

FOSTER JOHN WATSON

WAR STORIES FOR MY
GRANDCHILDREN

John Foster
War Stories for my Grandchildren

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Содержание

PREFACE	4
I	6
II	10
III	42
Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.	50

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PREFACE

As they were growing up, I was frequently importuned by my grandchildren to tell them of my experiences in the Civil War for the Union; and now as the great-grandchildren are coming on, their parents are asking that these experiences be put in some permanent form, as their children may never have the opportunity to hear the narrative from me. I naturally shrink from giving general publicity to my personal experiences, especially as the field has been already so fully covered by comrades in arms; but I have consented to prepare such a narrative on condition that its circulation be confined to the family circles.

In preparing the narrative I have not thought it wise to trust to my memory of events which happened more than half a century ago; and fortunately I have at hand my many letters written to my wife, giving in detail my experiences during my entire service in the army, and while they are in some respects too intimate and confidential for general publicity, they have the merit of freedom from studied preparation and constitute an account of events as

they occurred.

In this preparation I have indulged the hope that through it our children of this and coming generations may be inspired by a greater devotion to the American Union, for which their forefathers hazarded their lives and endured the hardships of war.

John W. Foster

I

INTRODUCTION

After the inauguration of President Lincoln, March 4, 1861, much discussion followed in Washington and in the North, and plans were proposed respecting peaceable adjustment of the troubles occasioned by the secession of the Southern States from the Union. But the first hostile gun fired at Fort Sumter and the National flag, on April 12, put an end to all peace proposals, and solidified the North in favor of restoring and preserving the Union by force of arms. As one of our statesmen of that day expressed it, yesterday there had been difference of opinion, to-day there was unity.

When two days afterwards the President's call for seventy-five thousand volunteers for three months' service was issued, my first impulse was to respond to that call; but before any movement for enlistments could be made in our locality the quota of Indiana was filled to overflowing. I was content for several reasons to await the progress of events.

I cherished no desire for military glory, and distrusted my special fitness for the life of a soldier. In my college days I had contracted a horror of war and regarded it as the most terrible and futile of human follies. Shortly before my graduation I had delivered a public address for my literary society on peace and

war, using as its title Charles Sumner's well-known oration — "The True Grandeur of Nations." I regarded myself as a peace man.

I had only recently entered upon the practice of my profession, and was ambitious to make a reputation as a lawyer. But, most serious of all, I had just established a modest home with a young wife and our first-born babe of less than a year old. It would be a terrible strain upon my affections and hopes to break these dearest of all ties for a life in the military service.

I, with the great body of the people of the North, entertained the hope that the seventy-five thousand men, who constituted the army so quickly formed, would prove sufficient for the reëstablishment of the Federal Union. But the battle of Bull Run, July 21, dispelled that delusion, and the President's call for three hundred thousand afterwards increased to five hundred thousand volunteers for three years' service indicated that a long and bloody war was in prospect. I resolved no longer to delay my entrance into that service.

Two days after that battle I wrote my wife as follows: —

"I intended to have written you a long letter last night in reply to your good one received yesterday afternoon, but I had no heart to write. The terrible and disastrous calamity to our army has made me sick. A thousand times rather would I have given my life and left you a widow and my darling child fatherless than that this defeat should have happened. I think I shall go to Indianapolis to-morrow to urge my immediate appointment in our new regiment.

I want to help retrieve our lost fortune. I have no fear of our ultimate triumph."

When the President's second call for volunteers was issued, a movement was at once set on foot to organize a regiment at Evansville, my home, and the Governor of the State had intimated his intention to appoint me major of this new regiment. On August 9 my appointment as major was made. The next day I sent my wife's brother, Alexander, to Glendale, near Cincinnati, where she was visiting her mother, to notify her of the event and give her details of the situation. He bore her a letter in which I wrote: "Zan [Alexander] will explain the cause of his coming. I want to be with my wife as much as I can before I go, so you must hurry home *as fast as you can*... While you are a loving wife, remember to be a *brave woman* and your husband will love you the more."

I had gone to Glendale some time before to talk over with my wife my intention to enter the army, and she had given her consent; but when the time came for me to take the final step she seemed to hesitate and draw back. It was a terrible trial to contemplate, her solitary lot with her little babe and I away in the army. In answer to her letter I wrote: "You seem in your last letter to be about to withdraw your consent to let me go. That was the special reason of my late visit to Glendale, and I thought it was agreed. I have a very honorable and, to me, very flattering position, and in some degree removed from danger; and of course I shall, for the love I bear my wife and child, be as careful of

my life as my duty will permit. The President has called for four hundred thousand men, and of that number it is my duty to be one. I regard this as important a war as that of the Revolution, the issue is the life and maintenance of the Government, and I would be ashamed of myself, and my children should be ashamed of me in after years, if I declined so honorable a position as that tendered me. Be of good courage."

In response to my call she came at once to Evansville, and soon entered into the spirit of my work in organizing and outfitting the regiment, and, as will be seen later in these pages, she remained to the close of my service my faithful and devoted supporter.

II

THE MISSOURI CAMPAIGN

The organization at Evansville became the Twenty-fifth Indiana Infantry Regiment of Volunteers. On August 22, thirteen days after its official staff was appointed, the regiment was ordered to St. Louis, Missouri. It was a notable farewell the citizens of Evansville and the surrounding country gave the regiment on its departure. The deportment of my wife I refer to in one of my first letters to her from St. Louis. I copy it at some length because it reflects the sentiments of hundreds of thousands of other soldiers: —

"I felt proud of you as my wife and loved you the more for the manner in which you acted on the departure of our regiment from Evansville. While I know that no wife loves her husband more than you do me, yet you could let me go off, for how long you know not, to brave the dangers of the battlefield, because I thought it my duty, without a murmur or reproach or entreaty. And now that I am away, I hope you will be the true woman still. You know that our separation is not harder for you to bear, surrounded by home and all its comforts, your darling child and dear mother, than it is for me deprived of all these. You must be hopeful and cheerful. I am here because duty prompts me, and you would be ashamed of me if I were not here.

"I will try to do all I can to preserve my health and so far protect myself from dangers as my duty and honor will permit. You must remember that there are tens of thousands of wives who bear the same lot as you do. It would make me very unhappy to know that you were disheartened and lamenting my absence and exposure to danger; and, on the contrary, it would lighten my trials to know that you were bearing it like a brave, true-hearted woman. I know you are my devoted wife, and I know you will act your part nobly."

