in the short advance he made. As it was, too, our main loss fell on his regiment.

At the same time that this action was going on General Grant was arranging for the famous Kautz and Wilson raid, and that night the raiders, several thousand strong, moved on our right flank, with every kind of machinery, for the purpose of tearing up and destroying the Southside and Richmond & Danville Railroads as far south as Staunton River bridge. Early on the 22d General William H. F. Lee put his picket line in charge of Chambliss' Brigade and one of my regiments (the Third), and with my other three (First, Second and Fifth) and Dearing's small brigade he started in pursuit of the raiders.

We first struck them at Reams' Station, ten miles south of Petersburg, on the Petersburg & Weldon Railroad, where they had destroyed the depot, and then made straight across the country by Dinwiddie Court House for the Southside road, on towards Burkeville. That night the work of destruction went ceaselessly forward; for twenty miles the entire track was taken up, the cross-ties made up into great piles and the iron laid across them so as to insure complete destruction by fire. In the same way the work was started the next day on the Richmond & Danville lines. In the meantime scouting parties were sent all over the country to

gather up horses, to carry off supplies, and to arrest leading citizens. In this way the whole country was overrun, many buildings set on fire and the track of the invaders made one complete scene of desolation. We had several fights in the pursuit without any decided results, until about noon of the 23d, when General Lee managed, by a forced march, to get in between their two columns. This occurred at a place known as Black's and White's. It was Dearing's day to be in front, but his force was not equal to the work in hand. He was just in the act of being driven off and all of our artillery (two batteries) exposed to capture, when the First North Carolina Cavalry, under Major Cowles, was dismounted and hurled against the advancing foe. This saved our guns but did not check the enemy's progress. Just at this juncture, however, a detachment of the Second Cavalry, under Major W. P. Roberts, managed to get in the Federal rear and right across the railroad track. And now for several hours the battle raged. Whole trees and saplings were cut down with shells and minie-balls, until night ended the conflict. That night the enemy abandoned the field and struck straight across the country for the Staunton River bridge on the Richmond & Danville line. In this action Colonel C. M. Andrews was mortally wounded and about half a dozen other officers were killed or wounded; and so completely were the men and animals exhausted, that on the next day a short rest was taken. It was also decided that the two brigades should now separate. Dearing was to move on the enemy's left flank, while my three regiments were to follow the enemy's line of march directly to the Staunton River bridge. This was the most important structure on General Robert E. Lee's whole line of communication for supplying his army. It had only temporary defenses, and was guarded by a small force of Junior and Senior Reserves, with a few disabled soldiers, led by some gallant Confederate officers who chanced to be present. But so admirable was the spirit of the men in this great emergency that they successfully resisted several preliminary attacks until the Barringer Brigade came up, when a vigorous assault upon

the Federal rear as well as their front forced them to retire and seek safety by a night march down the Staunton River *via* Boydton and Lawrenceville.

My command had started out on this expedition with some twelve hundred effective mounted men, but so terrible had been the marching and so intense the heat, and so incessant the fighting, that we now found ourselves reduced to less than three hundred men and animals equal to the task of further pursuit. In this emergency a small detail was made from the Ninth Regiment (First Cav.), under Captain N. P. Foard, Company F, of that regiment, to follow the track of the enemy, while the rest of the brigade made a forced march on their left flank, with a view of driving them into the trap so well planned by Hampton and Fitz Lee at Sappony Church and Monk's Neck. Here the rout was complete, including the loss of all their artillery, several hundred horses and fifteen hundred prisoners.

The utter destruction of this great raiding party now gave my brigade a much-needed rest. This enabled me, for the first time, to turn my attention to the vital work of organization, drill and discipline—a work always essential to cavalry success. In the First Cavalry especially did the old spirit show itself of making every man feel a self-reliance equal to every emergency. More than half of this regiment were armed and equipped from the enemy. One company (F) boasted that its entire outfit had been taken from the foe.

At last, on the 28th of July, we were hastened to the north bank of the James to meet a threatened move of the enemy on Richmond. We had a sharp engagement at Fuzzle's Mill, when the Yankee cavalry suddenly withdrew and re-appeared in force below Petersburg. We, too, soon followed, when on the 14th of August the whole division was again ordered north of Richmond, where we found the enemy within six miles of the city.

A series of engagements now followed, especially at Fisher's Farm, White Oak Swamp and White's Tavern. In the fight at White Oak Swamp General Chambliss lost his life in a vain attempt to rally his men from a panic into which they had fallen.

General W. H. F. Lee in person rallied the Virginians and formed a new line, with the First and Second Cavalry in front, which swept all before them. During these actions the brigade suffered severely, especially in officers. Captains Bryan and Cooper, of the Second Cavalry, and Lieutenant Morrow, of the First, were killed on the field—all officers of rare merit. On our return to the south side of the James we found that the enemy had gained possession of the Petersburg & Weldon Railroad, and on the 21st of August, General Mahone, with a large force of infantry and cavalry, had been ordered to dislodge him. My position was on the extreme right, along the Poplar Spring road. All four regiments were actually engaged and swept everything before them. But, much to our surprise, the attack by the infantry somehow failed of success, and we, too, were forced to retire with a loss of sixty-eight killed, wounded and missing.

On the 25th of August occurred the great combined action of cavalry, infantry and artillery at Reams' Station. On this occasion, General William H. F. Lee being ill and absent, the command of the division devolved on myself, while that of the brigade fell to Colonel W. H. Cheek, of the Ninth North Carolina. General Hampton commanded the mounted forces, and it was arranged that while the cavalry attacked the enemy in his front along the railroad, A. P. Hill, with his infantry, was to assail his intrenched works in the flank and rear. Never was success more complete. We regained the railroad, captured twenty-three hundred prisoners and took immense quantities of small arms and intrenching tools, with untold numbers of cannon and other munitions of war. Nearly all the forces engaged on the part of the infantry in this great battle were from North Carolina, and General R. E. Lee wrote Governor Z. B. Vance a special letter complimentary to the troops of the State, in which he also made special reference to the conspicuous part taken in the action by the cavalry brigade of General Barringer.

Thus in ten days our division had crossed and recrossed the James River; had marched to Stony Creek and then back to Reams' Station, making nearly one hundred miles night and day marching, and in the meantime fighting eight severe actions.

Next followed an action at McDowell's farm on the 27th of September, capturing a major and twenty other prisoners, but with severe loss to us in the death of the brave Captain Turner and other meritorious officers.

At Jones' farm there was a joint fight on the part of our infantry and cavalry, in which several hundred prisoners were taken, most of them by Beale's Brigade. During October cavalry operations were exceedingly active. We fought with varied success at Boisseau's farm, Gravelly Run and Hargrove's house; but the most important of all was the battle at Wilson's farm on the 27th of October, when Grant seized the Boydton plank-road, and we repeated the operations at Reams' Station and with like success. In all these actions the Ninth Regiment took a leading part, and in the last fight it and the Sixty-third (Fifth Cav.) Regiment were conspicuously prominent, in fact, so complete was our victory that during the night Grant abandoned his position and fell back to his former lines. In this action my brigade lost seventy killed and wounded, chiefly from the Ninth Regiment.

In November came off Hampton's famous cattle raid. This was one of the most striking cavalry achievements of the war, and deserves a passing notice. The cavalry held General Lee's right flank, extending in long, attenuated lines from Petersburg along the Petersburg & Weldon Railroad beyond Stony Creek. For this raid the whole line was virtually stripped of its protection, and the troops under General Hampton moved by circuitous routes to the enemy's position at City Point. There the hostile guards and picket lines were forced at the point of the sabre and a herd of cattle, numbering two thousand four hundred and eighty-six head, safely driven out and conducted back to our camp. Of course the exposure to our lines was very great, but the plans for deceiving the enemy and keeping up appearances were well carried out by the dashing P. M. B. Young, of Georgia, who, by means of camp-fires, bands playing and artillery discharges kept up a constant show of force. Meantime Rosser, with his Virginians, struck directly for the Federal camps, while Wil-

liam H. F. Lee was ordered to make sure our lines of retreat, and in this work it fell to my brigade to do some pretty hard fighting at Belcher's Mill and other well-guarded points; but so admirably was the whole scheme carried out that scarcely a man or animal was lost. The distance marched embraced a circuit of not less than thirty miles, and yet in neither night nor day marching did a single mishap befall us.

On the 8th of December was repeated another of the ceaseless attempts of the Federals to seize the Petersburg & Weldon Railroad, this time by General Warren at the village of Belfield. Here the Junior and Senior Reserves of North Carolina and Virginia made an admirable defense of the bridge until the infantry and cavalry came up, when the enemy was forced to retire. The main pursuit was made by my brigade, and especially the Ninth Regiment, two squadrons of which, under Captain Dewey, making a splendid mounted charge.

The losses of the brigade were summed up for the campaign just closed as follows: Killed, ninety-nine; wounded, three hundred and seventy-eight; missing and captured, one hundred and twenty-seven; total, six hundred and four. Distributed thus: First Cavalry, one hundred and thirty-eight; Second, one hundred and five; Third, one hundred and fifty-three; Fifth, two hundred and eight. The enemy's loss in killed and wounded was estimated at eight hundred, with prisoners taken by us at fifteen hundred.

The brigade now went into winter-quarters near Belfield, where we erected cantonments, and where we enjoyed a fair degree of rest and recreation, disturbed, however, by long marches for picket duty and occasionally some severe fighting. The winter was a hard one; forage and other supplies were in very limited quantities and sometimes wholly insufficient, often exposing the men to sore trials and temptations in securing necessaries for man and beast. Despite all these drawbacks, the brigade gradually grew in strength and numbers, while as a matter of fact most of the cavalry commands in Virginia were greatly reduced in both efficiency and numbers. The Virginians were beset by constant temptations to seek their

homes and the social attractions surrounding them. On the other hand, the mounted men from South Carolina, Georgia and other more distant States found it exceedingly difficult to keep up their "mounts," and were also hard to get back themselves when once allowed to go to their far off homes. In this connection it will be recalled that in the winter of 1864-'65, when Sherman threatened South Carolina, Hampton, with his entire command, was ordered south to meet the Federal cavalry under Kilpatrick. And yet, so reduced was the main body of his force that the Legislature of South Carolina had to appropriate a million of dollars in gold to remount them. North Carolina, on the other hand, occupied a happy medium between these extremes, and under an admirable system of "horse details" and the thorough discipline of her brigades most of her regiments were well kept up. This counted in several different ways; we came to be relied upon, not only for the ordinary picket duty, but in close quarters and hot contests the superior officers almost invariably looked to the North Carolina commands for the hard fighting.

Under all these disadvantages opened the campaign of 1865, and when, on the 29th of March, Sheridan started on his grand flank movement it was seen and felt by all that his heaviest blows would have to be met by the North Carolinians, then guarding General R. E. Lee's extreme right. My own four regiments then averaged about four hundred effective men each, with the prospect of large additions on the way with new mounts, but events soon crowded upon us so rapidly that these were of little avail. Sheridan's force was not less than ten thousand mounted men, largely centered around Dinwiddie Court House, well supported by infantry near at hand. W. H. F. Lee had under him my brigade and the two small brigades of Roberts and Beale, numbering all told not exceeding three thousand men, with which to meet Sheridan and his host. Major-General Fitzhugh Lee was then in command of all the cavalry of the Army of Northern Virginia, and was at Five Forks, several miles northwest of Dinwiddie Court House, virtually placing Sheridan

exactly between himself and Major-General W. H. F. Lee at Stony Creek, nineteen miles off. Worse still, rain had fallen in torrents and the streams were all overflowing. This forced us to make a long detour in order to unite the two cavalry commands of W. H. F. Lee and Fitz Lee. But on the 31st of March we had overcome all difficulties and had successfully reached the White Oak road near Five Forks. Here a small stream known as Chamberlain Run separated us from Sheridan at Dinwiddie Court House.

