MAXFIELD ALBERT, BRADY ROBERT

ROSTER AND STATISTICAL RECORD OF COMPANY D, OF THE ELEVENTH REGIMENT MAINE INFANTRY VOLUNTEERS

Albert Maxfield

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Maxfield A.

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Содержание

Robert Brady, Albert Maxfield Roster and Statistical Record of Company D, of the Eleventh Regiment Maine Infantry Volunteers / With a Sketch of Its Services in the War of the Rebellion

"Far from over the distance,
The faltering echoes come:
Of the flying blast of bugle
And the rattling roll of drum."

1890

In offering this Sketch, Roster and Statistical Record of the services of Company D in the War of the Rebellion, to its members, we wish to acknowledge the kind assistance given in its preparation by the men of D and of the Eleventh; also of that given by citizen friends in Maine, in tracing the fate of members of the Company who have wandered out of view in the twenty-five years that have passed since they were mustered out; and to acknowledge that of Captain Thomas Clark of the Office of the Adjutant-General of Maine, he having kindly furnished us with valuable and necessary information.

In reading the Sketch, members of D will kindly remember that it is written from one point of view only, and that many things they would like to see in it that are not there, may not have been sufficiently well remembered by the writer, if he ever knew them, to enable him to set them down in a trustworthy manner, and, too, that the limitations of space and the unity of the sketch made it necessary for him to leave out many things that he himself would have been glad to have incorporated in the story he had to tell.

The Roster and Statistical Record is as complete as it has seemed possible to make it. That there are blanks where there should be information is not at all the fault of the compiler, he having sought diligently but unsuccessfully for the information the blank spaces should furnish.

ALBERT MAXFIELD,
ROBERT BRADY, Jr.

This Company was formed in the early Fall of 1861. Its members were chiefly from the towns of the upper Penobscot, from Lee, Springfield, Topsfield, Enfield, Prentiss, and contiguous towns; a few from other parts of the State signing the Company rolls at Augusta.

According to its first descriptive list, much the greater number of the original members of D were farmers by occupation at the time of their enlistment, and most of them were young men of from eighteen to twenty-four years of age. And according to the same authority, its voluntary organization consisted of Leonard S. Harvey, Captain; John D. Stanwood, First Lieutenant; Gibson S. Budge, Second Lieutenant; Robert Brady, First Sergeant; with Abner F. Bassett, Jas. W. Noyes, Judson L. Young and Francis M. Johnson as Sergeants; John McDonald, Richard W. Dawe, Ephraim Francis, Hughey G. Rideout, John Sherman, Benjamin Gould, Wm. H. Chamberlain and Freeman R. Dakin as Corporals; Robert A. Strickland, Musician; Henry W. Rider, Wagoner; the rest of the Company, 77 in number, consenting to serve their country as private soldiers.

AUGUSTA AND WASHINGTON

Thus organized, the Company rendezvoused at Augusta, where, October 19, '61, it was mustered into the service of the United States, as Company D, of the Eleventh Regiment Maine Infantry Volunteers.

The regiment started for Washington, November 13, '61, arriving there on the 16th, and the same day pitched its circular Ellis tents on Meridian Hill, back of Washington, naming its camp "Knox," after the hero of the Revolution that Maine claims as her own.

The only really notable event that took place in the several weeks the regiment occupied Camp Knox, was the Battle of the Sand Pits, by which name the quarrel between the men of the Eleventh and those of a United States Cavalry Regiment camped near Camp Knox, is known to the initiated. Whatever the cause of the quarrel, it culminated in an undisciplined rush to arms and a prompt occupation of the disputed sand pits by the more hot headed of the Eleventh. Fortunately no blood was shed before the officers of the two regiments got their men under control. No reputations were lost in this engagement, and but one was made, that of Private Longley, of D Company, who, with characteristic French-Canadian impetuosity slipped a cartridge into the muzzle of his Belgian rifle, bullet end first, effectually spiking the piece.

The Eleventh was here brigaded with the 104th and 52nd Pennsylvania, the 56th and 100th New York Infantry Regiments, Regan's Seventh New York Battery of three inch ordnance guns attached; Colonel W. W. H. Davis, of the 104th Pennsylvania, in command of the Brigade, by reason of seniority of commission.

Soon after this formation, on New Year's Day, 1862, the brigade went into winter quarters in Carver Barracks, on Meridian Hill. Each regiment was domiciled in a dozen or fourteen one-story wooden houses, shell like structures of from fifty to sixty feet in length, twenty-five or thirty in width, and separated from each other by a street of perhaps twenty-five feet in width. The buildings of each regiment bordered one side of a great esplanade, the garrison flag floating from a tall staff in its center, each building laying a gable end to this square, which was common to all for drill and parade purposes.

Here the Winter was passed in perfecting the drill and discipline of the men, the officers gaining their technical military knowledge, book in hand, while imparting the contents to their stalwart pupils. In this way both officers and men practiced assiduously until they could load and fire in a truly military manner; march with mathematical accuracy and wheel geometrically. They also learned to obey orders without demur or question, under penalty of "Death or some worse punishment," as the men would have it the United States Army Regulations, read to them so frequently, provided for about all the offences in the military decalogue, this being their free rendering of the often closing phrase of a paragraph: – "Death, or such other punishment as the sentence of a court martial may inflict."

So far as recollection serves, the men of D were not given to law breaking. There is a remembrance though of Private Bridges standing on the head of a barrel at the head of the company street, a punishment for some now forgotten offense that did not seem to affect Private Bridges' sense of shame to any appreciable degree, he assuring all anxious inquirers that he was stationed in so commanding a position that he might announce the paymaster's anticipated approach from Washington, that all men of D might have timely warning to be on hand to receive their somewhat overdue dollars.