Our regiment was ordered to St. Louis because the State of Missouri was in a critical condition and in danger of being swept onto the side of the rebellion. St. Louis had been placed on the side of the Union by the daring and promptness of Frank P. Blair and General Lyon, the commander of the arsenal and barracks, in the seizure of the rebel Camp Jackson, and dispersion of the State Guards stationed in the city. But before our arrival the Union forces had met with a disastrous repulse at Wilson Creek, and General Lyon killed, one of the most promising of the Union generals. Soon after we reached St. Louis, the Confederate General Price captured Lexington, took the entire Union force prisoners, and was overrunning the greater portion of the State. General Frémont had been assigned to the command of the Department, and troops were being rushed forward to enable him to clear the State of rebels.

The Twenty-fifth Indiana remained at Benton Barracks, St. Louis, for three weeks, while Frémont was organizing his army

to drive General Price and his forces out of the State. How we occupied our time is in part shown by my letters. James C. Veatch, the colonel of our regiment, was appointed largely because of the service he had rendered in the campaign for the election of Lincoln, but it proved a good appointment. The lieutenant-colonel, William H. Morgan, had seen some service with the three months' volunteers and as a member of a military company had acquired some knowledge of drill and tactics. He was the only person in our regiment of 1047 officers and men who knew anything about military affairs.

After being in camp at Benton Barracks a few days, I wrote:

"Our colonel is doing all he can for the comfort and convenience of his men. Ever since we arrived, he has been stirring up headquarters in our behalf. In a day or two he will have us paid off, which will be decidedly acceptable; and is now bent on having us supplied with good guns before we leave here, and though good guns are scarce here, he thinks he will succeed.

"Colonel Morgan is invaluable as a drill and camp officer. He devotes three hours each day to the instruction of the officers, and two hours to battalion drill, besides his other duties. He has the officers recite to him daily from the Book of Tactics. Our regiment is under excellent discipline and very orderly, and I am satisfied if they will give us a few weeks to drill and good guns, that we will do honor to the State and country."

In the same letter to my wife, I wrote of myself: —

"Although the place of major may be one of ease, if an officer desires he may keep himself busy and be quite useful in regulating the camp, seeing that the officers and men do their duty, looking after the wants of the men, assisting in battalion drill, etc. And I am the more busy, because in addition I devote from two to five hours in study and recitation of the tactics. I accepted the position in our regiment, not as a sinecure, but because I thought my country needed my services, and I have resolved to leave nothing undone that will fit me to discharge my duties properly, and so prepare myself that if it should ever happen that the lives of a thousand men should be placed in my keeping, I might, as Dr. Daily would say, be competent for an emergency. So that now the time does not hang heavily on my hands. Personally I am getting along very well in camp."

A few days later I report that the regiment has received its first payment, and I make a remittance to my wife of \$130 in gold.

My father, then in his sixty-second year, was an ardent defender of the Union, and took great interest in the organization of our regiment, to which he contributed two of his sons, my brother, next to me in age, being the quartermaster of our regiment. He had ordered to be made the flags of the regiment, and as they were not finished before it left Evansville, they were presented at Benton Barracks, of which I give the following account to my wife: —

"We had the ceremony of the Flags' Presentation yesterday at dress parade. Colonel Veatch read father's letter and made some

very appropriate remarks, and the thanks of the regiment were unanimously tendered to him for his appropriate and valuable gift. The National flag is very fine, but I think the regimental flag is the best and most elegant I ever saw. There is no regiment from Indiana and I think none in the West that has as fine a stand of colors as ours. The men are very proud of them."

The following extract describes a treat at Benton Barracks, the like of which we had more than once during the year, as we were on or near the Mississippi, Cumberland, and Tennessee Rivers within easy reach of Evansville: —

"Your box of good things came on Sunday and was opened immediately. That evening we had what your Cincinnati cousin would call 'a sumptuous tea.' William, our cook, got out all his dishes and I furnished him with a new tablecloth and he got up a table in fine style with your dainties, with the aid of the bouquets and fruits our kind neighbors here had sent. Not only Aleck and I, but all our *mess* have enjoyed your treat very highly."

One of the matters that troubled me about giving up my affairs at Evansville was the continued maintenance of a large Mission Sunday School which I had organized and kept up in a flourishing way for some years. I did not get encouraging news as to its condition, and I wrote my wife about an efficient superintendent:

"I hardly know whom you can get in my place. There are very few men who will take the trouble and have the patience and perseverance to keep the school up through the hot summer and

cold winter successfully as I have done for four years. But it ought not to go down."

The school was maintained for some time, but it was discontinued long before the war closed.

Some of the embarrassments attending my new and untried duties are described in the following letter: —

"I was detailed to-day as field officer of the brigade, and have been kept busy all day, in the saddle almost continuously from 8 A.M. to 5 P.M., and am tired enough. I went over this morning and reported myself to the general for duty, and the first thing he said was that the adjutant-general was away and I would have to mount the brigade guard. As I had never even mounted a regimental guard, you may be sure it rather stumped me, but like a soldier I did my best, and in the presence of the general, the officer of the day, and other officers I performed the duty and passed the guard in review satisfactorily."

After three weeks of instruction and comfort at Benton Barracks we received orders to go to the front, and fearing my wife might be disturbed by the movement, I wrote her a consolatory letter: —

"We have orders to leave to-morrow for Jefferson City. Of course we are in great hurry and have very little time to write letters, even to dear and loving ones at home. We left our homes to fight our country's battles, and naturally we are glad to see a prospect of that kind of work before us. You must not be unduly solicitous or alarmed. You may hear reports of the Twenty-fifth

being entirely cut to pieces or all prisoners, even before we are in sight of our enemy. Don't place any confidence in vague rumors. If anything serious takes place, Aleck or I will send early word home, or some of our friends will for us, and if you do not hear, you may be certain we are busy or out of telegraphic or mail communication, and you need not think we are dead or prisoners. Be a true, brave woman. Act worthy of a soldier's wife, and put your trust in God, remembering that He does all things well."

The trip to Jefferson City was one of many railroad rides the regiment had, all more or less uncomfortable. I wrote, September 16: —

"I have only time to write you a pencil note at the dépôt. We arrived here safely yesterday at noon, but tired and in bad condition. As we began our march from Benton Barracks a hard rain set in and so continued half the day. Reached the dépôt at 3 P.M., but did not get off till 10 P.M., in crowded cars, little sleep, rain all night, with leaky cars. It took us fifteen hours to run to this place, one hundred and twenty-five miles. Just as we reached our camp it commenced to rain in torrents again and so continued nearly all night. We got the tents out in the rain. If we get through safely with our first experience in hardships of soldiering we will do pretty well."