At this time I had with me only three regiments, the Ninth, Nineteenth and Sixty-third (First, Second and Fifth Cav.), the Forty-first (Third Cav.) being in charge of my wagon trains. On approaching Chamberlain Run it was found that the Federal cavalry had crossed it and was advancing to attack us. I was ordered by W. H. F. Lee to dismount my command and meet this advance. The Fifth Cavalry was in front, supported by the First and Second, with Beale's Brigade in reserve and McGregor's Battery in position. In this order we not only speedily checked the enemy, but soon drove him in panic and rout, forcing him across the stream, over waist-deep, all in the wildest haste and confusion. Just at this moment General W. H. F. Lee ordered one of his regiments from Beale's Brigade to make a mounted charge; through some mistake of the order only one squadron of the regiment made the charge, and this was repulsed with frightful loss. This enabled the enemy to rally, and he in turn finally forced my regiments back. In this short conflict my loss was twenty officers killed and over one hundred men killed and wounded. Among the killed were Colonel McNeill and Lieutenant-Colonel Shaw, of the Sixty-third (Fifth Cav.) Regiment, and among the wounded, Colonel Gaines, commanding the Nineteenth (Second Cav.), and Major McLeod, of the Ninth (First Cav.).

Both sides now began to fortify the lines up and down Chamberlain Run, awaiting the inevitable conflict rapidly gathering around us. At last, about 3 o'clock in the afternoon, General W. H. F. Lee received a written order from General Fitz Lee to

drive the Federals from our front, in aid of some general movement then about to take place. This was my day to be in front, and of course it naturally fell to my command to attempt the work indicated; but in view of the fact that one of my regiments (Third Cavalry) was still absent, and because of the further fact that my other three regiments had all suffered so severely in the morning, I asked General William H. F. Lee to request (1st) the withdrawal of the order, and (2d) if this were not possible, to require one of his other brigades to lead in the movement. General W. H. F. Lee wrote to Fitz Lee, urging the withdrawal as indicated, but was told that military necessity required its performance. General W. H. F. Lee also kindly considered my request to substitute one of his other brigades instead of my own for the attack, but pleaded their reduced strength as a reason why he should not risk a change. I then asked him for any suggestions as to the best mode of attack, as in any event there would be great doubt of success and the loss might be very heavy. He declined making any suggestions on this point and left all to myself. I then gave him my opinion of what I thought the only hope of success. The Run was still very full, covering the bottoms for seventy-five yards on either side of the channel, with only one crossing for mounted troops, and the banks everywhere obstructed by logs, brush and other impediments. My plan was to put the First Cavalry in on the left, dismounted in line, and thus attack and draw the fire of the enemy, and then, at the proper moment, to make a charge in column across the ford against the enemy's main works, the troops making this charge to be closely supported by my remaining regiment, mounted or dismounted, as circumstances might require. General Lee cordially assented to this plan of attack, with promise of active support from his other brigades, if necessary. The Second Cavalry was selected to make the charge in column and the Fifth was to remain dismounted, with bridle in hand, until the critical moment should arrive, to determine the part it should take. Every effort was made to shield all these preliminary arrangements, and then suddenly, every-

thing being ready, Colonel William H. Cheek, of the First, formed his line and boldly entered the stream. This (as expected) seemed to really disconcert the enemy, and they at once concentrated a very rapid fire upon Cheek and his men. When about half way over, and the enemy's fire was fully directed to that point, I ordered the Second Cavalry, under Major Lockhart, to make his charge in a close column by sections of eight, with instructions, on crossing the stream, to deploy both to the right and left, as circumstances might require. The Fifth was also instructed to follow, partly mounted and partly dismounted, and adopt the same line of movement. Beale in the meantime being stationed by General Lee so as to help either wing, as the emergency might require. The whole plan succeeded to perfection. Lockhart drove the enemy from his works opposite the ford, while Cheek swept the lines to his left, and Erwin, of the Sixty-third Regiment, carried the right. In ten minutes the whole Yankee line was in flight and the Confederates in full pursuit. This was kept up for some distance and with great slaughter, until night closed upon us and a halt was ordered within some two miles of Dinwiddie Court House.

About 3 o'clock next morning we received orders to retire to our former position north of Chamberlain Run, where we remained to await the result of the great battle of Five Forks, then about opening.

My losses in this last attack and assault amounted to ten officers and nearly one hundred men killed and wounded. Among the killed were Captains Coleman and Dewey and Lieutenants Armfield, Blair and Powell, of the Ninth; Lieutenant Hathaway, of the Nineteenth, and Captain Harris and Lieutenant Lindsay of the Sixty-third, and two others. Among the wounded were Lieutenant-Colonel Cowles and Captains Anthony, Iredell, Johnston and Smith, with Lieutenants Mast and Steele, of the Ninth; Lieutenants Jordan and Turner, of the Nineteenth; Lieutenants Nott, Sockwell and Wharton, of the Sixty-third—all severely. I had only two field officers left in the three regiments—Colonel Cheek

and Major Lockhart. The former had his hat struck and horse killed; Lockhart escaped unhurt, to get a ball the next day, which he still bears.

Despite these terrible losses and the havoc of death among them, when the men rushed upon the enemy's works cheer after cheer rent the air, and the victorious troopers of the First North Carolina Cavalry Brigade still cherished hope that General R. E. Lee would win in the final mighty struggle then at hand; but next day saw another sight. In the disastrous defeat at Five Forks on the 1st of April the last hopes of the Confederacy went down in darkness and despair. It is believed that this cavalry triumph at Chamberlain Run on the 31st of March, 1865, was the last marked victory won by our arms. Next day Sheridan assaulted our works at Five Forks and drove all before him. My brigade was still on the White Oak road, on our extreme right, and as his victorious legions swept our immediate right the Ninth and Sixty-third Regiments did some of their old-time fighting. The Ninth was on picket some two miles distant, but under proper orders the whole command took up its line of march for the rendezvons at Pott's, a few miles off on the South-side Railroad, where also the next day Lieutenant-Colonel Roger Moore, of the Forty-first, appeared with his command and the remnant of our trains.

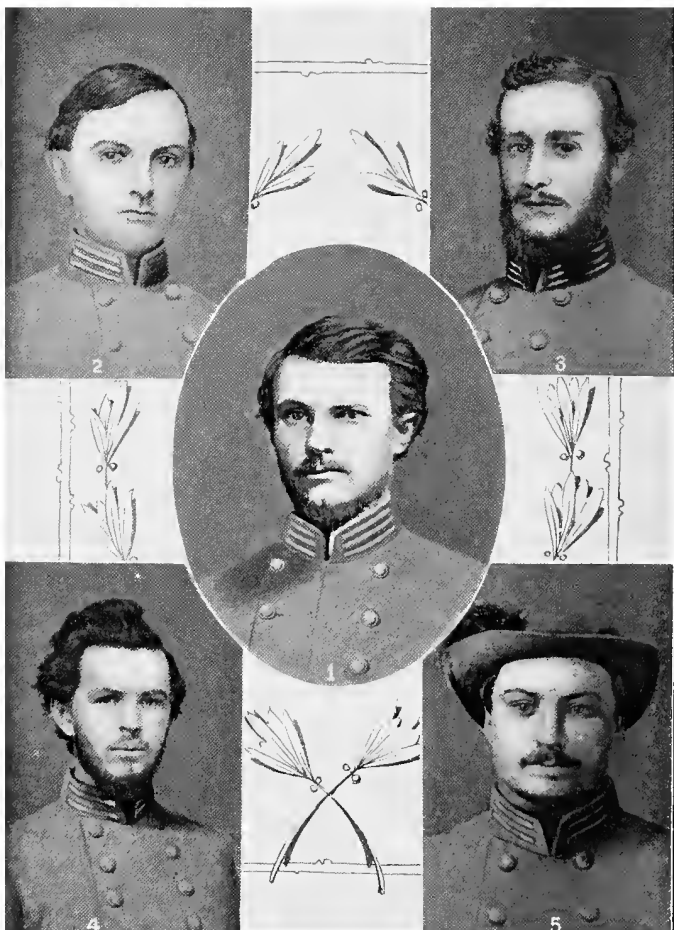
Next day, April 1st, at 12 M., we heard of the fall of Petersburg, and got orders to join in the retreat. That night we camped near Namozine Church, twenty-five miles above Petersburg, covering the extreme rear on that line. Early on the morning of April 3d we took position at Namozine Church to await the advance of the Federal cavalry in its victorious rush with overwhelming numbers. With less than eight hundred men in the line, I had to receive the shock of over eight thousand; but even this difference could have been met with some hope of successful resistance had not a further order come to "fight to the last." Among other dispositions, I was directed to dismount one regiment, the Sixty-third, under Captain John R. Erwin (acting Major), and conceal it in some out-

buildings and along an old fence row, with a view to a possible surprise. But all in vain: in less than thirty minutes my mounted lines were overwhelmed with numbers and the Sixty-third exposed to certain capture. Orders for this regiment to retire had all miscarried or been unheeded, when I myself, as a last resort, dashed across the field with two of my staff to guide them in person through a heavy wood I still saw unoccupied by the enemy. This saved the dismounted men, though their horses were lost; but subsequently, in my efforts to rejoin the division, I was deceived by a squad of Sheridan's scouts in Confederate uniforms and was myself captured. The command now devolved upon Colonel W. H. Cheek, of the Ninth; but two days afterwards he also fell into the enemy's hands.

So far as I could learn, from this on to the surrender at Appomattox on the 9th of April, the fighting was merely a round of hand-to-hand combats, or in small special details in conjunction sometimes with other commands. All this tended to disintegration and independent action. Probably not over one hundred took the paroles tendered at Appomattox, though I have never yet met one of the "old First" who did not get the benefit of General Grant's generous terms and carry home with him a good cavalry horse with which to start his "battle for a crop" in the memorable year of 1865.

In this limited sketch no attempt has been made to note the frequent changes in regimental commanders constantly occurring from promotion, death and other causes, but it is proper to add here that the four doing the largest service in the campaign of 1864 and 1865 were Colonel W. H. Cheek, of the First Cavalry; Colonel W. P. Roberts, of the Second; Lieutenant-Colonel Roger Moore, of the Third, and Colonel James H. McNeill, of the Fifth. They were all wonderfully efficient officers—ever skillful and brave, and in every emergency equal to the occasion.

RUFUS BARRINGER.



NINTH REGIMENT (FIRST CAVALRY.)

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. George S. Dewey, Captain, Co. II. | 3. C. J. Iredell, Captain, Co. E. |
| 2. Kerr Craige, Captain, Co. I. | 4. Jesse H. Person, 1st Lieut., Co. E. |
| 5. Samuel B. Gibson, 1st Lieut., Co. K. | |

ADDITIONAL SKETCH NINTH REGIMENT.

(FIRST CAVALRY).

By COLONEL W. H. CHEEK.

General Barringer, in his preceding sketch of the First North Carolina Cavalry, so fully described the organization, instruction and movements of our regiment up to the time of his promotion to Brigadier-General in June, 1864, that it is impossible for me at this late day, with the limited data at my command, to enlarge or to improve upon his narrative. There are, however, several engagements during the time covered by General Barringer's article which I consider so well calculated to illustrate the talent of our officers and the courage and discipline of the enlisted men, and which added so largely to building up the reputation of the regiment, that I desire to go back and bring them forward and place them in a more conspicuous position than he has given them.