It was a very dull winter. About all the diversions from drill and parade that I recall are a few days on pass spent in wandering through the Capitol and other Government buildings – through the Smithsonian Institute – in visiting the already crowded hospitals – a marching part in the pompous military funeral given General Lander's body – and a dinner party given by D on Washington's Birthday, at which the field and staff of the regiment, the conspicuous guests, paid for their oyster

stew and cider in speeches of impassioned eloquence, prophesying such a speedy downfall of the Wicked Rebellion that some of our men were almost inclined to pack their knapsacks before going to sleep, not to run any risk of missing the eastern train in the morning in case the W.R. should fall to pieces during the night.

This seems to be the place to have it recalled by Lieutenant Budge to the men of D who passed the Winter of 1861-62 in these barracks, that he commanded a detail that winter that, under the direction of the Provost Marshal General of Washington, seized and spilled into the gutters of that city some thirty thousand dollars worth of more or less ardent spirits. It would be interesting to have added to these figures a computation of the number of gallons of such fluids spilled by the men of D during its entire military history, spilled from canteens and other fluid receptacles, especially the number of gallons spilled by the re-enlisted men when on their famous furlough in the Winter of 1864.

Life in Washington passed as briefly indicated until March, when preparations were made for moving "On to Richmond." So eager were the men to make this movement, many of them fancying it would bring about an immediate ending of the war, that they chafed at the unavoidable delay that lack of transport service occasioned; Private Leighton, I believe it was, voicing the opinion of many that the delay was pusillanimous, and patriotically declaring for an immediate taking of Richmond and the hanging of Jeff. Davis, that all the farmers of the army might get home in time to attend to their Spring planting. And when there was one false start, the regiment in line, with baggage packed, and all ready for the word of command, then we were ordered back to quarters, there were curses loud and deep, even had been deacons using language that would have shocked the sisters, till the band jocularly struck up "Wait for the wagon and we'll all take a ride," when good nature was restored, proving that music indeed hath soothing charms.

THE PENINSULA CAMPAIGN

The afternoon of the 28th of March, the brigade, now the third of General Casey's division of the Fourth Army Corps, General Keyes, commanding, was actually en route for Alexandria; Captain Maxfield's diary says: – "With boots blacked, hands in white gloves and brass shoulder scales on," a campaign guise difficult for the men of '64 to appreciate.

This was a hard march for green troops, unaccustomed to heavy marching order, with more too than the phrase implies, for besides gun, equipments, forty rounds of cartridges, the knapsacks were not only stuffed with the ordinary kits of soldiers, but were laden with the remains of civilian wardrobes and the accumulations of a winter's garrison duty. I think that no man of D ever reached a more welcome camp ground than the one outside of Alexandria that night. And by the time the newly issued shelter tents were buttoned together, were pitched, and the camp fires were lighted, there were many too weary to care for anything but to creep supperless into their tents, wrap their blankets around them and rest their aching bones. In the morning reveille awoke them to see a Spring snow storm, half rain and half snow beating down, followed by a day of discomfort and another night on a wet camp ground, and glad enough the next afternoon, that of March 30th, were all to get on board the transport Constitution, with all its discomforts of wet decks, on which the men must sleep closely crowded together; four regiments of our brigade, the Eleventh, the 56th and the 100th New York, and the 52d Pennsylvania regiments, with Regan's Battery, jamming the five decked Constitution to its utmost capacity.

Proceeding to Fortress Monroe, we were ordered to land at Newport News, to which place we were taken by a smaller steamer, the Constitution drawing too many feet of water to be able to reach the landing place. In steaming across the bay the masts of the sunken war ships could be seen standing above the surface of the water telling of the great Naval combat that so lately took place in this placid water. Soon a puff of smoke rolled out from a rebel battery off Sewell's Point, announcing the coming of the first hostile shot. It fell so far short of our steamer that the tell-tale spray of water its plunge threw into the air was received by us with a yell of derision.

Landing at Newport News the 2d of April, the brigade went into camp, where we remained for a few days owing to lack of wagon transportation. It was here that the men first went on picket. And Captain Maxfield's diary records that there was a rush among them to go on picket duty, probably as great a one as there was in later years to escape such service.

The 6th of April, we proceeded to Young's Mills, where we occupied the log barracks rebel troops had occupied the previous winter. Here the regiment was paid off, and where they had learned it is a mystery, but it did seem as if not only the men of D but those of every company of the regiment were adepts in the mysteries of the national game; for wherever you went through the thick woods surrounding the barracks you would come across groups of men squatting around the tops of hard bread boxes laid on the ground, and hear such mystic phrases as: – "Ante up or leave the board." "It's your deal." "I raise you five cents." "I see you and go you five better." Some of the men wrecked their available fortunes in a few hours at the game, then would borrow a quarter from some friend and regain all they had lost, only to lose it again before night. Such is the see-saw of fortune.

The 17th of April, we rejoined the brigade in position before Lee's Mill, on the creek known as the Warwick River. We took a modest part in the siege of Yorktown. I chiefly remember a reconnoissance in which Company D followed a skirmish line as its reserve.

By company front, trying to keep a perfect alignment, keeping step as if on parade, D crashed through woods and bushes, quite undaunted until a shell came screeching towards them; and as it fell some twenty feet before them, burst in a cloud of smoke and the pieces went flying into the air, our heroes waited with open mouths for half a minute perhaps, certainly quite long enough for all danger to have passed, then at one and the same time each and all, as if by a common impulse, threw

themselves flat upon the ground, and digging their noses into the soil, lay there for another full half minute before arising to march on their dignified way.

Think of that you men of Morris Island, to whom flying shot and shells became a matter of course, of no more consequence than beans from a bean shooter. But that was your first shell, and 'twas long before you had heard the warning cries of "Jim Island" and "Sullivan," long before those names had become so familiar to you as to have hardened your nerves to comparative indifference.