Our regiment had been ordered to Jefferson City to form part of the grand army with which Frémont was expected to sweep Price and his forces out of Missouri, and for the next three months and more we were engaged in marching and counter-

marching with hardly any fighting worth recording. One of the not unusual experiences of camp life, when the enemy were supposed to be near, I gave my wife while at Jefferson City: —

"The news here to-day is that Lexington is taken by the secessionists. If that is so we are going to have some warm work in this part of the country. Night before last several shots were heard in the direction of our pickets two or three miles out, which caused the alarm to be sounded and brought out all the regiments of the brigade into line of battle. Some of them came out with a great deal of noise and confusion. Ours came in perfect order and to our full satisfaction; a person fifty yards from our line would not have known that there was any disturbance at all going on in our camp...

"I get along tolerably well in daytime, as I keep so busy with other matters I don't have time to get homesick. But last night I had such a sweet dream about little Alice; and then when I woke and found it only a dream, how I wanted to be at home just a little while to see you and her. But let us be of good cheer and hope. I will be with you again."

This is a frequent topic of my letters. A few weeks later I write: —

"The parts of your letters about our Alice were the most interesting to me. The dear little darling, how I would love to see her walk. Don't let her forget her papa."

How my dream recalled one of Campbell's war poems with which I was so familiar in college, "The Soldier's Dream": —

"The bugles sang truce, for the night cloud had lowered."

In another letter from Jefferson City I write: —

"You say in your letter received to-day that you are so glad we did not go to Kentucky, because they are going to have fighting there. We were very much disappointed in not being ordered to that very place, and just because there was to be fighting there, and we might aid our brethren in Kentucky. If our Government is worth anything it is worth defending and to maintain it thousands of our lives would be a cheap price. We must all look at it in this light, and do our duty fearlessly."

A further extract from the same letter: —

"We have had considerable trouble in having our guards learn their duty as sentinels. This week one of our sentinels was found asleep on his post. We sentenced him to be shot, at a court-martial, but recommended him to clemency; at the same time privately having the colonel understand it was merely formal to make the soldiers more careful hereafter.

"So yesterday at dress parade the regiment was thrown into a hollow square, the prisoner brought out and sentence pronounced with great gravity, making to all who did not understand it a very solemn scene. The prisoner was remanded to confinement to await execution. This morning the members of the companies all cast lots to decide who should be in the unfortunate squad to shoot him. The ten men who drew the *black beans* were brought up before headquarters this morning and notified that to-morrow morning at daylight they would have a terrible duty to discharge,

without telling them what it was, they readily imagining it.

"To-day the young man was suffering greatly, but he would not tell where his father or family are, for fear we should write them about it. He says his father told him if he died in battle he would be satisfied, but never to disgrace himself. And he promised that if we would only release him, he would give a good account of himself on the battlefield. He will be released in the morning, and we won't have any sleepy sentinels soon again."

Five days later I write from Georgetown: —

"We left Jefferson City Monday morning and came up to Lamine River, fifty miles, where we joined the Eighth and Twenty-fourth Indiana, and Colonel Veatch took command. Tuesday morning we heard there were seven thousand rebels near here [Georgetown]. The colonels of the other regiments wanted Veatch to stay at Lamine, but Colonel Morgan and I urged him on, knowing that we were equal to two to one, or even three, on the prairie with our long-range guns. It was greatly through our urging that Colonel Veatch decided to go forward. We were anxious to have a pure *Hoosier* fight with the rebels, and were glad of the prospect. We left at 3 P.M., all of us expecting to meet seven thousand at night or in the morning. It was a race, we supposed, for the possession of Georgetown, and by ten o'clock at night we passed over the seventeen miles with our whole force, and entered the town peaceably, without disturbing a citizen from sleep, and slept in the court-house yard. It was our first march on foot and a hard one, but we made it finely. The last two miles

were very trying on the men. The only way we kept them up was by riding down the lines and telling the men it was only over the hill to the enemy, and we would have them certain. But no enemy was near, none nearer than Lexington. I don't know how I will feel on the battlefield, but as yet I have no fear of going into a fight.

"We are at last settled after hard marching, rainy weather, and various hardships. I have been in the saddle nearly all the time for four days. Yesterday I stationed the picket guards, and it took about forty miles' riding, but I am standing it well. It is just what I need. I enjoy it finely, eat largely, and have no dyspepsia [a trouble at home].

"Near to our camp is a neat little cottage all furnished with everything, nice beds, furniture and carpets, dining-room and kitchen furniture complete. It is the house of a young lawyer, who was married this spring, was a secessionist, was taken prisoner, took the oath of loyalty, violated it, and is now in the rebel army, and subject to be shot if he is ever caught. His wife has fled to her father's. Colonel Veatch has established his brigade headquarters in his house, and we are living in style. I am writing at his desk, using his paper."

While in Georgetown I gave this picture of the country: —

"For the first time we are really in the enemy's country, and are seeing the effects of secession and some of the terrible results of war. As we passed through the villages on our march here, the houses were nearly all deserted, the doors closed, and very few

persons to be found. A sign of dreariness rested on everything. And when we arrived here at Georgetown, the county seat and numbers about a thousand people, at least one half of the houses were vacant, the stores closed, and business suspended.

"Georgetown has seen several reverses since the rebellion broke out, being several times in possession of both rebel and Federal troops. When the rebels came in, the Union men fled the country or took to the woods and slept among the bushes. Many women so exposed on the cold, damp ground lost their lives by the exposure. I took dinner a day or two ago with a gentleman, a citizen here, who formerly lived at Mount Vernon [near Evansville]. He had his store broken open in broad daylight by a company of the rebel army, and fifteen hundred dollars' worth of his goods carried away, while he was a refugee in the woods. Many men have lost their all.

"Such outrages have naturally enough begotten a spirit of revenge among Union men, and those of them of more violent passions and lesser principles have retaliated, until one wrong begetting another has brought on a spirit of bitterness and enmity among the people which is truly deplorable. I never want to see such a state of society again. The dregs of the population are uppermost, and the honest and innocent suffer. Surely it is a holy mission of ours to give peace, and safety, and law to this country. This part of the State is the most beautiful farming country I ever saw, and certainly it needs peace. Here truly 'only man is vile.'"

