

## MY LAST BATTLE

On the afternoon of October 18, 1864, my Regiment, 10th Georgia, camped on Fisher's Hills which borders Cedar Creek Valley, was west of Strasberg, with orders to be ready to move out at two o'clock the next morning and to leave off everything that would rattle or make a noise. Sheridan's Army was strongly fortified on the hills east of the creek. About start time the next morning the Regiment was formed and marched out leaving the little town of Strasburg to our left, Col. W.C. Holt in command. We did not go very far, probably one and a half miles, until we came to the creek, the Yankee pickets fired on us. We drove them off and waded over the creek and formed in line of battle on the west side with only our Regiment in this column. The order was furnished and we marched up a hill about one hundred yards with a battery shelling us from the time we struck their picket line at the creek. But they did us very little damage until we got to the top of the hill. We were going due east and day was just breaking which gave us the advantage of what light there was. I could see the line of breast-work about fifty or sixty yards in front, and the Yankees' heads moving above them. I remarked to Lt. Hentron, who was marching by my side, saying look out we are going to catch it and just at that time the whole line opened fire on us from behind the breast-work, which made a solid sheet of fire in our front. That really done us more damage than all the balance of the days fighting ... Killed and wounded scores of our boys.

But that was the all licks they got at us, there we gave a Rebel yell and ran right in on them and scattered them like chaff before the wind. Captured their battery of six guns. We turned it on them giving them grape cannister shot and shells as they went over the next ridge. They had tree tops sharpened and set in lines in front of their breastworks, but I did not know it until I lodged in them. We formed across their line and moved up the line to another battery they had to the left of Moore Pike Road leading down the Shenandoah Valley. Tho we did not have more than half a skirmish line for the space we had to come, but we doubled them back and took the battery making twelve guns we had taken and routed the whole line completely a half mile long with one depleted line regt. But just before we got over the breast-works at the second battery, I was shot and so was Col. Holt. An artillery officer shot us both with a Colt's repeater just across the breast-works. Col. Holt was wounded in the knee. I was shot through the hips wounding withers and rectum. I was wounded about sunrise. It was cold that morning, a big frost, and I bled freely, and being wet from wading the creek, I got very cold. Lt. Stovall was then Adjutant of the Regiment noticed my condition and gave me a canteen of apple brandy. Said drink it, will stimulate you. I took a drink or two but being wounded as I was it burned me like fire or hot water, but I hung it on my neck.

They carried Col. Holt and I off the field in the same conveyance. He was complaining, said his leg was hurting him badly. I told him if I was not wounded any worse than he was I could not care for it. I would get a furlow and go home. As we went off the field Gen. Early was sitting on his horse at the bridge about two hundred yards in front of where we made the last charge and asked how is the fight going. I replied the Yankees are routed and are in full retreat. He put spurs to his horse and went down the Pike Road at full speed. We got back to the Field Hospital and they amputated Col. Holt's leg. They carried him out by me. He called my attention to it and said look here I have a discharge. They sent him out to a private house and he died in a few days. He was a brave, kind and noble soldier and officer.

Dr. JJ Knott of Atlanta was our surgeon. He and a Dr. Carton operated on me, there was a small artery cut and they could not take it up. They just put a compress on it and got the blood stopped. We captured a rich battle field that day and I think most of our boys went foraging. They certainly was needing all they got, except the whisky, rations were very scarce in that country then. But our boys loaded up that day. In the evening they began sending our wounded back up the valley, said our army was pulling back. After the most of the wounded had been sent off Dr. Knott came to me and said I am going to make you as comfortable as I can, you are not able to be moved. You will not live till morning. So they put me on a straw bed and stretched a tent fly over me. I did not raise any objections, didn't think it was worthwhile. About night the last of them left. After dark an ambulance came by. I hailed it and asked the driver to take me on. I can't he said, I have all I can carry. I said I have a canteen of brandy if you will take me on I will give you all you can drink all night. Said he, get in. I cannot move so you will have to put me in. So he got out and put me in and took my canteen and brandy. They hauled me about forty or fifty miles up the Valley to Harrisonburg, but it was all the same with me. I took a fever and did not know anything for several days. My wound has never healed. I am hardly able to walk now, tho it has been almost forty-three years ago. I am still here yet!

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York, Alabama  
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