And first in order of time comes the attack of Company B upon the gun-boats in Roanoke River in the spring of 1862. At that time the preservation of the railroad bridge at Weldon was of the utmost importance to the Confederacy. So, when the regiment was returning from Eastern North Carolina to rejoin the Army of Northern Virginia, Company B, Captain Whitaker, was detached to do picket duty down the Roanoke, and especially to watch the approach of the enemy's gun-boats. Captain Whitaker was a large planter on the river, and once when he was at home, and the Company was under command of First Lieutenant A. B. Andrews, the enemy made an effort with three gun-boats to ascend the river, his object being the destruction of the railroad bridge at Weldon. Lieutenant Andrews (now Colonel A. B. Andrews, First Vice-President of the Southern Railway

System), very skillfully attacked him from the bluffs and other favorable points, and so harassed and punished him that at Hamilton he abandoned the expedition and returned to Plymouth. This engagement of cavalry with gun-boats was a novel proceeding, a new feature in warfare, and the first of the kind that happened in our army. This success of Lieutenant Andrews shows the wonderful capacity of the officers and men of this celebrated command to contend with an enemy on water as well as when mounted on horses or dismounted as infantry. Lieutenant Andrews has kindly furnished me with the following account of his operations:

ATTACK OF LIEUTENANT ANDREWS ON THE GUN-BOATS.

“On the morning of July 9, 1862 (I think this date is correct) a courier from Mr. Burroughs came to my camp soon after sunrise with a note stating that three gun-boats had passed Jamesville, supposed to be on their way to Weldon to destroy the Seaboard & Roanoke Railroad bridge at that point, that bridge being on the main thoroughfare between General Lee’s army and the South (as you will recall, that was before the Piedmont Road between Danville and Greensboro was built). On reading the note I at once had sounded “boots and saddles,” and had my company of forty-three men mounted, rode down the river, saw the boats coming up and waited until they had passed the wharf at Williamston, going up towards Weldon. There was great excitement in the town. I asked some of the citizens to pilot me up the river with a view of attacking the gun-boats from different points along the river, leaving two couriers at Williamston to report to me in case the boats should turn back and land at Williamston. Mr. S. W. Watts (afterwards Judge Samuel Watts) and a Mr. Williams went up the river with me. At a place called Poplar Point, about ten miles from Williamston, I stationed Second Lieutenant J. W. Peel with ten men dismounted, with instructions to fire upon the first boat, which was commanded by Lieutenant Flusser, of the United States Navy, and as soon as he delivered his volley to at once remount his

horses and report to me at Rainbow Banks, which was two miles below or east of Hamilton. Rainbow Banks was a bluff on the river, afterward fortified and called Fort Branch. I dismounted the men I had and arranged them along this bluff, taking position on the right of the company myself, and ordered the men not to fire until I had commenced firing my pistol, and then to fire and reload as rapidly as possible. I waited until the front boat, on which Lieutenant Flusser was, had gotten opposite me and then commenced firing my pistol, and the forty-one men began firing and reloading and firing again as rapidly as possible. Lieutenant Flusser was on deck, and I have never seen a man display more bravery than he did in command of this fleet. Finally the front boat passed us and opened its stern gun upon us, shelling the banks so that I was compelled to retreat, mount my horses and go to another point higher up the river. The men had had no breakfast and it was nearly 1 o'clock in the day. I went to a farm-house near by and secured what provisions they had, giving the men something to eat, and then proceeded to Hamilton. On the outskirts of the town I was met by a good many citizens who were very much excited, and begged me not to go in the town, and asking me to go around it, as Lieutenant Flusser had landed one hundred and twenty-five marines and two pieces of artillery, and they were satisfied that if I made an attack on them in the town of Hamilton that they would destroy the town.

“I waited until they started down the river again and then proceeded down the river to undertake to harass them again at Rainbow Banks, but they placed a boat in position and shelled the banks until the other two had passed, and then commenced shelling the banks upon the river so as to enable the first boat to pass. I attempted at other places to fire upon them, but they were shelling the banks on the river all the way down, and it was impossible for us to get another opportunity to attack them. I followed them until about nine o'clock, several miles below Williamston, then returned to Williamston.

"I did not get a man hurt and lost no property, except one relay horse which I had left in a stable at Hamilton, and which they took. Lieutenant Peel and all the men displayed great coolness and bravery. Yours truly,

"A. B. ANDREWS."

JACK'S SHOP.

Another action deserving of an extended notice is that of Jack's Shop, fought on the 22d of September, 1863. As I fortunately have a communication written to the *Fayetteville Observer* about the time by an officer of the regiment, which enters pretty fully into details, and which is correct save in some particulars which that officer may not have had as good an opportunity for observation as the writer, I hereby insert it as a part of this sketch:

"MESSRS. EDITORS:—I think it due to our State to let her know of the part her troops take in the various engagements. That North Carolina has done her part in this war, the bones of her sons moldering on every battlefield, from Bethel to Gettysburg, will testify. No one except those who frequent the hospitals, or visit the battlefields, or have access to the official accounts, knows of the glorious achievements of our North Carolina soldiers. Their deeds of valor will not be found recorded in the columns of the Richmond papers. I shall attempt to give merely a sketch of the part enacted by the First North Carolina Cavalry in the cavalry fight at Jack's Shop, Madison county, near Liberty Mills, Orange county, Virginia, on the 22d of September. My observation was confined to my own regiment; for that reason I shall speak of no other, for fear of doing injustice to some.

"We received orders about 1 o'clock on the morning of the 22d to be in the saddle by day-break. As 'rosy-fingered Aurora' tinged the eastern skies with the first streak of dawn the familiar sound of 'boots and saddle' broke upon our ears. With the alacrity of troopers of twenty-eight months' practice, we leap into our saddles, and soon the regiment is on the march. The

old regiment is reduced to one hundred and thirty men. The rest of the brigade fall in and we proceed to join the other two brigades, which constitute Hampton's Division. The Second, Fourth and Fifth North Carolina Cavalry, together with ours, form Baker's North Carolina Brigade, now commanded by Colonel Ferebee, of the Fifth. Our regiment is under command of Lieutenant-Colonel Ruffin, Colonel Gordon being in command of Butler's Brigade (Hampton's old brigade, except our regiment). We marched within a few miles of Madison Court House, where we came up with Jones' Brigade, and learned from them that the enemy was in strong force at Madison Court House. From here we start, under General Stuart (First North Carolina Cavalry in front), to intersect the pike from Madison Court House to Gordonsville, which we did about six miles south of the Court House. We did not find the enemy here, so we pushed up the pike, Company F, First North Carolina Cavalry, acting as advance guard, with sabres drawn. We had proceeded only a short distance when our advance guard came up with the advance guard of the enemy. Our boys charged them and ran them back: the regiment draws sabres and takes up the gallop, keeping close behind. Just behind Jack's Shop (where we first fell in with the enemy) there was a skirt of pines extending on either side of the road. In these the enemy was posted, his dismounted skirmishers lining the fence. Into this Company F, under command of Lieutenant Foard, charged most gallantly. Here they were confronted by an overwhelming force of cavalry, and from every tree whistled a rifle bullet. After emptying their pistols in the face of the foe the remnant of them came out and reported the strength and position of the enemy. The column was halted in fifty yards of the woods. It was deemed impracticable to charge the enemy, posted as he was, in the woods. Sharpshooters were immediately dismounted from every company and thrown forward, except Companies A and H, under Captain Cowles, who were sent to the left to hold the flanks. These were soon thrown out as sharpshooters, and the whole regiment was then dismounted. Major Cheek, whose horse had been shot from under him, took command of the line. Our men gallantly charged the woods, drove the enemy back, and for some time

held their position in the pines. The fight had now become general. Squadrons of sharpshooters were seen hurrying up from our own brigade and Colonel Gordon's command to support us. It was here, while cheering on his men, the gallant Captain Andrews fell, shot through the lungs. No braver or better man has fallen during this war. He was universally beloved by all. His wound, which at first was thought mortal, now gives hopes of his recovery. The artillery now opened on us, and General Stuart, who, with Colonels Gordon, Ferebee and Ruffin, was in front, called to our boys to pick off their artillerymen. After a stubborn resistance we were overpowered, and fell back about two hundred yards, which position we held until the enemy had gained our rear and we were ordered to retreat. We had fallen back about a mile, when we heard firing in our rear, and coming out on an open hill we found our artillery posted to sweep every direction. The cause of this at first we could not divine, but we were not long in finding out, for the bullets began to whistle around us from every quarter. Colonel Ruffin formed our command on the crest of a hill; we numbered only about fifty men. Of the one hundred and thirty who went into the fight thirty-three had been killed, wounded or captured; the others were scattered and lost for the time.

“The enemy are now between us and Dixie, and we must cut our way out. We move on. Just ahead of us we hear a shout, and after a little we see a crowd of blue jackets coming in divested of arms, canteens and spurs. Colonel Ferebee, with a part of his command and a miscellaneous crowd from every command, had charged and cut the Yankee line. The Yankees having failed in their attempt to hem in Hampton's Division, as they have always failed before, drew off, and we made our way quietly to the river. When we arrived there we beheld another large column of the enemy across the river and about two miles above. We crossed at Liberty Mills and took a road leading to them. The evening was far advanced, only a short time remained of the daylight, yet they must be driven back before night. We found a body of our infantry deploying along a fence and through a field, holding them in check. We went to their left, under a ridge of hills, into a wood; Company K,

Captain Addington, was thrown forward as advance guard. We came out of the woods to the left and in front of the infantry. The Yankees were prepared for us, and opened a heavy fire of artillery, with their usual accuracy. General Stuart now orders the charge. The last rays of the setting sun are glistening on our sabres as we raise the war-cry and ply the rowels to our weary steeds. They participate in the excitement, and forgetting their weariness, dash forward. It is a long charge, over hills and gullies. The enemy has limbered up and taken his artillery back to a safer position; further on we see a large body of his cavalry, who open on us with their rifles; we make for them through a shower of grape and rifle balls. Just before we reach them they break and run, leaving an impassable branch between us. At the same time a body of their sharpshooters open on us from the right. We turn upon them, and close the day by capturing all who made a stand, twenty-four in number.

“As I proposed in the outset, I have given an account of only my own regiment. The other regiments of our brigade behaved with great gallantry, made some splendid charges, and suffered much. Our brigade suffered the heaviest loss. There were ninety-two casualties out of about five hundred men who went into the fight. Of Butler’s Brigade the Cobb and Phillips Legions and Second South Carolina only were present. They were ably commanded by Colonel Gordon of this regiment, and fought as they have always done, with the greatest courage. Lieutenant-Colonel Delohy, of the Cobb Legion, than whom a braver man does not live, was wounded in the leg and fell into the hands of the Yankees while on his way to the river. Hampton’s Division alone was present. They mounted about two thousand men in all, and were confronted by over six thousand Yankees, under Generals Kilpatrick and Buford. They had started on a raid to Gordonsville and Charlottesville, but their plan was fortunately nipped in the bud. During the night of the 22d they commenced moving and fell back rapidly to their old position. Everything is now quiet.

“FIRST N. C. CAVALRY.”