It was in this reconnoissance that the first man of the regiment was killed, Private Mace, of Company A. As the first man of the regiment killed, his body had a fascination for all of us as it lay in camp, and few of us but were awe struck as we looked upon the waxen face of our comrade, now drained of blood, but yesterday blooming with health and spirits, struck dead in a second as if by a thunderbolt. The only other matter for record here is our being called out early one morning to stand to arms and listen to the attack a portion of the Vermont brigade made on the dam across the Warwick, known as Dam No. 1. Though the charging and the answering yells, the crash of musketry and the booming of cannon came to us, out of danger, but as the crash and uproar of a distant thunder shower, yet it was so suggestive of what was going on in the semi-darkness beyond the intervening woods, that it gave some of us a dread foreboding that the time was really near at hand when we must be active participants in just such bits of the bloody game of war.

We were not in the trenches before Yorktown at any time except as individuals. Then to creeping to the outer works and watching the slow operations of the siege, we much preferred to sit in the interior works and listen to the blood-curdling tales of the so-called California sharpshooters, the butts of whose rifles were notched to their utmost capacity, each notch representing a dead rebel, according to its owner's statement, but as it was estimated that the combined notches on the butts of their rifles outnumbered the entire rebel force under Magruder, it is more probable that they bore quite as much testimony to the mendacious abilities of the story tellers as to their sharp shooting ones.

One fine May morning, that of the 4th, it was known that Magruder had evacuated Yorktown the night before, and under the command of our new brigade commander, Brigadier General Henry M. Naglee, we were in quick pursuit. We crossed the rebel lines at Lee's Mills, which fortified position we gallantly carried without loss in the absence of the flying enemy.

As the different commands of our army moved forward, they converged on the road leading from Yorktown to Williamsburg with the result that this road was soon packed with horse, foot and artillery, all pushing eagerly forward, and without overmuch regards for right of way.

Company D, holding the right of the regiment, was a pleased auditor to a little conversation between Colonel Caldwell and the irate commander of a regiment the Eleventh had unceremoniously displaced. The displaced commander was evidently, by manner and seat in the saddle, a regular officer, which then meant among other things, an officer with large ideas of his own importance as a trained military man, and small ones of all volunteer officers.

"Sir," roared he, riding up to Colonel Caldwell, "How dare you march across the head of my command?"

The Colonel looked at him in his large placid way, without answering him, much as a mastiff looks at a snarling terrier.

"Do you know who I am, sir?" yelled the angry commander, now doubly enraged at the elaborate indifference, and the apparently studied silence of our Colonel. "I am Major so-and-so of such and such a regiment."

"And I," answered Colonel Caldwell, smiling blandly, touching his cap with military courtesy as he spoke, "And I am Colonel John C. Caldwell, commanding the Eleventh Maine Regiment of Infantry Volunteers, and am quite at your service, sir."

Speechless with rage, and fairly gasping at the haw-haw of approval we country bumpkins gave the Colonel's answer, Major so-and-so backed his horse a little, turned him, and galloped away in as furious a state of mind as any gallant Major ever galloped in.

This bright May day was spent by the infantry in marching and halting while the cavalry pressed forward on the heels of the flying enemy. Towards night the regiments went into bivouac. Then the men scattered for foraging purposes. The inhabitants had mainly fled to Richmond, perhaps naturally, they consisting of women, children and male antiquities generally, McClellan's report stating that every able bodied male of the Peninsula was in the ranks of the rebel army.

They went hastily, evidently. I remember one house from which the occupants had fled just as they were about to seat themselves to a meal apparently, for the table was spread with dishes and untouched victuals. Loading themselves with food and furniture from these deserted houses, the boys returned to camp.

My particular group of D slept that night on a feather bed, spread on the ground, with sheets, quilts, pillows – all the accompaniments. But, alas, it began to rain heavily in the night, so that before morning our downy nest of the evening before was about as comfortable a sleeping place as a bed-tick filled with mush and milk would be – a soaked, oozing, nasty mess.

In the morning we pushed forward in a heavy rain over roads cut up by artillery wheels and punched full of holes by the hoofs of innumerable horses. We could soon hear the battle of Williamsburg progressing in front as we, wet to the skin, plodded on our miserable way. Towards night, General McClellan ordered General Naglee to push forward and reinforce General Hancock, who was reported as heavily pressed. We moved forward rapidly and zealously, but before we could reach Hancock, that brilliant commander had, by feigning a retreat, led the opposing enemy from their intrenchments into the open field, where with a few heavy volleys he stopped them, then charging with the bayonet, routed and dispersed their column, capturing some five hundred of it.

We arrived only in time to witness the overthrow of the enemy, and to give the victors generous cheers of congratulations. Taking position in line, we stood to our arms through a cold, wet night, entirely without fire, and almost without food, our nearly empty haversacks furnishing us with a very scanty supper. It was a night to remember.

But in the morning, the dreaded morning, when all that long line of earthworks, beyond which lay the old city of Williamsburg, must be carried; in the morning our chilled blood was not only warmed by a brilliant sun, but by the knowledge that the Confederates had evacuated these intrenchments too, and were still falling back towards Richmond.

The supply trains had been left behind in leaving the lines before Yorktown, and when enterprising wagon-masters did get their trains towards the front, they were compelled to give way to hurrying troops and artillery. It now became necessary to await the coming of these but lately despised supply trains, for soldiers, to march and fight, must be fed, and you might as well try to get fight out of empty cartridge boxes as out of empty haversacks.

A few days then, we of necessity spent before Williamsburg, to rest the exhausted troops and to replenish empty cartridge boxes and haversacks. These few days were mainly passed by our men in taking a first sight of the horrors of war. Not only our own wounded were there, but the enemy's as well, left behind in the care of their surgeons, in the hurried flight of the rear guard that had made the stand for delay at Williamsburg. Cut, hacked, shot, dead and dying, a sorry sight there was in the barracks Confederate troops had occupied during the winter, now used for hospital purposes. And out on the field was a worse one. Dead bodies lay where they fell, and as they fell. Some in the act of loading, some as if firing, these that had been shot dead in their tracks; others lay on their backs or curled into tortuous shapes, staring stonily, as if for a last look at the world that had faded from their darkening eyes as the life blood poured from their mortal wounds. However hardened we became afterwards, the most indifferent of us by nature was then visibly affected by the gruesome sights we saw on the bloody field of Williamsburg.