In another letter from Georgetown, I report: —

"As to the enemy I don't know anything that is definite. We have a report this evening that they are only twenty-six miles away, but we have had them right on us so often before, that I hardly believe any reports we hear about them. But we try to keep prepared, our men sleep on their arms, and we station our pickets out five or ten miles."

As already noticed, the first payment to our regiment was made in gold coin, but the second one is noticed from Georgetown as follows: "I sent you by the Paymaster to be expressed from St. Louis \$150 in *Treasury Notes*. I suppose the Treasury Notes are good, but when you can get them changed into gold I would do it, to lay by for later use."

This suggests that I had early anticipated the coming depreciation of Government paper currency, and in later remittances I repeated this injunction, so that when I retired from the army my wife had as her savings from my pay a considerable sum in gold, which she converted into "greenbacks" at the rate of two dollars and fifty cents for one dollar gold.

In her letters more than once my wife writes of the alarm created among her neighbors for fear the rebel forces would capture Evansville, our home. In a letter, October 13, I wrote her: —

"You say in some of your letters that the people were packing up to leave Evansville when the rebels come. I do not believe they will ever reach there, but if they should come I would not, if I were you, leave your home or pack up. Your valuables you might

put into a place of security, but they will not injure peaceable and discreet women at least."

In a letter of October 15, I report a movement of our brigade to Otterville: —

"We have come here to go into Major-General Pope's division of Frémont's army in Davis's brigade. How long we will remain here is uncertain, but I guess only a few days, when we shall go south in search of Price.

"The bad weather has made a large number of our men sick, and two or three hundred were left behind. General Davis put me in charge of them with orders to get wagons and bring them forward. The sick department of our army is the most unpleasant, the most troublesome, and the most neglected in the whole service. I would rather at any time encounter the dangers of the battlefield than the hospital and receive the treatment of privates. It is a shame to humanity and our Government that it is so much neglected, at least here."

A few days later I wrote: —

"I have no time to write you a letter. I am doing most of the business of the regiment, both of the colonels being sick. All of our brigade left this morning in the forward movement except our regiment, which was left behind for three reasons – the brigade took all our wagons, we had so large a number of sick, and a regiment was to be left to forward supplies. We will leave as soon as we get transportation.

"Aleck [my brother, regimental quartermaster] has been

promoted to post quartermaster of General Pope's division, and will be stationed at Otterville, charged with the duty of drawing from St. Louis and forwarding supplies to the division, a very responsible position, and earned by his attention to his duties."

Three days later I wrote: —

"The health of our regiment has been very bad. It is almost unfit for duty. We could only turn out two hundred for company drill, and could hardly march five hundred to-morrow. Diarrhœa, chills and fever, and measles are prevalent. Our officers are almost all laid up. Colonel Morgan has gone to a private house to recruit for a few days. Aleck and I have been the only officers at headquarters who have been entirely fit for duty for several days."

Notwithstanding the condition of the regiment it became necessary for me to run down to St. Louis by rail to bring forward our supply of winter clothing, blankets, etc., and my wife met me there for a day. I am answering her first letter after her return to Evansville, October 23: —

"I am sorry to have you write so despondingly, or rather was sorry to know you felt so lonely (I always want you to write just as you feel). But it was natural that you should feel badly after our separation, for I know what my own feelings were. I trust you are more hopeful and cheerful now. You must remember it is all for the best. I would be with you in our comfortable home, enjoying all the happiness which you and my dear and kind friends could bestow upon me, if I could. But it is impossible. I should be a

miserable coward to stay at home in ease and luxury at such a time of national calamity and need."

I wrote again two days later, showing that I had a clear vision of the result of Frémont's grand march to destroy Price: —

"I hardly think we can get off before the first of next week, but it doesn't make much difference to us. We will hardly have a battle at any rate, and will only march down into the lower part of the State to winter, or drag our weary way back again. If this expedition is not a Moscow defeat, I shall be highly gratified. But you must not be alarmed about me. The officer who has a horse to ride and comfortably equipped will be well situated, but it is the poor foot soldier who has to suffer."

I at last chronicle our departure: —

"I have only a moment to write you that we are just about marching to the South. I am very busy, both the colonels and quartermaster being sick. I am colonel, quartermaster, and almost everything else. My health is very good. I see you are secretary of the Ladies Soldiers' Aid Society. You can't do too much for the soldiers, but their greatest need is in the hospitals, good nurses, good cooks, clean shirts, sheets, and kind treatment. If I am to die in the army, I want it to be on the battlefield, never in the miserable hospitals."

The following presents not an unusual phase of soldiering, but new to me: —

"About this hour (3 A.M.) more than two months ago [the day the regiment left Evansville] my good wife was up to give me a

good breakfast and bid me good-bye, and I ought to be able to write her a short letter at the same hour.

"We left Otterville day before yesterday with all our regiment that could march, with a train of fifty wagons. We had unbroken, balky horses, and have had a hard time with the train. Our division is fifty miles below Warsaw, and about out of provisions, and we have to use great haste to get them forward. To expedite matters I have taken personal command of the provision train and have been working hard at it. Sometimes it takes us two hours to get over one hill, then two hours to get through one mud-hole. I am not much of a wagoner, as you know, but I have the authority and the knack of getting a good deal of work out of the men. I have two good wagon-masters along with me. I take their advice, and then assume to know all about it with the drivers. You ought to see me preside over the difficulties of a hill or a mud-hole. When a wagon gets stalled, I just get off my horse and put my shoulder to it. The men work twice as hard when I help them. We got along pretty well to-day and reached our camp long before dark. This morning we have two heavy hills before us, and are up at three o'clock to have the horses fed and ready for a move as soon as it is light. Breakfast is announced and we must be ready to be off soon. If I get through with the provisions in good time it will be equal to a *small victory* for our division of the army. I am well and hearty; this kind of work makes me fat."

The culmination of this campaign is noted in a letter of November 7: —

"I have only time to write you a note to let you know we are safe in Springfield, without a fight or loss of life. When we reached Warsaw we received our orders from General Pope to come to Springfield by forced marches with all possible rapidity, as the enemy were advancing upon us in force. So for four days we marched twenty miles every day, which was something unusual for any army, but our men stood it very well, and are now much better for the exercise.