In this fight at Jack's Shop the First Cavalry gave an example of the value of the drill and the effect of thorough discipline, coupled with the quality of cool courage, perhaps more forcibly than in any other engagement of the war. The circumstances of the beginning of the battle were a little different from those described by the correspondent of the Fayetteville *Observer*, who was conceded to be Adjutant George Dewey, than whom there was not to be found a more accomplished gentleman or a more brave and dashing officer. I had him promoted "for merit" to the captaincy of Company H, his old company. He did not see the first of this fight, for he was with Colonel Ruffin, back at Jack's Shop, where he had stopped a few moments before to have a shoe nailed on his horse. The regiment was temporarily under the command of acting Major Cheek, who, with General J. E. B. Stuart, was riding at its head about one hundred yards in rear of the advance guard under Lieutenant N. P. Foard, of Company F. We were momentarily expecting to meet the enemy, and Lieutenant Foard had orders to charge on sight and I was instructed to support him with the whole strength of the regiment. When we saw the advance guard take up the gallop the regiment with drawn sabres did the same. Soon Lieutenant Foard was at a full charge, and as the regiment was rapidly getting into like movement, General Stuart said to me: "Be careful, and do not run into an ambush." He then turned aside and halted. As soon as Lieutenant Foard developed the position of the enemy and we saw his strong line of dismounted men posted behind fences, and with trees cut across the turnpike, I thought we were in the jaws of an ambuscade. General Stuart had not ordered me what to do under such conditions; "not to run into an ambush" were my only instructions. I halted the regiment and gave orders to "Return sabres!" "Unslung carbines!" "Fire on the enemy!" Lieutenant Morrow, of Company C, in command of the front company, was ordered to hold his place and continue firing until I could get orders from General Stuart. I galloped back to him and explained the situation. He ordered me to dismount the regiment and deploy it in the field on the

right. I dashed back and gave the orders. A line was formed as promptly and as perfectly as if there had been no enemy near. This was done in an open field, within less than one hundred yards of their sharp-shooters, in full view of them and under a heavy fire. As soon as our line was formed we charged, firing as we charged, and drove their sharp-shooters out of the pines and the woods, back into an open field, under the protection of their mounted supports. These were in full view, and appeared to be about two brigades in regimental formations. We were quickly recalled from this position and fell back about two hundred yards, where General Stuart had established his main line. Here, as dismounted skirmishers, and after we were re-inforced by other men from our brigade and from Butler's Brigade, under command of Colonel Gordon, we contended with the enemy for several hours. Here it was that the artillery, as referred to by Adjutant Dewey, was brought into action, and it was on this line that Captain A. B. Andrews was shot. I cannot be mistaken as to this latter fact, for he and I were near together at the time, and I caught him as he fell. The enemy did not press us with much energy, but kept up just enough fire to attract our attention and keep us actively engaged. All this time he was moving the greater portion of his command around our left, and was successful in placing a large force on the turnpike directly in our rear. It was only after some desperate fighting, with mounted charges and counter-charges, that he was driven off. This, however, was done by other troops of Hampton's Division.

In the many tough battles fought by this gallant regiment, not even at Goodall's Tavern, nor at Auburn Mills, nor at Atlee's Station, nor at Chamberlain's Run, nor on the plains of Brandy, nor even on the drill or parade grounds did it ever obey an order more promptly or execute a movement more beautifully, more heroically. The Old Guard of Napoleon never on any field of battle more forcibly illustrated the effect of discipline and the power of cool courage than did the First North Carolina Cavalry in this engagement near Jack's Shop.

Soon after the fight at Reams' Station I was detailed by General Stuart and placed in command of all the dismounted men of his corps, amounting to upwards of three thousand men, and was encamped at Orange Court House, reporting direct to General R. E. Lee. With this command we moved with the infantry when General Lee advanced to Bristoe Station, and reached a place called Greenwich, the private residence of an English Consul, on the evening of the battle, and about three miles distant. We started out from Orange Court House with two days' rations, and did not draw again until our return. For four days our only food was what white oak acorns we could gather in the woods. This march was called by the men who were so unfortunate as to be in it "Cheek's famine."

It was when in charge of this command that the battle of Auburn Mills and the Buckland Races were fought. The gallant Colonel Ruffin fell at the head of the column, charging a line of infantry at Auburn, and I, receiving a commission as Colonel a few days afterward, was ordered to take charge of the regiment. Lieutenant-Colonel Cowles (at the time Captain of Company A, and second in command to Major Barringer), took a very prominent part in both of these engagements, and has kindly furnished me the following interesting description of them.

AUBURN MILLS, BY LIEUTENANT-COLONEL W. H. H. COWLES.

On the 13th of October, 1863, whilst our army was concentrating at Warrenton, General Stuart was ordered to take a *reconnaissance* in the direction of Catlett's Station. Taking with him the North Carolina Cavalry Brigade, under General James B. Gordon, with Lomax's and Funston's Cavalry Brigades and Beckham's Artillery, he arrived at Auburn about 4 o'clock in the afternoon. Leaving a portion of the command at Auburn with Gordon's and Funston's Brigades and the artillery, he proceeded towards Catlett's, some three miles, when from the woods across the open fields could be seen an immense park of wagons, and heavy columns of the enemy's infantry, artillery and

wagon-trains were on the move. While watching this scene and movement, and endeavoring to make out the intention of the enemy, Stuart received a message from Gordon that the enemy were in our rear. Hastily riding in the direction indicated, Stuart, still incredulous, met General Gordon, who merely said: "Come, and I will show you." Riding to a point in view of the crossing at Auburn, he could plainly see another and a similar column of the enemy's infantry, artillery, wagons, etc., passing, and taking the road over which he had just come. To endeavor to cut through at this juncture was to hazard a large portion of our cavalry and all of our artillery. The only alternative was to "lie low," and make as little noise as possible, until dark or discovery by the enemy (who as yet was entirely and strangely ignorant of our whereabouts), when we would, if necessary, make the best disposition we could of the artillery for its safety or destruction and cut through. Such a thing as surrender never entered into the plans of our leaders or the thoughts of their followers. Limited space forbids a description of the incidents of that night, though it would make an interesting narrative. Let it suffice to say, that we held our place in the hollow of the hills until the early dawn, when it was ascertained that the rear of the enemy's two columns had separated, leaving an open space through which we could pass. My own impression is that General Stuart could not resist the temptation to give the enemy a taste of our mettle in payment for the long hours of suspense in which he had held us completely surrounded. During the night Stuart had communicated by means of disguised couriers, sent through the enemy's column in our front, with our infantry commanders, planning an attack in concert with them, which would have been a most excellent thing to have done, but his plans were not understood or the situation was not comprehended, and so at the earliest dawn Stuart, having his guns in position, opened upon them with all of his artillery and then and there "was hurrying to and fro." Immediately General Gordon ordered Colonel Ruffin to charge with the First North Carolina Cavalry. The ostensible reason for this was to create

a diversion so that our remaining troops could debouch into the open road and pass in rear of the enemy's column. Ruffin, at the head of the regiment, rode foremost into the charge—right down upon the quickly forming ranks of the enemy's infantry, amid the bursting, crashing shells of his artillery, which had been quickly turned upon us in response to ours. Through the open field, facing the enemy's infantry fire, the gallant regiment, with sabres drawn, followed its gallant leader, when suddenly there was a stop, a recoil—the brave and gallant Ruffin, with several others, had been shot down at the head of the column, which caused some disorder. Major Barringer was not immediately at hand; the condition of affairs was critical; something must be done, and to make sure, I called for my own company (A) and the first squadron to follow me, and together, with others, we renewed the charge even to the enemy's line of skirmishers, who promptly surrendered. Seeing that we were not supported, and the regiment at this time I do not think amounted to more than two hundred men, while line upon line of the enemy's infantry, in double ranks, was steadily approaching, I ordered the regiment back, which order was executed in fine style by the commanders of the companies. I rode to a slight eminence on our right, where General Gordon had just taken his position, to inquire as to what we should do. As I did so I saw him reel in his saddle, throwing his hand to his face. Inquiring if he was hurt, he replied: "It is a mere scratch." A bullet had grazed his nose, cutting the skin and severing a small blood-vessel, which bled profusely. He told me that I had done right in ordering the regiment back; that the end for which the charge had been ordered was accomplished, and exclaimed: "See there," pointing with his hand down the little valley which had given us its friendly shelter during the night, where could be seen our column wending its way. We soon joined it undisturbed by any further demonstration on the part of the enemy. In this affair our loss was considerable, though I have no statistics to guide me in giving it. It would have been great with the loss only of our gallant Colonel, Thomas Ruffin. Devoted to the cause, his regi-

ment and the men who followed him, he was mourned for many days.

On the 19th of October, 1863, the First North Carolina Cavalry, under the command of Major R. Barriuger, in company with Captain William H. H. Cowles, of Company A, as second in command, was slowly retiring before the enemy's cavalry in the direction of Warrenton along the road which leads from that place to Manassas *via* New Baltimore, Buckland and New Market. Our forces in this movement consisted of the North Carolina Cavalry Brigade, under the command of Brigadier-General James B. Gordon, Young's Georgia Brigade and Rosser's Virginia Brigade, all under the immediate command of Major-General J. E. B. Stuart. But few, if any, besides Stuart and his generals, knew of the plan of action, and that our declining every overture for engagement and withdrawing before the enemy was but a decoy to lead him on whilst Fitz Lee was preparing to attack him in the rear and flank. The enemy, it is true, seemed a little doubtful of our sincerity, and were not pressing very hard, and when we had reached a point within some two or three miles of Warrenton the column was moved into the field near the road-side, the order given to dismount, but to keep in the order of column and ready to mount and move at once. We remained here until about the middle of the afternoon, when the order was given to mount, the head of the column turned back into the road towards Manassas, and before we had reached the summit of the ridge separating us from the enemy firing was heard in that direction. Sabres were drawn, preparatory to action, and although I had been especially assigned in the morning to take charge of the rear, and upon occasion to act upon my own responsibility, I now took the responsibility, in the gratification of what I thought would be construed as a pardonable curiosity, to move to the front. The fire of the enemy was taking effect on our column, which had halted, the head of the column resting upon the crest of the hill. When I reached that point a soul-stirring scene was presented: Our own column resting in the road with sabres drawn and ready for action, with mounted skirmishers on

either flank responding to the enemy's fire; Generals Stuart and Gordon on the right of the road viewing intently the situation; the enemy's column (the pick and flower of the Federal cavalry) confronting us and stretching in column of fours, completely covering the highway in our front as far as we could see, with mounted skirmishers on either flank and evidently in readiness to charge. Not a moment was to be lost; much, as every old cavalryman knows, depended on getting the "bulge on 'em," as Fitz Lee would say. Stuart called quickly: "Now, Gordon, is your time!" and Gordon as promptly: "Charge with the First North Carolina!" There was no time for the formula of the parade ground. I neither waited for nor heard the command of General Gordon repeated, but rode rapidly to the front, calling out as I did so: "Forward First North Carolina Cavalry; I will lead you!" The response from the regiment, as it rushed forward, was that wild, unearthly, untrained, undisciplined, yet to the enemy terrific and terrible, Confederate yell, which swelled and grew as it passed from front to rear of our entire column. Down from the crest of that ridge the regiment poured like an avalanche. With flashing sabres and the impetuous speed of a war-horse, nothing could withstand it. For an instant the enemy hesitated, while some endeavored to rally and meet us, and, notably in this effort, I remember well one officer. But it was all in vain; panic seized them; the cohesion of their drill, discipline and organization was for the time destroyed, and individual effort amounted to nothing; break they must, and break they did. And yet, every time we ran into them they fought like brave men, and I verily believe that if we had given them two minutes more before taking the start we would have had the fight of our lives for the possession of that road. As it was, the front wavered, their column melted and broke, and though they made frequent rallies and attempts to reform, we gave them no time. Sabres and pistols were freely used by both sides in the *melees* which followed every time they were attacked from the rear. As we approached New Baltimore, a small village, our column became somewhat scattered, the fleetest horses outstripping

others, and the capture by us of such as would break away from the enemy's crowded column contributed to this. At this point Major Barringer's horse became unmanageable. Breaking, or disregarding his curb, he rushed past everything, and as he entered the town, in the effort to stop him, he was thrown against a house with great violence, knocking the horse completely over and down and striking the Major against the house with such force as to cause serious injury to his arm and head, disabling him from further participation in the action. This placed me in command of the regiment. The pursuit went right on through New Baltimore, passed Buckland, over Broad Run, the enemy finally taking refuge behind their infantry, the distance covering about five miles. I remember our own casualties were small. Several of the enemy were killed and wounded and we captured a good many prisoners.

This article does not purport to relate all of the incidents which occurred in this action worthy of mention; some thrilling and, strange to say, some amusing. Stuart, in his gay humor, named it "The Buckland Races." It certainly stands alone as the *steeple-chase* of the war. The regiment did well on that day, and richly deserved the high encomiums it received from both Stuart and Gordon.

ATLEE'S STATION.

Another action during this time was that of Atlee's Station, which is deserving of more extended notice than given it by General Barringer. We claim it as the most important cavalry action of the war.