The 9th of May we were on the march again, but moved slowly, the roads being few and narrow, and the weather rainy. On the 13th, Colonel Caldwell having been promoted a Brigadier-General, took leave of us and Colonel Plaisted assumed command. It was two o'clock in the morning of the

14th of May before we reached New Kent Court House, and about the 19th before we reached the Chickahominy and took possession of the ruins of Bottoms and the Railroad Bridges.

A reconnoissance D and a piece of artillery made showed that the last named bridge had been burned. We had a merry exchange of grape with the enemy's artillery across the river, here about forty feet wide, fringed with a dense growth of forest trees, and bordered by low marshy bottom lands, varying from half a mile to a mile in width, as McClellan describes it. The following day, the 20th, Naglee's Brigade crossed Bottoms Bridge and D with another company of infantry and a squadron of cavalry followed General Naglee for some miles along a road leading through White Oak Swamp to the James River. We touched the enemy's cavalry but once and quickly formed at a bridge to receive his anticipated charge. It not coming, General Naglee crossed the bridge with his cavalry and charged the enemy, the General at the head of his little force scattering the enemy in every direction but ours. We then marched on again for some miles, when the infantry went into position at a big farm house on a commanding hill and General Naglee and the cavalry rode away towards the James River. It was said that they watered their horses in that river before returning to us, which they did in about an hour. We then made a rapid retrograde movement for Bottoms Bridge, marching back by another road than that we had taken in advancing, by this sharp manoeuvre escaping the attention of a body of gray coated gentlemen who had assembled at a point on our line of advance to give us a taste of Southern hospitality on our return march. This rapid and brilliant reconnoissance, right through the enemy's country, gave General McClellan important information regarding roads and their connections that he found very useful to him when unexpected circumstances forced us to retreat in that direction.

On the 24th of May, General Naglee's brigade dislodged the enemy from the vicinity of Seven Pines and secured a strong position for our advance. McClellan says also that on the 25th, under cover of a movement by General Naglee, the whole Fourth Corps took up and began to fortify a position at Seven Pines. On the 28th his record also shows Casey's division was moved forward to Fair Oaks, three-quarters of a mile in advance of Seven Pines, leaving General Couch at the works at Seven Pines. General Casey immediately began a new line of rifle pits and a small redoubt for six field guns to cover our new position. Here we were engaged in constant skirmishing and picket service until May 31, when the battle of Fair Oaks was fought. When about noon of the 31st of May the Rebel Commands of D. H. Hill, Huger, Longstreet and G. W. Smith swept down on Casey's division, D and other companies of the regiment were on the picket line, D on the extreme right. The few members of D left in camp joined regiments moving to the front as they came forward, and with the rest of Naglee's Brigade, to use the language of General McClellan's official report concerning our brigade, "struggled gallantly to maintain the redoubt and rifle pits against the overwhelming masses of the enemy." As individuals those of D so engaged did their duty, both here and in the later stands made at General Couch's rifle pits. One of them, Private Gray, reported missing, was undoubtedly killed while voluntarily attached to some stranger organization, receiving burial with their dead of his adopted regiment. But the story of D as a company we will tell from information furnished us by its First Sergeant, Brady, who commanded and directed its movements when it made its stand on the picket line against an advancing line of battle. The portion of the Regiment not on picket was taken into the battle by then Major Campbell, and shares with the 104th Pennsylvania the warm encomiums of official writers on the heroic bravery shown by these two regiments that day.

The night before the battle of Fair Oaks was one of a terrible storm, that we all know. D went on picket that evening, occupying the extreme right of the line, an entirely unsupported position. The men passed a miserable night, watching in darkness and storm, sheltering themselves as they best could and still remain alert, for all the signs pointed to an early attack on us; the pressure of the enemies skirmish lines, the plain movements of their troops, and the fact that they must either dislodge us or lose Richmond. Towards morning the storm ceased, and the day broke with the promise of clearness. Shortly afterwards Sergeant Brady came out of camp with Private Annis, then a detailed cook, Annis bearing a camp kettle in which he proceeded to prepare coffee, when the men partook of a rough

breakfast. Soon Lieutenant Washington, of General Johnston's staff, rode unexpectedly into the line of D, having mistaken a road in carrying orders to some rebel command. Quickly halted, he ruefully yielded himself a prisoner, and under Captain Harvey's pilotage made an unwilling way to General Casey's headquarters. Captain Harvey failing to return, the command of the company devolved upon Second Lieutenant Johnson, as First Lieutenant Stanwood was away sick. The capture of Lieutenant Washington made the pickets doubly alert. Besides, General Naglee himself rode out to their line to make observations, and warned them that they were liable to be attacked at any moment. Soon great activity was displayed by the rebel pickets in the immediate front, and sharp picket fighting took place during the forenoon. A little after noon the roar of the attack on the left was heard. It was uncertain what the pickets should do. Lieutenant Johnson and Corporal Keene moved out on the right to learn, if they could, what force, if any, guarded the flank. They found it entirely unguarded, and moved along until they fell in with Sumner's advance, when they were occupied in giving information concerning the movements of the enemy, and the bearing of the roads to General Sumner's aids.

Sergeant Brady had been left in command of the company by Lieutenant Johnson, and shortly a rebel line of battle appeared moving towards the line held by D. Under Sergeant Brady's orders, some of the men began to barricade the road they centered on by falling trees across it, the others keeping up a rapid fire on the enemy to give the idea by their boldness that they covered a line of battle, while really between them and Fair Oaks there was then no force whatever. This ruse succeeded to an unexpected degree, the rebel line of battle halting, throwing out a strong skirmish line, and making an elaborately cautious advance. Of course their skirmishers easily flanked our forlorn pickets, and curling them back in spite of their stubborn resistance, finally scattered them through the woods.