"When we arrived here we learned that Price was seventy miles away from us and that there never was any danger. Officers speak very disparagingly of Frémont. The indications are that we will march back again in a few days. 'Up the hill and down again.'"

Sometime before the next letter was written from Warsaw, November 14, on the march "down the hill," we had heard of the removal of General Frémont: —

"Our Missouri campaign has been a very barren affair. It may suit a fellow who likes long walks and heavy marching, but there has not been much of war in it. The only time there was to my mind any prospect of a fight was at Georgetown. If Price had ever intended to fight, it was his best chance. We have been chasing him all through the southern part of the State on long and forced marches, wearing out our troops, and spending immense sums of money, and Price keeping fifty miles away from us all the time, and he is now clear over into Arkansas. The Springfield campaign is over at least, and Frémont's reputation

and our soldiers' feet have been the sufferers. However popular Frémont may be his military glory is ended.

"Our Colonel Veatch I regard as a man of unusual good judgment and has been an ardent friend of Frémont, and yet says his removal was just and needed, and such is almost the unanimous opinion of officers here. Tell father if he has not become reconciled to the removal, a personal knowledge of matters at St. Louis and here would satisfy him."

My youngest brother, Willie, was eight years old at this time, and I make frequent references to him in my letters. From Syracuse I wrote November 18: —

"We arrived here yesterday from our march of two hundred and fifty miles. We left Otterville on October 29 and arrived here yesterday the 17th, having had only one day of rest during the whole journey. If I had time I would write Willie a letter (but you can tell him) of our march, what a long line our division made, troops and trains of near three miles, what a time the poor soldiers had with sore feet, how we sat around big blazing camp-fires, how we got up before daylight and ate our breakfast on a log, and were marching before the sun was up, and give him a list of all the towns we passed through so he can find them on the map I sent him. About these I can give him the details when I come home. But this is only the least exciting of the soldier's life stories. We can't come home till I can tell him something about our experience on the battlefield, which we have not yet had."

A week later I write still from the same place, expressing great

impatience that we are kept in Missouri, and the desire on the part of myself and the men to be ordered into Kentucky, but I add: "I am beginning to understand that the army is one vast machine, and the mass of us need not trouble ourselves about our future, as our generals will determine that. We have only to do our duty and execute their commands." But I caution my wife if we are ordered to Kentucky: "You must not flatter yourself that, if I get nearer home, I will have a much better opportunity of paying a visit to the dear ones there."

Then I entered upon a topic which seemed to be a familiar one in my letters, about home: —

"The commanding officers at St. Louis will be very particular about absence, and when we get into the active field again it will be worse. And it must be so, if the army is to be kept in any state of efficiency. How much I would love to come home. No one ever more highly prized the blessings and comforts of a happy home than I, — a dear, loving, and noble wife, a sweet, darling little daughter, and so many kind kindred and friends, — but it must be otherwise. I am called to the place of duty, away from all these. I would be a craven, a disloyal citizen, if I did not do what I am doing in this time of peril to our country. And I rejoice that I have a wife, with a heart so noble, so patriotic and so brave, as to share this feeling with me, and who submits to her situation without a murmur. This pleasant home which you and I both long to enjoy together would be worthless and ruined, if our once prosperous Government falls to pieces. It is far better that we

endure this separation and that our country suffer this terrible war for a time now, than that we permit the whole nation to fall to pieces, and for years and years after to see nothing but civil war and continued bloodshed between little factious States. We hope and pray that God will speedily restore the country to its wonted peace, so that we may all return to our families and friends."

A little later, in acknowledging receipt of one of my wife's letters, I say: "I am glad you are reading Washington's letters. You will find he was a good husband and loved his home, but he *went to war for seven years!*"

While waiting in suspense at Syracuse, I tell of another court-martial: —

"I was all day yesterday engaged in a court-martial and until late last night. A lieutenant in the Eighteenth Indiana was arraigned by his captain for attacking and slandering him in a newspaper in Indiana, and the lieutenant came to get me to defend him. I tried to beg out of it, but he insisted so strongly that I had to undertake it. The court was presided over by the general commanding, and was composed of the colonels and other field officers of the division, and I was somewhat abashed in appearing before it, the practice of the court being altogether different from our civil law courts, and I being unacquainted with it; but I thought I might as well learn now as at any other time. I think I got through with it pretty well. If I keep the lieutenant from being cashiered it will be fortunate for him."

The coming on of winter made the generals, as well as the

men, think of winter quarters. In a letter dated November 24, referring to another of the reports about a threatened attack on us by Price and the probability of marching again, I write: —

"In the meantime we are shivering around our camp-fires in this winter weather, and stuffing our tents full of straw, blankets, and buffalo robes to keep warm. Last night I managed to sleep comfortably. I made my bed right down on the ground. It is warmer than to have my cot up on its legs. These Missouri prairie winds are such winds as Hoosiers don't know anything about.

"You ought to see some of the expedients we resort to for comfortable camp-fires. At headquarters of the regiment we have a big roaring log fire built, and have small logs propped up on the forks of saplings for seats or benches, and then we barricade ourselves from the wind *a little* by tents and stretching wagon covers around the saplings... But at the best this winter campaigning is not comfortable for officers or men."

Notwithstanding the cold weather, I note in my letter of December 3, that we are keeping up the drills: —

"Yesterday and to-day we have been kept quite busy, General Pope having issued a strict order in reference to regimental and brigade drills. We are out both morning and afternoon with the regiment, notwithstanding that the ground has been covered with snow and it is very cold. It comes a little hard on us, cold fingers and cold feet, but it is all the better for both officers and men. As for myself I am in much the best health when I am kept busy, and on the march or move. This afternoon we had a review of

the whole brigade, preparatory to an anticipated grand review by General Halleck, Department Commander, in a few days."

It finally seemed settled that the army was to remain in this part of Missouri, and we were to go into winter quarters. So our brigade marched down to Lamine River December 7, preparatory to a permanent encampment. I report: —

"We will have a large city of log huts, probably 15,000 or 20,000 troops. We are commencing operations to-day by clearing off our camp, preparatory to building our log huts. I shall be in command of the working forces of our regiment and shall soon know how to build a log house in the most approved style. So you see I am having a varied experience in my army life."