On the night of March 1, 1864, General Kilpatrick, in command of five thousand picked men of the Federal cavalry, was encamped about five miles northeast of Richmond, with the intent to assault the city from that side at light on the morning of the 2d. He had sent Colonel Dahlgren, with two hundred men, around to the west of the city to make this demonstration on the 1st for a double purpose: first, to draw the Confederates to that side of the city and thereby weaken their lines on the east, where he was to attack at daylight next morning; and secondly,

that they would there be in position the more quickly to release the prisoners on Belle Island and turn them loose to pillage and burn Richmond.

General Hampton, with his command, was encamped around Bowling Green, in Caroline county. As soon as it was ascertained that the Federal cavalry had broken through our lines near Spottsylvania Court House, General Hampton began the pursuit of it with about two hundred and fifty men from the First North Carolina Cavalry, forty men from the Second North Carolina Cavalry and a section of McGregor's Battery, under the command of Lieutenant Ed. Sully. We left camp about midnight on the last day of February and marched continuously through a terrible storm of rain, hail, sleet and snow, until about midnight of the first of March we came in sight of camp-fires between Atlee's Station and Richmond. At the station General Hampton and his staff went into the ticket-office and he sent me down the road to ascertain whether the fires were those of our troops or of the Federals. His only instructions to me were, if I found them to be the enemy's "to harass him all I could." We moved down the road and soon encountered a picket. After an exchange of shots he retired and, strange to say, if he went into camp, he failed to alarm it. I immediately sent forward some scouts, who soon reported the troops to be Yankees, and that they were all asleep around their camp-fires in a body of woods. I went forward, carefully examined the situation and prepared at once for a night attack. I dismounted about one hundred and twenty men from the First North Carolina Cavalry and deployed them as sharpshooters, under the command of Captain Blair, who cautiously moved them up to the edge of the woods and within fifty yards of the fires. He was instructed to lie down and to keep quiet until the artillery opened. Owing to the condition of the ground, I could put only one gun in action. Every preparation was made to fire this as rapidly as possible. When the first shell flew over him, Captain Blair was ordered to rise, raise the yell and charge the camp. The scheme proved a perfect success. The enemy was surprised, demoralized and

stampeded. We captured one hundred and fifty prisoners, one hundred and eighty horses, carbines, sabres, saddles, bridles, blankets and other outfits too numerous to mention. I did not lose a man. Among the prisoners was a brigadier-general and men from five regiments. This brigade was the rear of Kilpatrick's column, and it was so badly stampeded that we pursued them that night and drove them in upon the camp of their main body, which also became demoralized, and the whole command broke camp about three o'clock in the morning and made for the lower Pamunkey in a panic.

It was this attack of ours, which was in the hearing of Dahlgren, that caused him to withdraw from his position, or he may have been signaled by General Kilpatrick. At any rate, in his flight he passed very near a portion of my command about day on the morning of the 2d.

At this time it was generally conceded in military circles on both sides that had Kilpatrick been permitted to make his assault on Richmond from the east next morning, and been supported by Dahlgren from the west, that the city certainly would have been captured. I do not wish to detract one iota from the fame or gallantry of the brave men who successfully resisted the attack of Dahlgren on the evening of the 1st of March, but it is an error to ascribe to them all the credit for "preventing Richmond from being sacked," an honor which belongs largely to the First North Carolina Cavalry Regiment.

After the attack on this rear brigade of Kilpatrick's was over, and order restored in the captured camp, I caused a strong picket guard to be placed in the road taken by the fleeing enemy, and rode back to the station to report to General Hampton our success. He went back with me to the camp, had the command made ready to march, and began the pursuit. The night was very dark, so we moved slowly and cautiously, shelling the road in the direction of Kilpatrick's main camp, which was several miles nearer to Richmond. Before daylight this body also had left in a panic, abandoning several caissons and leaving a large quantity of other camp equipage.

A short time ago I was asked by an officer of high rank in the civil war which engagement of the cavalry in the Army of Northern Virginia did I consider the most important as to the results accomplished by it. My mind at once reverted to the battle of the first Brandy Station. This is conceded to have been the largest cavalry fight of the war. General Stuart had eight thousand men in the saddle and the Yankees about twelve thousand, and the action lasted nearly all day, yet what were its results? How did it affect the plans of that campaign? Absolutely not at all. At that time both armies were on the march, General Lee making for Pennsylvania and General Meade moving on a parallel line to protect Washington City. Both armies had its cavalry on their flanks to conceal its movements and to discover those of their opponent. Under these circumstances the entire cavalry of these two great armies came together on the wide plains of Brandy on the 9th day of June, 1863. The battle lasted from early dawn until near sunset, and the losses were heavy on both sides; but the result did not affect the campaign. It did not defeat, delay or hinder the plans of either the great commanders in the least. They moved on just as if this action had not taken place.

Later on, General Hampton, at Trevilian Station, fought the second largest cavalry battle that occurred on the soil of Virginia, and with very important results. General Grant was attempting to transfer a large body of his cavalry from the James River to the Valley to co-operate with Hunter in his work of devastation, and in his effort to cut the East Tennessee & Virginia Railroad. General Hampton, with about four thousand men, met this force of ten thousand men, under Sheridan, near Trevilian Station, and after maneuvering and fighting for several days compelled them to turn back. The results accomplished by this action were very important, for if Sheridan, with his power on the field of battle and with his fondness for the use of the torch, had formed with Hunter (a general of like power and similar fancy for flames) a junction in the

Valley our resources would have been seriously crippled and our people would have suffered untold miseries from the torch and from the "bummers." But had this plan of General Grant's been successful, and had his plans been carried out; had our railroad communications been destroyed and the Valley devastated, would such results have been as disastrous and the consequences as depressing to the cause of the Confederacy as the fall of its Capital? We think not, and believing as we do, that but for this night attack at Atlee's Station that the city of Richmond would have fallen an easy prey to the assault of Kilpatrick the next morning, we claim for the gallant men of the First North Carolina Cavalry the salvation of the Capital of the Confederacy.

What other regiment can, with equal propriety, in one single engagement claim results so great? Nor is this claim too great. We have its confirmation from many officers, high in command, of both the Union and Confederate armies. Indeed, a few days afterwards President Davis personally thanked me, and said that but for this attack he feared that the city would have been taken.

In a recent letter from Captain J. C. Blair, of Company D, he says: "I hope you will not be too modest to do yourself justice as regards your fight near Richmond with General Kilpatrick, for it was the most successful of any one during the war. You know that you saved Richmond. Kilpatrick would have taken the city next morning. It was the best managed of any fight I was ever in, and yet they think no one can manage troops but a West Pointer."

I here insert a letter from General Hampton, written to Colonel Wharton J. Green when he was preparing his eulogy on General Robert Ransom for Memorial Day: .

"COLUMBIA, S. C., March 4, 1892.

"MY DEAR COLONEL:—I am glad to learn that you are to deliver an eulogy 'on General Robert Ransom, for his character and career reflected honor on North Carolina. It was my good

fortune to have the First North Carolina Cavalry in my command during the larger part of the war, and I always attributed much of the efficiency of this noble regiment to its first colonel, afterwards the distinguished General Robert Ransom. To him was due, in large measure, those soldierly qualities which won for his old regiment its high reputation (a reputation it deserved), for, in my opinion, there was no finer body of men in the Army of Northern Virginia than those composing the First North Carolina Cavalry. Of the many instances when this regiment distinguished itself I recall one, when, in conjunction with a small detachment from the Second North Carolina Cavalry, it performed a memorable achievement in the defeat of Kilpatrick on his raid attempting to capture the city of Richmond. With only two hundred and fifty men in its ranks, under command of Colonel Cheek, and with fifty men of the Second, we struck Kilpatrick's camp at one o'clock in the morning, in a snow-storm, after marching forty miles, captured more prisoners (representing five regiments) than our number, including the officer commanding the brigade, and put to flight Kilpatrick's whole force of three brigades, in which were five thousand men. But on every field this regiment displayed conspicuous gallantry. Your State, which furnished so many gallant soldiers to the Confederacy, gave none who upheld her honor and reflected glory on our flag more bravely than did the First Regiment of Cavalry. I can never forget my old comrades who composed it. Peace to their dead, and all honor to their living.

“Sincerely yours,

“WADE HAMPTON.”

GOODALL'S TAVERN.

There is another important action which General Barringer has failed to notice in his sketch that deserves to be mentioned. General Barringer's absence at the time in Eastern North Carolina, on detached duty, accounts for the omission. I allude to the fight at Goodall's Tavern on the 11th of May, 1864. This

place was a country hotel, on the old stage road from Richmond to Gordonsville, eighteen miles above Richmond. Here Sheridan, with his twelve thousand troopers, after breaking through our lines near Spottsylvania Court House, had encamped on the night of the 10th. The North Carolina brigade of cavalry, under General Gordon, marched in pursuit all day and night, and by crossing a large creek at a blind and unguarded ford, came unexpectedly upon the enemy's rear brigade about dawn on the morning of the 11th. The First Cavalry was in front and began the attack without delay. The enemy filled the old hotel and all its outhouses, stables, barns, etc., with sharp-shooters. These buildings were in a large opening, and we being without artillery, could not dislodge them. The fight between the dismounted sharp-shooters lasted for several hours. Finally General Gordon took personal command of my regiment and sent me around to the extreme right to take charge of a squadron of the Fifth Cavalry and threaten their flank, so as to compel them to withdraw from the houses. With this squadron I charged and drove back their advance squadron in great disorder on to their main support. At this juncture General Gordon, at the head of the First, came to my support, and uniting this squadron of the Fifth with them, we had the most desperate hand-to-hand conflict I ever witnessed. The regiment we met was the First Maine, and it had the reputation of being the best cavalry in the Army of the Potomac. Sabre cuts were given thick and fast on both sides. The staff of my colors received two deep cuts while the sergeant was using it to protect himself from the furious blows of a Yankee trooper. We drove them from the field, but our pursuit was stopped by a battery of artillery and a second mounted line which they had established a short distance in the woods at Ground Squirrel Church. This line extended one hundred yards on both sides of the road. To dislodge them from this position, and to capture their cannon, if possible, I took a squadron of my regiment and made a detour through the woods in column of fours and struck them on their extreme right. Here we had another hand-to-hand fight, which resulted

in our breaking and hurling them back in confusion into the road. Here again the sabre was freely used, and here it was that while pursuing a fleeing foe, with the point of my sabre in his back, his companion, with his pistol almost in my face, sent a bullet crashing through my shoulder.

This fight recalls an incident that occurred in the rotunda of the Ebbitt House in Washington City on my return home from Johnson's Island prison in August, 1865, which illustrates so forcibly the reputation of the grand old regiment that it ought to be told and handed down to posterity. The room was crowded with Federal officers, all, of course, strangers to me. Feeling very lonely, and wishing to have some one to talk with, I determined to make an acquaintance. Seeing an officer of commanding appearance, with an open, approachable face, clad in cavalry uniform, with the insignia of a colonel, I went up to him and introduced myself as the late Colonel of the First North Carolina Cavalry. He grasped my hand most cordially and soon called up and introduced quite a number of other officers. He said to them: "I have the honor of having met Colonel Cheek once before. It was on the 11th of May last, at a little place called Goodall's Tavern, about eighteen miles from Richmond. On that occasion Colonel Cheek, with his regiment, the First North Carolina Cavalry, which was considered the best regiment of cavalry on his side, met the First Maine, which held a similar reputation on our side. I saw these two fine regiments come hand-to-hand, in open field, with drawn sabres. The clash was terrific, the fighting was furious and obstinate, but the First Maine was driven from the field. An officer of the First Maine, after the surrender, speaking of his regiment, made the proud boast that it was never driven from the field but once during the war, but, said he, we consider that no disgrace or reflection, for it was done by the First North Carolina."

I mention this to show the reputation of the regiment in the camp of the enemy.