Before the rebel onset, Sergeant Brady, realizing by the sound of the battle that he was cut off from his camp, had carefully cautioned the men to make their line of inevitable retreat toward the right and rear, and fortunately for most of them they followed these orders, reaching our lines in safety. Those that were captured were Sergeant Bassett, Corporal Dakin, Musician Strickland, Privates William and Moses Sherman, House, and lastly Sergeant Brady himself, who, the captor of two rebel soldiers, was triumphantly following his prisoners into our lines as he supposed, when, reaching the railroad, a line of rebel infantry confronted him, and he found it necessary to exchange place with his own prisoners, who, you may be sure, took a great pleasure in escorting him to Richmond. These, with Private Gray killed, and Private Blaine wounded, cover the loss of D at the battle of Fair Oaks.

It will be seen by this, that when night fell on the first day of the battle of Fair Oaks, Company D was somewhat scattered. Some of its members had joined the colors, but many were still wandering in search of them, while a stout detachment was already housed in Libby Prison. But before the next day noontime, the company was fully organized again under the command of Lieutenant Johnson, Captain Harvey relinquishing the command, pending the acceptance of his resignation, which circumstances forced him to send in.

The regiment took no part in the second day's fighting, constituting part of the reserve. That night they lay in the edge of a piece of woods. During it certain mules belonging to the Q.M. Department of our army were stampeded, galloping in a body along our line of battle, the rattling of the chains of their harnesses which had not been removed when they were unhitched from the wagons, so resembling the clanking of the scabbards of galloping cavalrymen, that many of the Eleventh, more than will confess it, were sure that the rebel Stuart and his cavalry were upon us. For a few minutes the utmost consternation and confusion prevailed, but the truth was quickly known and quiet restored. Of course no one was really scared, still it is said that some of the Eleventh, and they not all of the rank and file either, displayed an unexpected aptitude for tree climbing during the misconception.

After the battle we had occasion to look over the battle-field, for of course we did not know that our missing were captured, they might be killed or wounded.

It told the same ghastly story of war as that of Williamsburg. Our hastily abandoned camp had been rummaged by the Confederates and the shelter tents and old blankets taken from it to spread on

the wet ground as they lay in line of battle. The long line of wet trampled tents and blankets told the exact position the enemy occupied the night of the first day of the battle. The kettles still hung over the charred embers of the extinguished cook fires, the headquarters' tents still stood in their places, the horns of the band still hanging on the limbs of the apple trees they were hanging on when the band took its hasty departure for Augusta. It tooted for us no more. In a day or two our division was placed under command of General Peck and ordered to guard the Railroad Bridge and Bottoms Bridge; Couch's division guarding the fords across the White Oak Swamp. For some days our position was at the bridges, we camping at the end of the Railroad Bridge, just where the Confederate artillery had stood when D and its Federal piece of artillery first opened fire on each other from opposite ends of the bridge. Then came the swift and almost unheralded march of Jackson from the Valley to the south side of the Chickahominy and the Seven Days' Battles. The story of the Battle of Gaines' Mills was brought to us by the seemingly interminable army of the disheartened troops that for hours filed across the Railroad Bridge, without officers or orders, clamoring that all was lost, and that Jackson was moving swiftly towards us, crushing all opposition.

With a well-manned battery, strongly supported, placed on the hill behind us, the Eleventh went down into the swamps of the Chickahominy, remaining there in a long skirmish line for two or three days, expecting every hour to hear the skirmishers of the enemy crashing through the woods of the opposite shore of the Chickahominy, now easily fordable by light troops. But before the momentarily uncertain enemy moved forward McClellan's rapidly laid plans had been fully acted on, our right wing was across the Chickahominy by its various bridges, the bridges were destroyed, and the retreat to the James River was in full operation. As we moved away from the Railroad Bridge, the center spans of which had been destroyed by axemen of the Eleventh the day before, the famous train of cars that our men had loaded with shells and combustibles at Savage Station came tearing down the track, and reaching the bridge took its mighty header.

General "Dick" Taylor, of the Confederates, who was in command of the troops at the other end of the bridge, says of it, while the battle of Savage Station was raging on the afternoon of June 29th, Magruder attacking Sumner, to be beaten off, the din of the distant combat was silenced to his ears by a train approaching from Savage Station, gathering speed as it rushed along, quickly emerging from the forest to show two engines drawing a long string of cars. Reaching the bridge, the engines exploded with a terrible noise, followed in succession by the explosion of the carriages laden with ammunition. Shells burst in all directions, he says, the river was lashed into foam, trees were torn for acres around, and several of his men were wounded.

To this harsh music we moved swiftly away till we had crossed White Oak Swamp Bridge in gathering darkness and reached the high ground beyond it. Here we bivouacked in line of battle, all but the guards sleeping on their arms, while the rear guard came filing across the bridge. In the morning exhausted troops could be seen lying fast asleep everywhere – in the fields, the woods, even in the dusty road itself. But all of our troops were across the swamp, and as fast as the packed condition of the roads to the James would permit, all but those of us to form the rear guard of the day, the divisions of Smith and Richardson and Naglee's Brigade, under command of Franklin, to lay here and hold Jackson himself at bay, were moving slowly towards the next selected position to make a stand – Malvern Hill. That Jackson was on the other side of the bridge we knew, the rattle of the skirmishers' rifles told us that. But just about noon he announced his presence by suddenly opening on us with thirty pieces of artillery.

One moment there was nothing above us but a cloudless summer sky, the next the air was full of shrieking shells, bursting in puffs of white smoke, and showering down a storm of broken iron. It was so startling in its suddenness that it is not strange, as the Second Corps chronicler says, that there was "a scene of dire confusion." And to add to it, the men in charge of a ponton train drawn up by the roadside, waiting for an opportunity to lumber away along it, unhitched their horses, mounted them and fled for the James River.