I seemed to be quite possessed with the project of building our huts and getting into winter quarters, as I was planning to extend hospitality to dear friends. I write my wife: —

"How would you and little Alice like to come out and live with me in a log hut for a while this winter? If the little darling will learn to say 'papa' right sweet and right plain, maybe I will have her come out and see and talk with her 'papa.' That will depend on how long we will stay here, and how well I shall be fixed up. But you must not be certain of it, for a soldier's life is a very uncertain one."

And sure enough all our plans and anticipations came to an end, as a letter from Sedalia, December 21, relates: —

"After more than a week's silence I have only time to drop you a note. The newspapers will doubtless tell you of our last

expedition. We went out in a hurry and came back in a hurry. We just missed by three hours' march a rebel supply train with a guard of three thousand: but we succeeded in capturing an entire regiment, with a full complement of officers, and Colonel Magoffin, a notorious secessionist, and a lot of other prisoners, making altogether about one thousand.

"There was no fight of any consequence. The cavalry surrounded them and they surrendered after a short skirmish. The Twenty-fifth was in the advance of the infantry and would have been in the fight, if needed. The only one of our regiment killed was Sergeant Ray, of Company G, who was acting as a mounted scout. Our regiment was assigned as a guard to the prisoners, and will have the post of honor in conducting them to St. Louis. We will leave by train in the morning. I am very tired with guard duty and marching for two days and nights, and must be up early in the morning."

This march proved the last of our campaigning in Missouri. Not a glorious record, but a lot of experience and useful training as soldiers. The regiment was assigned to quarters at Benton Barracks. I write: —

"It is uncertain how long we shall stay here or what they will do with us. We may be all winter or possibly only two or three weeks. They have given the field officers of our regiment a little house just outside the Barracks, four rooms, a kitchen, cellar, and attic for the servants, and a stable. If we can arrange things to suit us and it is agreeable to the other officers, I expect Colonel

Veatch and I will be sending for our wives. What think you of it?"

A few days later I received her reply on which I made the following comments: —

"You never wrote a more noble letter. I have read it over and over again. You could have written in a way which might have been more likely to have brought you over to visit me, but you could not have in a way more surely to make me love and admire you. I know how much you love to be with me and how much I would enjoy your presence. I have been thinking, ever since we came back to St. Louis [seven hours by rail from Evansville], about the propriety of having you come over to spend a few days or weeks with me, and had hardly decided what to do about it.

"While in many respects it would be pleasant, in others it would not be. If you took up quarters with me, it would be in a very comfortable room for a soldier, but not very comfortable or attractive for a lady — no furniture except stools, plank tables, and bunks with straw to sleep on, and soldiers' blankets and buffalo robes for covering. And then it would be in a house filled with officers, — gentlemen, it is true, but *not at all times* pleasant companions for a lady. If you went with me to a hotel, I would have to neglect my duties, which neither you nor I would desire me to do. And even in my own quarters I could not pay that attention to you which I would desire without some, at least apparent, neglect of duty. There are quite a number of officers' wives here, and I know that they do not in any degree promote the efficiency of the service. When I decided it to be my duty

to go into the army I anticipated I would have to give up my dear home comforts and enjoyment, and when you gave your consent to my going you so regarded it, and though we may both lament the necessity, we should not complain. I believe under the circumstances you will agree with me that for the present it is best that you should not come over, – will you not?"

When we returned to Benton Barracks we found that gallant soldier General W. T. Sherman in command. I had only a formal acquaintance with him then, but years after we were near neighbors in Washington and became intimate friends. When at the Barracks he was under a cloud of ridicule, and was known throughout the country as "Crazy Sherman." This appellation was given him because, a few weeks before, while in command at Louisville, he had told Mr. Cameron, Secretary of War, he would require two hundred thousand soldiers to rid the State of Kentucky of rebel troops. The sequel proved that more than that number had to be sent into that State before it was free of Confederate troops. Sherman was at that period one of the few *sane* men who realized so early the magnitude of the task before us. His "Memoirs," published years after the war, show that at the time he was much distressed at the appellation.

Our stay at Benton Barracks was prolonged for nearly six weeks, and was the usual experience of such soldier life. In a letter of January 14, 1862, I write: —

"It is now between eleven and twelve o'clock at night, and I am writing you while you are sleeping with our little darling near

you, – if she hasn't waked you up! You may wonder why I am writing you at this late hour. Well, I'm 'officer of the day' for the Barracks, and a part of my duty is to make 'the grand rounds' of the guards at least once *after twelve o'clock at night*. Rather than get a half sleep and be waked up, I prefer to sit up and write my wife till the time comes.

"We were very agreeably surprised this morning to have *Captain Willie* [my brother] step in on us, as we were not looking for him. I am very glad he came. We will try to make it a pleasant visit to him, and he will be much company for us. As I am 'officer of the day,' I took him around with me as my 'orderly'! When I visited the different guard-houses and sentinel-posts, he was very much interested in seeing the guards 'turn out' and the other military civilities. It has been very cold to-day, but both the infantry and cavalry were out for the afternoon drills of battalions and brigades. Willie stood out in the cold wind to see the maneuvers as long as he could.

"We have had a very pleasant evening at our quarters to-night. At dress parade Colonel Morgan invited all the officers over to take supper with us. They came, about thirty of them, about seven o'clock, and at eight we had supper. We had oysters fried, oysters stewed, oysters raw, and oyster patties, with their accompaniments, followed by meats, pickled pig's-feet and salad, and topped off with pound cake and champagne wine. You would hardly approve of the wine part, but we could scarcely do less at a soldiers' supper. Very few would have stopped at that.

Then those who smoked devoted themselves to a plentiful supply of cigars.

"In our regimental brass band there is a fine string band. I wish you could hear it, as I know with your love of music you would enjoy it very much. It gave us music all the evening. The officers got up a 'stag dance' and enjoyed it greatly. Then we had some first-rate songs, and wound up the evening by the officers presenting Dr. Walker [our regimental surgeon], in an *appropriate(!) speech by the major*, a beautiful medical staff sword, belt, gold tassel, and green silk sash, in token of a most faithful discharge of his onerous duties."

About this time I reply to a letter from my wife, regarding some domestic matters, as follows: —

"I was somewhat affected and a little amused at the account you give of your household and financial troubles. You must not let a little gas bill of fourteen dollars worry your life out of you. It is possible it was a little exorbitant, but none to hurt. I don't want you to worry yourself about these business matters. Where there are any troubles you will find your mother and father safe and willing advisers. I know that you are careful and prudent in your family expenses. I never thought you spent a cent unnecessarily. I don't want you to be thinking you are spending too much money; I just want you to get all you want to eat or wear.

