

LETTER FROM THE BARKERS  
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Shelbyville, Tenn, Jan. 6, 1863.

Editor Telegraph —Dear Sir—The old year, freighted with momentous events, is numbered with the mighty past. Its blended hopes and fears, its mingled signs and tears, its victories and defeats are all among the things that were. -- Eighteen hundred and sixty-three has been born amid the stirring scenes which will have a prominent record in history. The second battle of "Murfreesboro'" had just been fought, a glorious triumph had followed our arms and the psalms of victory were sounding forth along the lines of the "Army of Tennessee." That brilliant achievement was the last legacy which the departing year could give to our bleeding country. We will cherish it as a precious memento. For a week the insolent foe had been advancing. Confident of success, his track had been marked by plunder, robbery and desolation. But in the providence of God, a severe chastisement was awaiting him. His declated ranks plainly told how heavily he had paid the penalty of these wilfull crimes. On Christmas, about 11 o'clock, his battle line slowly advanced upon our left wing, which had been protected by Gen. Wharton's Brigade for over a month. His line extended from the Wilson and Winstead to the Hollasville pike, some 7 miles. During all this time the duty of picketing the Wilson pike had been assigned to Lieut. Ellis, with Co. G. About noon his pickets were driven

in, and he was soon compelled to abandon his reserve stand and fall back towards Nolinsville. The line of the enemy being composed of infantry, cavalry and artillery, could only be stopped by our cavalry. The brigade had early been ordered to the front, and during the afternoon the Rangers skirmished very heavily with the enemy for several hours. Observing their coolness and individual daring when charging upon the enemy, one could not but feel that they were engaged in a holiday amusement rather than the introduction to a great battle. Towards evening quiet reigned and we returned to camp. Today Lieut. R. J. Davis, of Co. E, received a flesh wound in the arm, L. P. Gordon, Co. F, slightly in the face; Jesse Billingsly, Co. D, severely in arm and side. Friday morning, couriers from our pickets reported the enemy still advancing in heavy force. His battle-line was extended and compact. He had early reached Nolinsville, some three miles below our camp. It was now certain he was making a general advance, and the brigade was sent out to skirmish and dispute his way. The Rangers were to-day conspicuous for the determination and courage with which they fought. At one time they were in the hottest place they have lately found. But the danger only seemed to develop their coolness and gallantry. During the day Captain White's battery of two guns did splendid execution, and greatly contributed to our success. Some fifteen Rangers are on detached service in this battery. Under Lieut. Arthur

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But they are efficient artillerymen. King's Georgia battery to-day abandoned a gun and it fell into the hands of the enemy. It was lost through pure cowardice. Slowly the enemy advanced his line. About two o'clock it was evident our camp was in danger. Hastily tents were struck, and the train moved beyond Triane. Here the wagons remained until morning, and set out for Murfreesboro'. It was a very rainy and disagreeable night. As darkness came on it found the enemy within a few hundred yards of the house which had been occupied as headquarters by Gen. Wharton. Our brigade bivouacked in his front in order to be ready for work early in the morning. Our casualties had increased. Lieut. A. H. McIuer, Co. E, was killed. J. H. Glascoe and F. C. Pybus, Co. C, were slightly wounded. S. M. Dennis, Co. K, was missing. Col. Harrison had his horse shot under him. Capt. Cook was temporarily stunned by his horse falling. Sergeant Major Jas. H. Claiborne had both himself and horse knocked down by a cannon ball.

Saturday was gloomy. From the exposure of the night and want of food the men felt ill prepared for a renewal of the fight. But daylight opened the ball again. By this time Gen. Wood's infantry brigade had come to our assistance. With a battery or two they supported our charges. The infantry did but little fighting. Our cavalry was constantly engaged during the forenoon. Tirone being situated in a rolling country, the ground was adapted to this work. The

manoeuvring was skillful, and everywhere the enemy was met by our gallant boys. Gen. Wharton and Staff were constantly moving, and in person he directed the movements. The cavalry of the enemy was becoming more daring, but the infantry was close by for support. This rendered our charges dangerous. For whenever his cavalry was pressed, they would fall back and draw us upon the infantry.