The confusion lasted but for a minute, and in it the Eleventh had no share. We were lying in the edge of the woods that bordered the great cleared field in which the troops and trains were massed, and perhaps had an advantage in all being wide awake. At any rate we were not a bit demoralized. Scarcely a man started to his feet, all waiting for the word of command. It came quickly, and from the mouth of General Naglee himself, who riding up to us and seeing our immovability while the troops around us were in evident confusion, could not restrain his delight at our coolness, but cried out "Fall in, my Yankee squad," for the Eleventh was few in numbers now. We fell in, and as he proudly led us across the big field to a new position, we stiffened our necks and neither dodged or bowed to the storm of iron beating down upon us. We had made a hit, and we knew it.

Taking up a position behind the rails of a torn-down fence, the Eleventh lay listening to Jackson's cannon and watching Hazzard's battery as it swept the White Oak Swamp Bridge with a storm of grape and cannister that kept even Jackson at bay. The cannoneers fell one by one – were thinned out until the officers not yet killed or wounded dismounted and took their places at the guns. It was whispered that their ammunition was giving out – was most gone – a few rounds more and the last shell would be fired, and then Jackson and his 35,000 men would pour across the bridge and up the heights to learn what sort of stuff we were made of.

But this was not to be. Just as we were gathering ourselves together for the apparently fast coming struggle, there came a yell from the rear, a sound of desperately galloping horses, and with slashing whips Pettits' battery came tearing on at the top of their horses' speed, General Naglee leading them into position. Ours, as did all the regiments massed in the big field, rose and cheered Naglee and the artillerymen as they swept by. Inside of a minute from their first appearance, they were in position, unlimbered, and were sweeping the bridge with grape and cannister.

Away on the left, at Glendale, there was fighting, and hard fighting too. Our men were so hard pressed that Franklin felt obliged to return two brigades to Sedgwick that he had borrowed from him. And our old commander, Colonel Caldwell, who had been with us during the day (now a Brigadier-General and commanding a brigade in Richardson's division), marched away with his brigade too, and rendered effective service in beating the masses of the enemy off.

They attacked at several points in their efforts to break through the lines of our men covering the roads by which our supply, ammunition and artillery trains were retreating to Malvern Hill. Slocum, on the Charles City road, was attacked at half-past one o'clock, but held his position by a sweeping artillery fire. Then, McCall, at Glendale, a point half way to Malvern Hill, was heavily attacked. McCall and many of his men and guns were captured, but the strength of the rebel blow was exhausted in the necessary effort, so that Sumner, whose line had been in the rear of McCall's, letting the broken troops through, opened heavily with artillery and musketry, repulsing all the enemy's efforts to break his line. Later in the day an attempt was made on Porter, stationed at Malvern Hill. He, too, by the aid of the gunboats, maintained his position. As night fell, we prepared to retreat. The abandoned ponton train was set on fire, and by its flaring light we moved back, marching on and on until morning found us in position with our own division at Malvern Hill.

The line of battle stretched around Malvern Hill, which is a point on the James River of perhaps sixty feet in height with a broad cleared top. Our line of defence made a huge semicircle, the flanks on the river and under protection of the gunboats. Our own position was on the right flank, close to the river. But a third of the troops of our army were actually engaged in the battle of July 1st, 1862. It was an artillery battle; the hill was crowned with sixty pieces of artillery, planted to sweep all possible openings by which troops could advance. Magruder and D. H. Hill made determined efforts to withstand their fire but, when supplemented with a rolling infantry fire, no troops could stand it. Night fell with our position undisturbed at any point.

As for me, I slept through most of the uproar; slept the sleep of the thoroughly tired-out. And I understand that all that could of the army did so too, refreshing tired Nature against the hour of

need; many of the troops actually engaged waking to do their brief part in repelling an assault, and that done, to lie down in their line of battle to fall asleep again.

When darkness set in the retreat was continued. Troops, batteries and trains moved towards Harrison's Landing all night. Morning broke, the heavens opened, and torrents of rain descended. Our division lay in a covering position to oppose any advance the enemy might make, but he had given up the chase. With our troops already on the James, under cover of our gunboats, he knew it was madness to pursue further. So, the sodden, tired men, the trains of wounded, batteries and wagons floundered unmolested through the mud into Harrison's Landing, and not till all were past us, the last straggling man and wagon, did we of the rear guard move into that haven of rest and safety for the beaten, battered, exhausted Army of the Potomac.

HARRISON'S LANDING

At Harrison's Landing our regiment was encamped on the left of the line, close to the river. There was but one alarm here, that of the morning of August 1, when the enemy ran some light guns to the opposite bank of the James and opened fire on the landing. For about thirty minutes there was a lively exchange of shot and shell between their battery and our gunboats, when the enemy fell back, and troubled us no more.

Here we remained until the middle of August, our life a monotony of picket duty in an open field, baking, sweltering under a hot sun, with only such shelter as kennels made of sticks and wheat straw afforded. In camp, a well shaded one fortunately, we lazily slept the time away, drilling occasionally, but not often, though when General Emory took command of our brigade here, General Naglee going north on leave, he established a series of brigade drills, the chief amusement in which, to the rank and file, was to see the commanders of the different regiments gallop up to the General after each awkward movement to receive the maledictory criticisms of that outraged old cavalry warrior on their evident ignorance of what to him was as familiar as winking. They passed his encomiums along to their line officers on returning to their regiments you may be sure, and the line officers took it out of their "non coms," who cursed the men for their stupidity, who damned the man who invented tactics and themselves for having been such fools as to enlist for soldiers with which officers could play shuttlecock and battledore.

Finally, the preparations for the evacuation of the Landing being completed, we of Keyes' Corps moved away from it the 16th of August. The 17th we crossed the Chickahominy near the mouth of the James, crossing on a ponton bridge of two thousand feet in length, reached Williamsburg the 18th, went into camp about where we did when there in May, marching to Yorktown the 20th.