"When I left home I got you a good house to live in, and I want you to live in it in proper style and comfort. If I was at home you know I would have broiled quails, stewed rabbits, roast turkeys,

venison, all varieties of oysters, and all kinds of good things for the table, and there is no reason why 'a lone, lorn' wife should starve just because her husband has gone off to the war. If I was at home I would have two or three gas burners going to your one, if I wanted the light; and there is no reason why my wife should grope around in the dark for fear of a gas bill at the end of the month. I know you are not extravagant and therefore there is no danger of useless expenditure, and no occasion for troubling yourself on that account. I have no fear but that you will save all the money you can conveniently with your family wants. I am drawing pretty good pay, and therefore can afford to keep my family in good circumstances."

Frequent reference in my letters is made to the way in which the Sabbath is spent in camp. In one of my letters I express the hope that "I will not lose or forget my Christian standing. I want to come home as good a Christian at least as when I left, though the temptations to evil and bad habits are very great."

Here is a description of one while at Benton Barracks: —

"Another Sabbath day has nearly passed, but before I go to sleep I must write you at least a short letter. To-day has been a quiet and rather profitable Sabbath, at least more so than most of those which I spend in camp. In the forenoon Willie and I went to the First Presbyterian Church, expecting to hear Dr. Nelson, but after we were in and well seated, who should I see going up into the pulpit with Dr. Nelson but Mr. —, the Home Missionary agent who preached at Evansville last year, you will probably

remember him. And he gave us the very same sermon to-day that he did then *verbatim*. The text was the same – 'The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto leaven which a woman took and hid,' etc. Having heard it before, I was not much interested in it, so that my visit to the city through the mud was not a very pleasant or profitable one.

"But this afternoon I read the 'Evangelist' [the Presbyterian Church paper] all through, reading almost every article, and it generally interests me, occupying most of the afternoon. This evening I read several chapters in the Bible, the 60th of Isaiah, 1st, 2d, and 3d of John, and my favorite chapters, the 14th, 15th, and 16th of John, and others. I also read two of the little books you sent us in the Soldier's Library. So you see the day has not been an entirely profitless one, but how much more pleasantly I could have spent it at home with my dear wife and child! But when I come back the Sabbaths will be the more pleasant and sacred with you, and we shall have an added pleasure in teaching our little darling holy hymns and holy truths."

I had occasion often in my letters to thank the folks at home for the useful things and dainties they were frequently sending to camp. The correspondence shows that I was not bashful in making our wants known, as, for instance, this extract: —

"You have written me several times asking what I wanted. Well, really, we don't want much of anything but our wives and families, as we are living very comfortably; but if you want to send us a present you might send us a box or two of eatables.

Say you bake us one of your good jelly cakes, and mother try her hand on one of her first-quality fruit cakes, and Eliza and Cassie [my sister and sister-in-law] see what they can do on a lady cake or something of that kind. And then, if you have in any of the various Foster families any extra supply of fruits, or preserves, or jellies, or tomatoes, or such like, you might send them by way of ballast."

In one of my last letters from Benton Barracks I gave this account of the Sunday inspection: —

"This forenoon I was busy at the Barracks. Every Sunday morning when it is pleasant weather we have a general inspection. The troops turn out in the best clothes they have, with shoes cleaned and blacked, knapsacks packed and on their backs, guns brightened up, and looking as well as they can. They are inspected by companies. Then the sleeping-quarters, dining-room, and kitchen are visited to see that they are kept in good order, etc. This inspection is sometimes made by the general. When not made by him, it is made by the field officers. Colonel Veatch and I made the inspection this morning, and it kept us busy till near noon."

Our marching orders came finally as recorded in my last letter written from St. Louis at the Barracks: —

"We have been anticipating marching orders for several days, but have at last received them. Orders came out from General Halleck this evening that 'The Twenty-fifth Indiana would prepare to march to Cairo.' The exact date of our departure is

not definitely known, but it may be early to-morrow. It is quite cold, but we can stand it as well as any of this army. We are very willing to leave the Barracks and get into the field, and especially as we are going down the river and most likely will be sent to Paducah or Smithland. Barracks life doesn't agree with me near so well as active work."

III

THE BATTLE OF FORT DONELSON

Greatly to our relief the Twenty-fifth Indiana was surely out of Missouri, with the prospect of active campaigning in Kentucky or Tennessee. Although we had orders to take a steamer for Cairo on January 30, we did not get away from St. Louis till February 2. On the steamer I wrote my wife in a tone which indicated that I was taking a more serious view of our future than I had in Missouri: —

"It may be that when we get to Cairo we shall find orders sending us up to Smithland, but wherever we go you will have abundant rumors of army movements and great battles fought. I trust you will not be unnecessarily alarmed or solicitous. I will write you as often as I can, keeping you as well posted as possible, but I expect I shall only be able to write you at considerable intervals... We will both pray our Heavenly Father to be my guard and protector, and return me safely to my home and dear family again. Let us have faith, and hope for the best."

On the 6th of February I write again from Cairo: "We are quartered here in the barracks, in the muddiest place imaginable. No one who has not been in Cairo knows what mud is. How long we shall remain here is altogether uncertain."

My next letter was written the 9th on a steamer going up the Tennessee River: —

"We seem fated to make or commence all our marches on the Sabbath. How often do I long for the enjoyment of one of our home Sabbaths. We were ordered to go aboard the steamboat at nine o'clock Saturday morning, so we had the men up before day to cook two days' rations and were packed up all ready to leave. But we did not go until noon to-day and we should be at Fort Henry to-morrow forenoon. We have six hundred barrels of powder on board, which makes traveling a little dangerous, but shall be at Paducah in an hour or two, where it will be unloaded. Our orders are to 'join General Grant,' so I suppose we will be with the army as it goes forward into Tennessee and South to victory.

"I am just in the locality I have been wanting to be all during the war, and I have only to do my duty like a soldier and a man. You must not be unduly solicitous about my welfare, or pay much attention to the rumors by telegraph, as they are at first always uncertain and generally erroneous. If our regiment is in an engagement, I will see that a carrier is sent to the first place to get the news home. So that if you do not hear you can be satisfied that *all is right*. You will remember me in your thoughts and prayers always, and have faith that all will be well."