Being wounded at Goodall's Tavern on the 11th of May,

1864, the command of the regiment devolved upon Lieutenant-Colonel Cowles until my return to duty about the 1st of August. During this time scarcely a day passed that the regiment was not on the march, and frequently in several actions during the same day. It was during this time that the famous Kautz and Wilson raid occurred. It fell to the lot of the First to be put in active pursuit and led by the dashing Lieutenant-Colonel Cowles. The assaults on the enemy were fast and furious. Besides these numerous attacks on the raiding party the regiment was in some fifteen named engagements while under the command of Colonel Cowles. He has kindly furnished me with an account of this raid, which I insert:

THE WILSON RAID, BY LIEUTENANT-COLONEL W. H. H. COWLES.

On the 21st of June, 1864, the Federal cavalry, under the command of Major-General Wilson and Major-General Kautz, two full divisions, numbering about six thousand men, well mounted, equipped and provisioned, were dispatched with orders to destroy the Petersburg & Weldon Railroad and also the Southside and Danville Railroads. Moving rapidly, they struck the Weldon road at Reams' Station and destroyed the track for several miles. Thence they pushed rapidly for the Southside road. Our cavalry at this time was greatly depleted. After the hard and destructive campaign in the spring, in which we lost both Stuart and Gordon, with many of our veteran troopers, and after Grant had settled down with his great and superior resources to kill and wear and starve us out, we were kept constantly on the move from one side of the river to the other, fighting by day and marching by night, extending here and there our long-stretched infantry lines until our services were needed to meet and repel some demonstration of the enemy's well-fed and well-equipped cavalry, now grown bold from our diminished numbers and well knowing that we had no more men or horses to bring and scarcely food for those we had, they could well afford to exult and venture upon a raid.

General W. H. F. Lee, with his remnant of a division, pushed on as fast as he could in pursuit of this large force. The weather was exceedingly hot and it was terribly dusty. In close column it was almost impossible to breathe or see for the dust, so we were forced to march in column of twos and with long intervals between the regiments; but when we met the enemy at Black's and White's, a small station on the Southside road, he was engaged in tearing up track and doing the railroad property all the damage he could. Disposition was at once made to attack. I do not remember the order of march that day, nor who was in front; I only heard the firing and closed up, quickening our pace. Soon a courier came with the message to come up as quickly as possible; then we pushed into a gallop, and as we did so formed fours. I was in command of the regiment, and when we reached the point where our artillery was posted the firing was dense and heavy in the woods in front and to the right of the road, and our forces, a thin line of dismounted men, were giving away. I do not remember whose men these were, but they were not of our brigade. The enemy could plainly be seen at a charge on foot, chasing this line of dismounted men, and evidently aiming for the capture of our battery, which, under the gallant Captain McGregor, was stationed just in the open field to the left of the road. General W. H. F. Lee was on his horse at the side of the road with the expression upon his face of a brave man hard pressed. As we came up at a gallop he exclaimed to me: "*Save the guns! Save the guns!*" "We'll do it, General." "Prepare to fight on foot; dismount; front into line; double-quick, march!" was all the command I gave or had to give that well-seasoned and gallant old regiment. The men knew what was expected of them, and they never failed. Quickly forming as they came up, they went in at a charge, through a narrow stretch of open ground into the woods, each seeking his own opportunity to fire and to fire accurately, for we had no ammunition to waste. The blue-coated fellows had begun to think they were to have it all their own way; one of them

fell right at the mouth of the cannon. I think he was knocked on the head by one of McGregor's gunners with a rammer. It was but a short tussle, and we had them going the other way, back to the railroad cut, where, intrenched, they opened upon us an incessant fire. Protecting ourselves as well as we could by the ridge and the timber, we here engaged them, understanding that if we could hold them there and give them something else to do other than the destruction of the railroad we would accomplish all that was expected or possible for us to do. Throughout the remainder of the afternoon and until dark I have rarely heard and never been subjected to a more unceasing and rapid fire of small arms. We were very close together; too close for the successful use of artillery upon either line in the thick growth of timber, as we were; and yet McGregor got their location by the railroad and did some effective service. Our elevation was a little above the railroad, and they could shoot over the heads of their own men, but the timber was so thick they could not get our exact range, and most of their shells passed over and exploded beyond us; but it was wonderful with what accuracy those in the railroad cut fired. Had we been without any protection and remained there as long as we held the position, some three hours or more, it is scarcely possible that any would have survived, for we had no breastworks and only the shelter of the timber and the slight elevation. Their bullets swept the small growth from the crest of the ridge, and good sized saplings and small trees were almost cut down by them. That night when we were relieved and went back to the point from which our charge had begun, General W. H. F. Lee met us and was profuse in his thanks to officers and men for their conduct, and McGregor, with his brave heart overflowing with gratitude, rushed forward, and seizing my hand, exclaimed: "Henceforth those guns," pointing to his battery, "belong to the First North Carolina Cavalry; you saved them to-day, and they are yours."

This was the most important action in which our command,

under General W. H. F. Lee, engaged the enemy alone during this raid, which lasted, from start to finish, for about a week. We continued to follow the enemy and harass, hinder and worry him, and by our frequent attacks prevented the destruction of much property. The result of this raid was very disastrous to the Federals. After General Hampton, who had crossed the James River to come to our aid with his forces, joined in the attack at Sappony Church, they were defeated and driven throughout the afternoon and night of the 28th. Next morning the rout became complete. Without going more into detail, the result of the whole matter was that Kautz and Wilson were forced to abandon their wagons and artillery, and leaving a large number of prisoners, were glad to make their own escape with but a comparatively small portion of their force.

In the month of August we crossed and recrossed the James River several times and fought several important actions on the north side. At White Oak Swamp we had a severe engagement. Our losses were considerable. Lieutenant Morrow, of Company C, was killed.

REAMS' STATION.

On the 25th of August, 1864, the great battle of Reams' Station was fought. In this action the cavalry, infantry and artillery all took part. General W. H. F. Lee was absent on sickness; this put General Barringer in command of the division, Colonel Cheek in command of the brigade and Lieutenant-Colonel Cowles in command of the regiment. There was an opinion somewhat prevalent among the poorly informed infantry of our army that the cavalry did little or no fighting. I do not know how better to correct this error than to quote the words of General R. E. Lee. It will be remembered that this battle of Reams' Station was fought principally by troops from North Carolina, and so well did they behave, that General Lee wrote the following complimentary letter to Governor Vance:

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA,

August 29th, 1864.

His Excellency Z. B. VANCE,*Governor of North Carolina,*

Raleigh.

* * * * *

I have frequently been called upon to mention the services of North Carolina soldiers in this army, but their gallantry and conduct were never more deserving of admiration than in the engagement at Reams' Station on the 23d ultimo.

The brigades of Generals Cooke, McRae and Lane, the last under the temporary command of General Conner, advanced through a thick abatis of felled trees under a heavy fire of musketry and artillery and carried the enemy's works with a steady courage that elicited the commendation of their corps and division commanders and the admiration of the army.

On the same occasion the brigade of General Barringer bore a conspicuous part in the operations of the cavalry, which were no less distinguished for boldness and efficiency than those of the infantry.

If the men who remain in North Carolina share the spirit of those they have sent to the field, as I doubt not they do, her defense may securely be trusted to their hands.

I am, with great respect,

Your obedient servant,

R. E. LEE,

General.

CHAMBERLAIN'S RUN.

The winter of 1864-'65 was spent mostly in doing picket duty and protecting the Petersburg & Weldon Railroad as far south as Stony Creek. On the 8th of December we held the railroad bridge at Belfield and the next day followed in pursuit of Warren's forces, making a splendid mounted charge and capturing a large number of prisoners.

This was the only engagement of any importance in which we took part until the spring campaign of 1865 opened about the last of March. We spent the winter in quarters near Bel-

field, and when it was known that Sheridan, with a large force of cavalry, was at or near Dinwiddie Court House, we were hurriedly rushed to that place to intercept him. The rains for several days had been very heavy and the ground was miry and the streams much swollen. On the 31st of March we met Sheridan's forces about three miles from the Court House, near a small stream at ordinary water, but then a wide and raging current, known as Chamberlain's Run. A part of the enemy had crossed the stream and was met by the Barringer Brigade, the Fifth Cavalry being in front. After some severe fighting the enemy was driven back across the stream and then we were dismounted and a line of battle was formed by the Sixty-third (Fifth Cav.) and Ninth (First Cav.) Regiments and we were ordered to cross the creek and pursue the enemy.

I agree with General Rufus Barringer as to the correctness of his article in general, but I differ with him as to some particulars in his description of this fight at Chamberlain's Run, and I feel it a duty to more fully describe the part taken by the First Regiment North Carolina Cavalry in this celebrated battle. I know that General Barringer was honest in his convictions, and where there is a difference in our description of this battle, it must be attributed to our different opportunities for observation.

In the morning attack, upon reaching the creek we were dismounted and formed a line some hundred and fifty yards above the ford. Colonel McNeill's Sixty-third (Fifth Cav.) Regiment was also dismounted and was to cross at the ford. My right failed to connect with his left by a space of over one hundred yards. The stream was very much swollen by recent heavy rains, and at places was impassable by reason of briars and swamp undergrowth. In my immediate front it was over one hundred yards wide and as deep as the men's waists. On the opposite side, and extending down the creek to about the right of my regiment, was an open field about fifty yards wide, and beyond this field a thicket of half-grown pines that extended back for a

mile to a large open field. An old fence ran between the creek and the first field, the water in some places extending through it and out into the open land. The road crosses this stream at right angles one hundred and fifty yards below. The fight in the afternoon across this stream was to be made by the First and Fifth Cavalry. The Fifth was to cross at the ford and the First at the point above described. When ordered to advance the First moved forward in an unbroken line across the creek and drove the enemy from our front. We were pursuing him rapidly up into the pines when I discovered bullets coming from our right and rear. I galloped to the right of my line and found the enemy moving up the creek and in our rear. The regiment was withdrawn as rapidly as possible, yet in good order, and reformed at its original line on the west side of the creek. Colonel McNeill had been repulsed at the ford and it was some of the enemy from this point that were moving up the creek to cut us off. It was almost a miracle that the regiment was saved from capture. We would certainly have been cut off had I not been on my horse, by which means I was enabled quickly to find out our danger and with equal promptness to provide against it.

In the afternoon the plan was for the Nineteenth (Second Cav.) Regiment, Colouel Gaines, supported by the Sixty-third (Fifth Cav.), to attack at the ford and for us to cross at the same place as in the morning. Upon reconnoitering my front, I found that the enemy had strengthened his position by throwing up rifle-pits in the edge of the pines. This was reported to Generals Barringer and W. H. F. Lee, and appreciating fully the magnitude and danger of the work assigned me, and also to provide against being caught in a trap as in the morning, I asked leave to halt the regiment at the fence on the opposite side and not to advance until I knew that other troops would advance in line with us.

For the second time and at the same place we formed line of battle, and from the experience of the morning every man knew the danger that lay ahead. Notwithstanding this, when ordered

forward the gallant old regiment advanced under a deadly fire across the creek as it would move in line on dress-parade. At the fence we halted, and each man protected himself as best he could, but all the while replying to the enemy with a vigorous fire.

The Nineteenth (Second Cav.) Regiment met the same fate at the ford as did the Sixty-third (Fifth Cav.) in the morning, and for some half an hour the Ninth (First Cav.) Regiment, being the only Confederates on that side, were subjected to the concentrated fire of the entire line of the enemy. Never were brave men subjected to a more severe ordeal; men and officers were being rapidly shot; to advance would be rash madness, to attempt to withdraw perhaps more fatal. In this dilemma Lieutenant-Colonel Cowles and myself, standing in water up to our waists, were consulting what to do, when he was shot in the head, and but for me would have been drowned. I sent a courier to General W. H. F. Lee, informing him of the situation and asking for orders. Just then I saw Beale's Brigade, commanded, I think, by Colonel Waller, of the Ninth Virginia Regiment, which, having been dismounted, were preparing to cross above and join on our left. When this command was about midway the stream I ordered "Forward!" and nobly our gallant regiment responded. Leaping from their hiding-places, the men rushed over the enemy's rifle-pits, broke his line and, in concert with Beale's Brigade, drove him pell-mell through the pines, out into an open field. In this field I saw some mounted Federal cavalry, and expecting they would charge our scattered ranks, I ordered "Halt, and form line as quickly as possible." We delivered a few volleys at them and they quickly retired. A few moments after this General W. H. F. Lee, at the head of a mounted squadron from the Sixty-third Regiment, came up the road from the ford at a gallop. He charged across the open field and into the woods beyond, but the enemy had withdrawn. This road, leading direct from the ford, was still about one hundred yards to the right of my new line, and these mounted men from the Sixty-third were the first and only troops

from either of the other regiments of our brigade that I saw on that side of the creek during either the morning or afternoon engagements. The ford was not uncovered until after the combined attack of the Ninth (First Cav.) Regiment and Beale's men up the creek, which crushed the enemy's right and forced him to withdraw.