YORKTOWN

All of the army but two divisions of our corps now took transports to go to the relief of Pope and Burnside, and to fight the battle of Antietam. Two divisions of our corps were left on the Peninsula; Couch's going with the main army. Our brigade took position at Yorktown, and proceeded to strengthen the defences of that place to enable it to resist any attack from the direction of Richmond. The work was soon completed, but we were not troubled by the enemy. Once a raid of Confederate cavalrymen on Williamsburg created a flurry of anticipation, but nothing came of it except an opportunity for General Emory to see the regiments promptly take their previously assigned positions. The General soon after this left us, General Naglee having returned, and it was known that though General Emory had taken command reluctantly, preferring his old command naturally, yet that he left us with characteristic and vigorous asseverations of regret at having to do so. Shortly before his leaving, the so-called "'62 men" joined us. Their recruits were rather looked down on at first by the "veterans" of one campaign, and for a time were kept in open-mouthed admiration by a few true, and many apocryphal, stories of the valor and endurance the story-tellers declared they themselves had so lately displayed. The men of '62 that D received were all good men and true, and added no little to the good fellowship of the company as well as to its strength. Many of them coming from seaboard towns, some of them seafaring men, they brought a new and rather desirable element, a jovial, adventurous one, into the ranks, until now almost entirely made up of plodding farmers.

Two expeditions were fitted out from Yorktown, in both of which D took a part, one to Matthews County and the other to Gloucester Court House. As Captain Maxfield, then a private of Company C, was an active participant in both these movements, and the compiler of these sketches was in neither, Captain Maxfield will tell of what befell the troops of these expeditions.

MATTHEWS COUNTY

Nov. 22, '62. Nine companies of the regiment left camp between 8 and 9 p.m., and embarking on the gunboats Mahaska and Putnam and the tugboat May Queen, proceeded down the York River and up the Chesapeake Bay. They entered the Mob Jack Bay about 8.30 a.m. on the 23d, and proceeded up the East River, where they landed in Matthews County, Va., at 11.30 a.m. The force was divided and sent to different plantations, where they destroyed large quantities of salt and salt works, or salt kettles. The male portion of the community were taken and held as prisoners while we remained. The writer was in the detachment commanded by Captain Libby of Company A, and went to the plantation of Sands Smith. We shall never forget the warlike picture of little Pete Neddo of Company A breaking the big kettles with a sledge hammer, or the poor old negro woman, whose son had run away a few months previous and had accompanied us as one of the guides of the expedition, at sight of the boy. She threw herself on her knees and with hands upraised, exclaimed "Is this Jesus Christ! Is it God Almighty!" Nor could we refrain from expressing the wish that this "cruel war" was over when we made prisoners of the old gentleman and the young men who had come to his house to spend the pleasant Sunday afternoon in the society of his lovely daughters. We returned to the gunboats soon after dark.

At 9 a.m. on the 24th, as we were about getting under way for our return, a farmer came in with a flag of truce, who said a supply train was passing at a short distance and could be easily captured. The force on the Putnam, consisting of Companies A, C and D, was landed, and under command of Captain S. H. Merrill of Company I, ordered to reconnoitre for one hour. We advanced about three miles, which brought us in sight of Matthews Court House, where there appeared to be a small force. After commencing our retreat we found we were pursued by a body of cavalry. Lieutenant F. M. Johnson and Corporal J. F. Keene of Company D, who allowed themselves to be separated from the command, were taken prisoners. We immediately returned to Yorktown, where we arrived about sundown.

No field officer of the Eleventh accompanied this expedition, it being under the command of Major Cunningham of the Fifty-second Pennsylvania Volunteers.

GLOUCESTER COURT HOUSE

Dec. 11, '62. The regiment left camp before sunrise, crossed the York River to Gloucester Point, and in company with the Fifty-second Pennsylvania, Fifty-sixth and One Hundredth New York, and Battery H, First New York Artillery, took up the line of march for Gloucester Court House, where we arrived at 4 p.m. We remained in the vicinity of the Court House, sending out foraging parties in different directions, who captured herds of cattle, sheep, mules and some fine horses. The cavalry, which led the advance from Gloucester Point, advanced to within a few miles of the Rappahannock. The expedition was commanded by General Henry M. Naglee, and was intended as a diversion in rear of the rebel army during the battle of Fredericksburg.

We commenced our retreat just after sunset on the 14th, and arrived in camp at 3.30 a.m. on the 15th, without the loss of a man, bringing our captured herds and the prisoners captured by the cavalry.

One of the incidents of this expedition occurred when a member of the Eleventh attempted to pay for certain articles of food at a house near the Court House. The occupant absolutely refused to accept greenbacks, but one of his comrades perceiving the dilemma, produced a bill on the Bank of Lyon's Kathairon, a patent medicine advertisement, which the lady readily received, supposing it to be genuine Confederate money.

THE DEPARTMENT OF THE SOUTH

In December we began to hear rumors that our brigade was to take part in an expedition to the further South, and soon active preparations for a movement were going on around us. The sick were sent North, ammunition and other supplies were plentifully provided, transports began to swing at anchor in the bay, and the 26th of the month we of the Eleventh found ourselves sailing away on the old steamer Cahawba in company with the 98th New York, General Naglee and staff, and the brigade band, bound for Morehead City, where we arrived the first day of January, 1863.

We had a stormy passage, especially off Cape Hatteras. Here we saw the original Monitor in tow of the transport steamer Rhode-Island, passing closely enough to them towards night to see the heavy seas washing over the Monitor's low decks, to the evident discomfort of the bare-legged seamen. Before morning the Monitor had gone down, but her crew was saved by the Rhode-Island.

We landed at Morehead City and marched to Carolina City, a few miles away, where we went into camp. The term city as applied to these and other Southern places is usually mighty misleading. For example, Carolina City consists even now of little more than a railroad depot, and Morehead City is but a little larger.

Our brigade remained comfortably encamped at Carolina City for a few weeks, our idea being that we were intended to form part of a force to descend upon Wilmington.

And, when the Eleventh went on board the Cahawba again, this time in company with the 104th Pennsylvania instead of the 98th New York, and put to sea in company with a fleet of transports carrying our new division, we thought that Wilmington was our objective point. General Naglee, now the commander of the division our expedition consisted of, was on board the Cahawba with his staff, as was Colonel Davis, now again in command of our brigade, and his staff. We soon learned that we were bound for Port Royal, S.C., and that to capture Charleston was the object of our expedition.