This was the last letter I was able to write home until after the battle of Fort Donelson. On the 10th our regiment reached Fort Henry on the Tennessee River which had been captured by

General Grant only four days before our arrival. On the 12th we marched over to the vicinity of Fort Donelson with the rest of General Grant's army, eleven miles from Fort Henry, and situated on the west side of the Cumberland River. We were a part of the division commanded by General Charles F. Smith, and which occupied the extreme left of General Grant's army. That army, when it went into camp on the evening of February 12, covered the entire front of the Confederate forces. From our encampment the rebel line of rifle-pits and fortifications could be seen, we occupying one series of ridges and the enemy those confronting ours.

The fighting began on the morning of the 13th, our picket lines being pressed toward the enemy's front, mainly to develop their position. In view of the eagerness of my own account in my letters, I quote the part of the official report of Colonel Veatch, which relates to the operations of the Twenty-fifth Indiana on the 13th: —

"At 10 o'clock A.M. we moved forward in line of battle to the top of the hill which was between us and the enemy's breastworks. Here I received orders to fix bayonets and charge the rebels, and, if possible, drive them from their works. The timber was so thick that we could only see here and there a part of the rebel works, but could form no idea of their range or extent... At the foot of the hill the enemy poured on us a terrible fire of musketry, grape and canister, and a few shells. The rebel breastworks were now in plain view on the top of the hill. The

heavy timber on the hillside had been felled, proving a dense mass of brush and logs. Through and over these obstacles our men advanced against the enemy's fire with perfect coolness and steadiness, never halting for a moment until they received your order. After a halt of a few minutes they then advanced within a short distance of the enemy's breastworks where the fire from a six-pound field-piece and twelve-pound howitzer on our right was so destructive that it became necessary to halt and direct the men to lie down to save us from very heavy loss.

"After remaining under a very heavy fire for two hours and fifteen minutes, with no opportunity to return the fire to advantage, the enemy being almost entirely hid, and seeing no movement indicating a further advance from any part of the line, I asked permission to withdraw my regiment. In retiring, owing to the nature of the ground and our exposed position, the men were thrown into slight confusion, but they rallied promptly at the foot of the hill, and remained in that position until night, when we moved back, as directed, to the ground we occupied in the morning. We lost in this action fourteen killed and sixty-one wounded."

On the 14th the battle was continued almost entirely by our naval forces, the army taking no part except the pickets and sharp-shooters. It was General Grant's hope that the gunboats would be able to silence the Confederate water batteries and pass up the Cumberland, and thus cut off reinforcements to the enemy, but in this they failed and were forced to retire.

In view of this situation it was the intention of Grant to establish a siege of the fortifications and await reinforcements. But on the morning of the 15th our right wing under General McClernand was attacked in force, the enemy coming out of their intrenchments with the apparent intention of cutting their way through our line and abandoning the fort. McClernand being hard-pressed, General Lew Wallace's division went to his assistance, and the battle raged in that direction with great intensity all the forenoon. We lay upon our arms in line of battle, ready and impatient to take part in the contest, listening to the roar of battle in the distance. General Smith, our division commander, about three o'clock in the afternoon received orders to advance upon the enemy in our front, and immediately our attacking force was formed by Lauman's brigade, in column of regiments, consisting of the Twenty-fifth Indiana, and three Iowa regiments, General Smith himself leading the attack.

It was a martial sight, this column of regiments advancing down into the ravine and ascending the hill on which were located the enemy's fortifications, struggling through the abatis of fallen timber, with the bullets whistling thick among our ranks. But it was an event of only a few minutes; our column, never halting, was soon in front of the intrenchments, when the enemy broke and fled, and the day was won. Colonel Veatch says in his report that the skirmishers of the Twenty-fifth Indiana were among the first, if not the very first, to enter the fortifications.

General Grant, in his account of this charge, says: "The outer

line of rifle-pits was passed, and the night of the 15th General Smith, with much of his division, bivouacked within the line of the enemy. *There was now no doubt but that the Confederates must surrender or be captured the next day.*" It was an inspiring sight for us, as we ascended the hill, the general on his white horse, hat in hand, waving us forward into the enemy's lines. He was the hero of the battle. On the 19th General Halleck telegraphed to Washington: "Smith, by his coolness and bravery at Fort Donelson, when the battle was against us, turned the tide and carried the enemy's outworks." General Sherman, in his "Memoirs," has this to say of the capture of Fort Donelson: "He [General Charles F. Smith] was a very handsome and soldierly man, of great experience, and at Donelson had acted with so much personal bravery that to him may be attributed the success of the assault."

Although this charge of our brigade, the last fighting of the battle, was the decisive event which brought about the surrender, it was attended with little bloodshed. The charge was so rapid and the enemy's fire so unsteady, that we entered the intrenchments with little loss of life. More men were killed and wounded in the fight of the Twenty-fifth on the first day of the battle, as described in Colonel Veatch's report, than by the entire brigade in this charge so decisive in its result.

At dawn on the morning of the 16th white flags were seen along the whole of the enemy's lines, and the notes of a bugle were heard by us advancing to the outworks where our brigade

had bivouacked during the night. It announced an officer, who delivered to General Smith a letter to General Grant from the rebel commander, General Buckner, asking upon what terms he would receive a surrender. General Grant's famous reply was: "No terms except an unconditional surrender can be accepted. I propose to move immediately on your works." The forces engaged as given by General Grant were twenty-one thousand Confederates and twenty-seven thousand Federals.

The only extant account of the battle I sent home was written to my wife on the day after the surrender, dated the 17th: —

"I can write to you to-day with great thankfulness to our Heavenly Father for the privilege of again addressing my dear wife, and sending my congratulations to my home. You will have learned before this reaches you that Fort Donelson has surrendered. I am happy to write that the Twenty-fifth Indiana bore a worthy part in the conflict and triumph. We made two charges on the rifle-pits and fortifications, on the 13th and on the 15th. Yesterday, after the surrender, the Twenty-fifth Indiana was the second regiment to enter the fort. We are now occupying huts in the fort lately occupied by the Second (rebel) Kentucky. This was the regiment which fought us so desperately in the rifle-pits on the 13th.

"Our charge on the 13th was desperate, over the steep and rugged hills, covered with felled timber and under a most terrific fire. The fire of musketry was thick as hail. The cannon raked us on both flanks and in front, and the storm of shot, shell,

grape, and canister was awful. You can say to our friends that the Twenty-fifth has been tried in most perilous positions and has acted like veterans. In the thickest of the fight the officers and most of the men seemed to lose all sense of personal danger.

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