These are my recollections of the part taken by the Ninth (First Cav.) Regiment in this great cavalry battle, and my memory has been lately refreshed by conversations with men who were there present. I also have some letters written at the time, one of which, to my wife, I here insert :

“HEADQUARTERS FIRST N. C. CAVALRY,
“April 1st, 1865.

“MY DEAR ALICE:—We had a terrible fight yesterday. I lost eighty in my regiment. Colonel Cowles severely wounded; Major McLeod slightly; Captain Dewey killed; Captain Coleman killed. Thirteen other officers wounded, several of whom will die. John and Als were not hurt. Nearly all the brim of my hat shot off. My horse (the one I lately bought) shot twice, and killed.

“My regiment fought more gallantly than I ever saw it before. We waded a creek waist-deep and seventy-five yards wide under heavy fire and drove the enemy from an intrenched position. Will give you full particulars when I have more time. General Lee complimented us in the highest terms. The Thirteenth Virginia was on my left, and after the fight gave me three most enthusiastic cheers. ‘Boots and saddles’ has sounded. Good-bye.”

The losses were chiefly in the afternoon fight. Many were shot while crossing the creek and many again while lying under the old fence, and the dead and wounded were scattered all through the pines. We saved all and none were taken prisoners. In proportion to the number engaged this loss will equal, if not exceed, that of any cavalry regiment in the history of the world in a single day's fight.

The exact number taken into action I do not recollect, but when we remember this was in the very last days of the Confederacy, when all of the regiments, and especially the cavalry, were reduced to mere skeletons, I feel safe to say that the efficient mounted command on that day did not exceed two hundred and fifty men. Take from this the one-fourth to hold the horses of the dismounted men, and the various details that must be made, and it will be seen that we took in action not to exceed one hundred and fifty men. What cavalry regiment (save General Custer's command) ever lost seventeen out of twenty-one officers in an open field fight, or eighty men out of about one hundred and fifty.

The loss of the Light Brigade at Balaklava, whose charge has been immortalized by England's Poet Laureate, was only thirty-seven and one-half per cent., while the loss of the First North Carolina Cavalry at Chamberlain's Run was fifty-three and one-third per cent. among the enlisted men and eighty-one per cent. among the officers. Nor will we confine our comparison of losses to the Light Brigade and other commands of cavalry from earliest history to the present date, but we charge up to the face of the infantry and challenge them likewise. We go to Gettysburg, the bloodiest field of the civil war, and throw down our glove in the face of all comers on either side and call for an exhibit of losses in commissioned officers.

General Barringer says of the fight in the afternoon: "My plan was to put the First Regiment in on my left, dismounted in line, and thus attract and draw the fire of the enemy." As to drawing the fire of the enemy, this part of the plan was a grand success. A shower of lead met us as soon as we entered the water and was poured on us continuously until we reached the fence on the other side. General W. H. F. Lee, as he witnessed our advance under this concentrated and deadly fire, said to General Barringer: "Sir, the world never saw such fighting," and the next day he said to a friend: "There was nothing done at Gettysburg more gallant than this charge of the First North Carolina Cavalry at Chamberlain's Run."

The Ninth Regiment (First Cav.) was led in the afternoon attack by Sergeant John L. Turner, of Company F, across the creek and up to the fence on the opposite side, where we halted. When Beale's men came up and I commanded "First North Carolina, forward!" the first man that I saw spring out into the open field was Captain Craige, of Company I. As soon as I appeared in this opening my horse was shot and so disabled that I had to abandon it. Fortunately a few moments later an ordnance sergeant, distributing ammunition along the line, came on and I took possession of his horse for the balance of the fight. While the regiment was being dismounted and preparing for action, I rode down to the water's edge and saw that the enemy had greatly strengthened and fortified his position since morning. Appreciating the terrible assault we were to make, and knowing the destructive fire that would be poured into a solid line, I thought it best to send forward a thin line of skirmishers. For this purpose I ordered a detail of two of the bravest men of each company. This line I placed in charge of Sergeant Turner, and for his good conduct and gallantry I that night promised him that henceforth he was Lieutenant Turner.

General Barringer was in command and made the dispositions for the fight. After the creek was crossed I was the ranking officer on that side, and had command of the field up to the time that General W. H. F. Lee, at the head of the mounted squadron, made his appearance.

A PERSONAL ADVENTURE AT THE BATTLE OF FIVE FORKS.

The 1st of April, 1865, was an *off day* for the First North Carolina Cavalry. In consideration of the heavy fight and severe loss we had at Chamberlain's Run the day before it was our time, according to a custom in the brigade, to have the easy place in this day's fight, so we were put off on the extreme right of our line of battle, quite a mile east of the White Oak road. We were placed there more for the purpose of observing

the movements of the enemy than with the expectation of taking any part in the engagement.

Just before sunset and after our line, extending across the White Oak road, had been broken, we were ordered to come in and to take a road on the west of the White Oak road leading to Potts' Station on the Southside Railroad. In a few minutes another courier, very much excited, dashed up with instructions to bring the regiment in at a gallop or we would be cut off. We took up the "Fast trot," and as we were nearing the fork to Potts' we saw a column of Yankee cavalry coming up the road from Five Forks, and I saw that they would reach the road to Potts' before we could. The only chance to transfer my regiment into this road was to stop this advancing column of Federal cavalry. I took the first squadron and met them at a full charge. For a few minutes we had a tilt with cross sabres, but we routed and drove them back. After having accomplished our purpose with this squadron it was slowly withdrawn, holding the enemy in check by volleys from our carbines. In the meantime Adjutant Twitty had transferred the balance of the regiment to the Potts road. A short distance up the road we found a guide posted by General Barringer to turn all of my men into a second fork or path. The Adjutant sent the regiment on, while he and a few officers and an orderly waited a short distance up this path for me. I remained in the middle of the main road to watch the movements of the enemy and to gather in any of my men that might have gotten scattered in the fight. While sitting here on my horse two horsemen, from the direction of the enemy, came up the road at a full gallop. They rode right up to me and halted, one on either side. It was now quite dark, yet I saw that they were Yankees, and I further saw that they had their carbines unslung and in a position of "Advance carbine." They covered me with their guns, the muzzles not more than a foot from my breast. I thought my time had come, yet I put on a bold front, expecting every moment that the Adjutant and those who were with him, and who were not more than twenty paces off, would come to my

relief. In the meantime I thought my only chance was to deceive and fool them. So, says I, to the one on my right: "What command do you belong to?" He replied: "The First Vermont." I turned to the other with the same question and received a like answer. I said: "I too belong to that regiment. Hold on here awhile, there are some rebels just down the road there a little, and soon we will have some fun." To allay their suspicions I continued to talk, and during all the time was attempting to draw my pistol. As it often happens on critical occasions something gets wrong, so at this time my pistol got hung in the holster. Expecting every moment for a bullet to go crashing through my body, I had to continue talking to allay their suspicions. This talking not only deceived them, but so misled the Adjutant and my friends nearby, that they did not come to my relief. At last I got my pistol drawn, and at the click of the lock, instead of firing, they both turned to run. I fired on them and emptied one saddle; the shot at the other one missed. This was the first signal that I was able to give my friends of my danger, and they responded promptly with a volley at the fleeing Yankee, but he kept on. After it was all over and I was scolding my Adjutant for allowing two Yankees to hold me in their power for so long a time, when they were so nearby and could so easily have relieved me, they excused themselves by saying that it was so dark that they could not see their uniforms, and hearing me talking all the time, they concluded, of course, that I was talking to some of our own soldiers.

We followed after the regiment and soon found it encamped for the night. On the 3d we had a severe fight at Namozine Church, and on the 5th I was captured by Sheridan's scouts, who were clad in our uniform.

From this incident it will be seen that the First Regiment of Cavalry was the last to cross sabres or to fire a gun on the field of Five Forks. And so, again, it happened two days afterwards to be the last that left the field at Namozine Church. When the last of our mounted skirmishers were withdrawn from this

open field one column of the enemy had passed beyond us on our left and another column, charging up the road on our right, was so near upon us that our only chance to escape was to dash across the road and get into a pine thicket. When I, with a few others, crossed this road, we did so not twenty-five yards in front of their column. This engagement at Namozine Church was the crushing blow to General W. H. F. Lee's Cavalry Divison. No regiment of his command that was present at this battle ever made an organized fight afterwards.

The charge of this squadron of ours at sunset of the first day of April, 1865, on the eventful field of Five Forks, was the last mounted charge on the soil of Virginia made by North Carolina cavalry, and it was a detachment from this same regiment at Vienna, near the waters of the Potomac, on the 26th day of November, 1861, that made the first. These two occasions were the *Alpha* and *Omega* of the many charges made by North Carolina's cavalry in the Army of Northern Virginia—the first and the last. Brave old regiment; ever ready at the sound of the bugle!

During these fights at Chamberlain's Run, Five Forks and Namozine Church the Forty-first (Third Cav.) Regiment of our brigade was off guarding a wagon-train. The day after the destruction of the division of General W. H. F. Lee at Namozine Church, General R. E. Lee, then at Amelia Court House, sent for me and ordered me to go and look for Colonel Moore, and to bring him and his command to his (General Lee's) headquarters. At the time this was the only organized regiment in General W. H. F. Lee's Division. I took with me an orderly and bugler and started in the direction of Jetersville. That afternoon we met some twenty or more men, clad in Confederate uniforms, who represented themselves as belonging to Captain Randolph's company, of the Ninth Virginia, who had gotten scattered in the fight at Namozine Church, and who were now trying to get back to their command. After some friendly conversation of several minutes' duration, suddenly there was an outcry of "Surrender!"

“Surrender!” and our Virginia friends proved to be none other than Sheridan’s scouts clad in Confederate uniforms. One of the most thrilling incidents of the war occurred here, which the narrow limits of this sketch prevent my relating. Major Young, the commander of these scouts, was exceedingly clever to me, took me to supper with him at General Sheridan’s headquarters and at bed-time had an officer’s tent stretched for me, gave me a bed of nice hay, with *clean* sheets and a clean pillow-case, and next morning sent a barber to shave me. In other respects he was exceedingly kind and did me a very great favor. There was a council of war held there that night and I had the opportunity to see Generals Grant, Meade, Hancock, Warren, Custer, Merritt, Buford and many others of high rank. From here I was sent to Johnson Island prison. So with me the war ended. Now, thirty-five years have passed, and our country has had another war, and there is also another war now going on, in which one of the mightiest nations of the world is a party, and in which many battles have been fought. When we read accounts of them, and see them classed as “heavy engagements,” “important battles,” etc., and then compare them with the fights that the First North Carolina Cavalry used to have, I am a hundred times more impressed with the greatness of our magnificent regiment.

CONCLUSION.

There was no regiment in the cavalry that had the post of honor assigned it so often as did the Ninth North Carolina. Whenever the commanding general, be he Stuart, Hampton, Lee, Baker, Gordon or Beauregard, had a desperate movement to make the call was always made for the Ninth North Carolina. When General Stuart went on his horse raid into Pennsylvania in 1862, Lieutenant Barrier, of Company I, led the advance across the Potomac, and Captain Cowles, with Company A, protected his rear, and was the last to cross the same river on the return into Virginia.