But though we went on board the Cahawba the 20th day of January, it was not till the afternoon of the 29th that we put to sea. We arrived at Port Royal January 31st, and entering the harbor, found ourselves one of a large and growing fleet of transports and gunboats. The 3d of February we sailed up Port Royal Sound to Beaufort, where we landed that the Cahawba might be cleaned, then reembarked on it the next day and returned to Port Royal. We were not landed again for some days, and the warm Southern sun operating on men as crowded together as we were, without opportunity for exercise and proper cleanliness, was not conducive to good health. Sickness cropped out, ship fever prevailed to an alarming extent, and a number of the Eleventh died before the troops were landed at St. Helena Island, which they were on the 10th of February. Landing, our regiments went into camp, and winter as it was, we found it necessary to cover our tents with an awning of palmetto branches spread on a frame work of crotched uprights and cross sticks.

The health of the men improved rapidly. Their life was rather monotonous – drill, dress parades, reviews by Major-General Hunter and guard mountings taking up the time. The enemy was not near us, the labyrinth of rivers and waterways surrounding the nest of Islands known as Port Royal, enabling the light draught gunboats of the fleet to keep them on the inland, well out of our way.

Captain Stanwood of D had resigned before now, its First Sergeant, Brady, had been promoted to Second Lieutenant of Company G, and Second Lieutenant Butler, of Company H, was made First Lieutenant of D, and commanded the company.

The 4th day of April, the regiment, the 104th Pennsylvania, with General Naglee, Colonel Davis, and their staffs again reembarked on the old Cahawba, and the 5th sailed in a fleet for the North Edisto Inlet. Anchoring in that now crowded roadstead, we waited the success of the fleet's attack on Charleston, when the division was to land and march on that city. But the fleet found the forts guarding Charleston Harbor beyond their weight, so clearly so that as Admiral Ammen puts it, "even the common sailors knew that Charleston could not be taken without a protracted siege."

The only thing left for us all to do, was to return to Port Royal, which we did the 10th of April, the old Cahawba leaving the swiftest of the fleet out of sight on the run, even sacrilegiously running by the "Flag Ship" of our transport squadron, and entering Port Royal while that seat of authority was still hull down.

It was our last cruise on the steamer Cahawba. Afflicted as it was with the third plague of Egypt, it had been our home for so many days, had borne us safely over such a stretch of water, in storm and calm, that we had a rough affection for the stout old transport; and for Mr. Davis, her second mate, too. We had heard the command from the wheel-house so often of "Stand by your anchor, Mr. Davis," and the hoarse return of that old mariner, "Ay, ay, Sir," that he seemed part of the ship itself. As the regiment came alongside in a small steamer to go on board the Cahawba, to take a part in this very expedition, and our men saw the head of the rough old sailor peering over the side of the Cahawba at them, what a yell of "Stand by your anchor, Mr. Davis," rang out of five hundred throats. I am sorry to have to state that instead of the orthodox reply to this nautical command, Mr. Davis only growled "There's that damned Eleventh Maine again." The Cahawba steamed up the Sound to Beaufort with us the 11th of April, where the regiment landed and went into camp.

Lieutenant Butler, who had been ill for a day or so, now grew worse rapidly. His disease proved to be a malignant fever. He died April 14th. We buried him in the cemetery in Beaufort, with the military honors due his rank. His grave was near that of another young officer, one who had died in the Mexican war, and whose body had been brought home to be buried. I remember that over the young South Carolinian's grave stood a monument representing the trunk of a young palmetto tree, its top broken off. Where Butler is buried I do not know, at his old home, I hope; and if he sleeps under the marble representation of a young, prematurely splintered pine tree, it is fitting. Young, handsome, intelligent, respected and admired by his men, cut down at his post in his years of high promise, wherever his grave is, it is that of a true son of our old Pine Tree State.

Our sojourn at Beaufort was a pleasant one. The town, though now sadly neglected, retained all its beauty of semi-tropical flowers and plants, and, under a beautiful sky, in an enervating climate, we took lazy comfort in our camp on the bank of the river. Besides a plentiful supply of regular rations, the men of D were here regaled with luscious blackberries. They grew abundantly in the neighborhood, and the negroes were delighted to exchange quantities of them for our broken victuals. We had a big Quartermaster's "fly" pitched for our company and a long table built down the center of the space it covered, with benches fitted on each side of it. And when the table was set for breakfast with bright tin dishes – the men's plates and cups – with a ration of good white bread by each plate that our own Prince Dunifer had baked for us at the post bakery, with hot coffee in the cups, and mess-pans filled with baked beans strewed along it, that table was a sight for a hungry soldier. And at dinner, with boiled beef and rice in place of the beans, it looked appetizing enough, too But at supper, with tea in place of the coffee, and with each plate well filled with ripe blackberries to eat with the white bread, and with dishes of brown army sugar to pass around among the sweet-toothed, it bordered on the luxurious. But where was the soldier that was ever satisfied with his rations? Not in Company D, anyway. Under the leadership of one or two past masters in the art, the men growled at even these rations until the cooks threatened to reduce themselves to the ranks. This would not do. The Articles of War didn't seem to cover the case, providing neither shooting nor hanging for this particular offense. When, lo, some one in authority had a bright thought. It was adopted, the cooks returned to the ranks, and the leaders in the grumbling mutiny, somewhat aghast, found themselves in charge of the cook house. They were told that such excellent critics of cookery must needs be good cooks, but the argument didn't hold good, though seemingly logical, for they proved not to be good cooks; nay, they were the worst ones D ever had. The men tried to swallow their discontent from very shame, but they could not swallow the victuals. The discontent became an uproar, with the result that the old cooks returned to the cook house, and if the men of D grumbled thereafter beyond the wide

latitude military custom allows, they took good care to do so, as Corporal Annis used to smoke, with their heads under their blankets.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.