Again, when at Auburn Mills General Stuart’s entire

command was surrounded by lines of Federal infantry, he called for the Ninth North Carolina to open the way for him to withdraw. At the battle of Sharpsburg the picket line of the First North Carolina Cavalry was the last troops withdrawn from the battlefield, and did not recross the Potomac until near day on the morning of the 19th.

General Hampton, on his famous cattle raid in 1864, upon arriving in the vicinity of the cattle corral on James River, dismounted our regiment and placed it between the cattle and the army of General Grant, encamped not very far away, to hold them in check while he, with the other troops, were putting this vast herd of beeves in moving order. Here again the important duty of protecting the rear was assigned to the Ninth North Carolina, and at Belcher's Mill, on our return, we were engaged until late into the night with Federal troops which had been sent down the Jerusalem plank-road to intercept General Hampton and recapture the cattle.

Not only did the superior officers call for this regiment in critical emergencies, but I have known them to refer other commands to it as a means of inciting them to deeds of daring. Mr. James Higgs, formerly a member of the Third North Carolina Cavalry, tells me that on one occasion, in the heat of battle, General Hampton dashed up to his command and thus addressed them: "Men of the Third North Carolina Cavalry, I want you to charge the enemy, and I want you to go at them like the First goes at them!"

I heard an officer of artillery, whose battery operated with the infantry, pay us a high compliment on one occasion when the line of battle was being formed for a general engagement. It must be remembered that an artilleryman is always very cautious, or perhaps a little nervous, as to who is to be his support in an action, and especially is this so if the artilleryman, accustomed to be supported by infantry, finds that he must now look to the cavalry for protection of his guns. On this occasion my regiment was sent to support two batteries posted on a hill about one hundred yards apart. As I was forming my line in

the ravine behind them, I heard one of the men call out to those at the other battery and say: "Boys, it's all right, it is the First North Carolina Cavalry that is supporting us!"

I cannot close this sketch without paying a deserved tribute to my brother officers. Governor Ellis had the appointment of the officers of the ten regiments of State Troops. The regiment of cavalry seemed to have been a pet of his from the beginning. He selected the colonel and lieutenant-colonel from the old army, both West Point graduates and of fine reputation in their respective commands. James B. Gordon, of Wilkes county, as Major, proved himself a soldier of extraordinary capacity. The captains of companies were selected from widely different parts of the State, all men of ability, high standing and reputation in their respective sections. Captain Ruffin had been a member of the United States Congress, Captains Folk, Crumpler and Cheek were lawyers and members of the Legislature, Captain Houston was Solicitor of his judicial district, Captain Miller was a distinguished physician of Charlotte, Captains Woodfin and Barringer were able and prominent lawyers, and Captains Siler and Whitaker were wealthy, educated and accomplished gentlemen. The Governor was equally circumspect in the selection of subaltern officers, many of whom rose to prominent positions during the war. Of the field and company commanders that he appointed one rose to be a major-general, four became brigadiers and the fifth was recommended for a like promotion, and favorably indorsed by General R. E. Lee, who, however, stated in his indorsement that there was no vacancy to which he could be assigned. So the appointment rested until after the 31st of March, 1865, when General Lee recommended that the commission be issued *for special gallantry* on the bloody field of Chamberlain's Run. If it was ever issued by the Secretary of War it never reached its owner, but was lost amid the wreck and ruins of the Confederacy. Some of his friends think he is entitled to the rank, and kindly call him General, but he aspires not to the title, preferring rather to be known as the colonel of a regiment which under

his command, from the summer of 1863 to the surrender, made a reputation second to none on the American continent.

During this period there was not a commissioned officer in the line who was not either killed or wounded, with five exceptions. It was a saying in camp about this time that a commission in the First Cavalry means "a hole in your hide." Every field officer it ever had, except Colonel Ransom, was either killed or wounded.

Of the original captains, counting Wood, Blair and McLeod (they having succeeded Captains Woodfin, Folk and Miller, all of whom resigned before the regiment received its baptism of fire), six were wounded and four killed. Of the twenty-three captains it had during the war, six were killed and fourteen wounded. Of the thirty-one subaltern officers who remained in the line from the summer of 1863 to the surrender, ten were killed, fourteen were wounded and two died of disease, and I think that three of the other five were wounded, but of this I am not positive.

I regret exceedingly that I have not the data to show the losses of the enlisted men. They were instrumental equally with the officers in building up the fame of the regiment, and their losses were proportionally as great. Truly may it be said of them, as was said of the Father of His Country, "Their deeds, their worthy deeds alone, have rendered them immortal."

ROSTER OF OFFICERS.

FIELD AND STAFF OFFICERS.

COLONELS—Robert Ransom, promoted Major-General, 1862; Lawrence S. Baker, promoted Brigadier-General, wounded at Brandy Station; J. B. Gordon, promoted Brigadier-General, wounded at Brook Church and died; Thomas Ruffin, killed at Auburn Mills, September 28, 1863; W. H. Cheek, wounded at Goodall's Tavern, May 11, 1864.

LIEUTENANT-COLONELS—L. S. Baker, J. B. Gordon, Thomas Ruffin, W. H. Cheek, Rufus Barringer; W. H. H. Cowles, wounded at Mine Run and Chamberlain's Run.

MAJORS—Victor M. Barringer, resigned; J. B. Gordon; Thomas N. Crumpler, wounded and died July 11, 1862; John H. Whitaker, wounded and died July 1, 1863; Rufus Barringer, W. H. H. Cowles; M. D. L. McLeod, wounded.

SURGEONS—William L. Hilliard, H. H. Hunter, William A. Blount.

ASSISTANT SURGEONS—Charles J. O'Hagan, W. A. Blount, W. Jones, — Rolfé.

QUARTERMASTERS—W. M. Addington, J. B. Neal, W. J. White.

COMMISSARIES—M. D. L. McLeod, M. V. Boykin, John W. Primrose.

COMPANY A—Captains: T. N. Crumpler, killed; W. H. H. Cowles, wounded; John L. Smith, wounded. Lieutenants: D. T. Armfield, killed; John H. Ray, resigned; John H. Forrester, resigned; D. C. Parks, resigned; D. W. Eller, resigned; N. G. Turner; E. R. Barker, wounded.

COMPANY B—Captains: John H. Whitaker, killed; A. B. Andrews, wounded; W. H. Anthony, wounded. Lieutenants: J. W. Peele, killed; W. R. Williams, resigned; J. E. Elliot, wounded; C. M. Roberts, wounded; R. H. Powell, killed; J. C. Pledger, killed; W. R. Wood, promoted Captain and assigned to Company G.

COMPANY C—Captains: J. M. Miller, resigned; M. D. L. McLeod, wounded; James F. Johnston, wounded. Lieutenants: R. H. Maxwell, wounded; J. L. Marrow, killed; W. B. Field, wounded; Manly S. Steele, wounded; David Hutcherson, killed; J. P. Alexander, wounded.

COMPANY D—Captains: G. N. Folk, resigned; J. C. Blair. Lieutenants: J. B. Todd, resigned; Joseph W. Todd, wounded; J. W. Council, resigned; C. W. Lippard, resigned; W. M. Blair, killed; D. P. Mast, wounded; Noah Shell, resigned; — Caldwell, resigned; R. B. Brown, wounded and resigned; John D. Ferguson, died.

COMPANY E—Captains: W. H. Cheek; C. J. Iredell, wounded. Lieutenants: A. B. Andrews, promoted and assigned to Company B; Jesse H. Person, killed; R. J. Shaw, resigned; J. H. Fuller, wounded; W. J. White, promoted Quartermaster; George H. Yancey, wounded; R. C. Twitty, promoted Adjutant.

COMPANY F—Captains: Rufus Barringer, wounded; J. A. Fisher, wounded; N. P. Foard, wounded. Lieutenants: Miles Johnson, resigned; Jacob Barrier, wounded; J. L. Grier, died; W. R. Scott, resigned; H. H. Fitzgerald, resigned; Kerr Craige, promoted and transferred to Company I; Wiley A. Barrier, transferred to Company I; John L. Turner, promoted by Colonel Cheek for gallantry at Chamberlain's Run.

COMPANY G—Captains: John W. Woodfin, resigned; W. R. Wood, wounded; Henry Coleman, killed. Lieutenants: J. L. Gaines, promoted Colonel Second Regiment North Carolina Cavalry; J. L. Henry, resigned; J. L. Blasiugame, resigned; W. E. Broadnax, promoted to staff of General R. Ransom; T. L. Matthias, E. J. Kuykendall.

COMPANY H—Thomas Ruffin; James C. Borden, resigned; George S. Dewey, killed. Lieutenants: Thomas L. Vail, resigned; B. F. Person, resigned; Johnson H. Bryan, resigned; W. F. Kornegay, resigned; W. S. Henrahan, resigned; Bryan F. Whitfield, wounded; H. J. Sauls, wounded; John Sherrod, resigned; John W. Hayes, killed; J. W. Biddle.

COMPANY I—Captains: W. J. Houston, killed; W. A. Barrier, wounded and resigned; Kerr Craige. Lieutenants: Benchan Carroll, resigned; N. C. Armstrong, resigned; D. O. Wells, resigned; J. B. Neal, promoted Quartermaster; S. C. Jones; W. G. Grady, killed.

COMPANY K—Captains: T. P. Siler, wounded and resigned; W. M. Addington. Lieutenants: W. H. Roan, resigned; Frank Leach, resigned; B. P. Ellis, died; Jesse W. Siler, killed; Sam B. Gibson, wounded; J. M. Gillespie, wounded.

The regiment was under fire one hundred and fifty or two hundred times, not in its full regimental formation, but as scouts,

pickets, companies or squadrons. Below is a list of the battles in which it participated:

Vienna, Rainbow Banks, Willis' Church, Frazier's Farm, Malvern Hill, Phillips' Farm, Riddle's Shop, Turkey Creek, second advance on Malvern Hill, Fox's Farm, Fairfax Court House, Urbana, Frederick, Middletown, Catoctin Creek, Burkittsville, Pleasant Valley, Sharpsburg, Williamsport, Stuart's Raid into Pennsylvania, Martinsburg, Hall Town, Barbee's Cross Roads, Little Washington, Gaines' Cross Roads, Amisville, Hampton's raid to Dumfries, Occoquan, Kelly's Ford, Brandy Station, Aldie, Middleburg, Upperville, Fairfax Court House, Stuart's raid around General Meade, Brookville, Sykesville, Littleton, Hanover, Huntersville, Carlisle, Gettysburg, Hagerstown, Williamsport, Funkstown, Second Brandy Station, Jack's Shop, Auburn Mills, Buckland Races, Stevensburg, Parker's Store, Mine Run, Raccoon Ford, Atlee's Station, Rapidan River, Wilderness, Sheridan's Raid, Goodall's Tavern, Todd's Tavern, Brook Church, White Hall, Haw's Shop, Kenner's Landing, Hanover Court House, Ashland, Malvern Hill, Nantz's Shop, Herring Creek, Crenshaw's, The Rocks, Wilcox Landing, Davis' Farm, Kautz's and Wilson's Raid, Black's and White's, Staunton River, Fuzzle's Mill, White Oak Swamp, Poplar Spring Road, Reams' Station, Tucker's Farm, McDowell's Farm, Jones' Farm, Boisseau's Farm, Mrs. Cumming's, Gravelly Run, Hargrave's House, Burgess' Mill, Malone's Crossing, Munck's Neck, Wilson's Farm, Hampton's Cattle Raid, Belcher's Mill, Belfield, Chamberlain's Run, Five Forks, Namozine Church.

Besides the above enumerated battles there were skirmishes innumerable, which in those days were considered so trivial that they were not honored with a name, but which, if their like were to occur now in the Philippines or in South Africa they would be heralded by a cable dispatch as "heavy engagements."

W. H. CHEEK.

HENDERSON, N. C.,

9 April, 1900.