With their long range guns we were in their power. In the afternoon, when we had retired beyond Triune, his batteries opened upon us. It was observed to-day that the Rangers were always nearest the enemy and under the heaviest fire. They can oftener get into a fight with him than any other cavalry. It was now the evident policy of our Generals to draw the enemy on and mass our troops at Murfreesboro'. Hence our skirmishing and falling back. It was a day of constant vigilance and fighting. Our last engagement was heavy, and one and a half miles this side of Triune. Our loss increases. Capt. J. C. Lowe, Co. A, slightly in mouth, by spent ball; G. B. Beaumont, severely in shoulder; Albert Medford, mortally--since dead; Co. D. D. D. Munn, slightly in thigh, Missing-- Corp'l J. P. Ford, R. B. Shapp. Co. F--Henry Brown, slightly, breast and shoulder. Co. G--D. J. Blair, left arm badly shattered; M. L. Kimball, in hand, slightly. Co. A--Eugene Griffin, missing. Co. K--Sergt. L. E. Crump, leg, severely; I. O. Gualder, hand, badly; R. J. Bruce, of White's battery,

was slightly wounded in shoulder; he was of Co. B., formerly.

During the evening a very heavy rain fell, which made the dirt roads very miery, yet the train plod on through mud and water until late at night, when it camped near the Salem pike. The sun set clear, and the night was very frosty; but the dry cedars furnished good fires, and thus the exposure was neutralized. The cavalry camped near the train. The infantry had mostly preceded us from Triune. It was a serious trip for them. Daylight Sunday morning found the train ready to move, and by the end of a pike 12 o'clock found us within five miles of Murfreesboro'. The warm sun and balmy air contrasted most favorably with yesterday's gloom and rain. We all anticipated a few hours rest in preparation for the coming fight; but scarcely had the horses been unsaddled, and the wagons started for forage, the blankets and clothing been spread out to dry, before a courier comes dashing along with the announcement that the enemy was still advancing upon us, and within two miles, by another Triune road. All was commotion again. The cavalry hastened to the rear, and the train moved towards Murfreesboro'. It proved to be a false alarm, although he was on our track, 6 miles in the rear. The Rangers spent the night near his advance. The train camped near town.

On Sunday night every available man and horse was made ready for the coming battle. Early Monday morning the

brigade moved through Murfreesboro' and passed out 6 miles to the terminus of the Wilkinson pike. This was the direct route to Holmsville, the point from which we had started out. The enemy had concentrated his right wing on this route. The day was mild and beautiful. Our boys were exhilarated by the bracing air, and were in splendid fighting trim. Gen. Wharton threw his brigade in line of battle on both sides of the pike, and awaited the approach of the enemy. About 12, M., firing in front announced his presence. It was soon evident he intended flanking our left, and to prevent this we all crossed the pike. Soon the firing became rapid, and at times very heavy. His cavalry was becoming bolder, and on several occasions made a brilliant dash upon our brigade; but whenever the Rangers confronted him he was routed. The surgeons and myself occupied a position where we could observe the maneuvers, and candor compels the admission that the Rangers did the most of the fighting on this occasion. We were moving from point to point as the brigade would fall back, and often they were engaged with the enemy when the other regiments had left them from one-half to one mile. It was evident they too often changed their base, and too quickly turned their backs upon the advancing foe. True, it was our object to draw him on, but we were also expected to fight him as desperately as possible, and thus inflict a severe punishment on his cavalry. Undoubtedly the most brilliant affair of the day

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was a charge upon the "4th Ohio cavalry." Splendidly mounted, and also equipped with the most improved arms, they fancied themselves invulnerable against a rebel charge. We had understood that it was exceedingly anxious for an engagement with the Rangers. An opportunity was here presented for testing their fighting qualities. They had met the 2d Georgia and routed them, and were in close pursuit. The chances seemed good for a complete success; but just at this critical juncture the Rangers were near by. Col. Harrison improved the opportunity. So ordering a charge, with a yell they dashed after the 4th Ohio and the scale soon turned. The exultant pursuers were now pursued. In a most glorious style they were driven from the field, and chased over a mile and a half, and then the chase only ceased because we feared an ambuscade from their infantry. They left a number of their dead and wounded upon the field. We brought out some 20 prisoners, a number of horses, guns and pistols. We met with no loss. I do not wish to do injustice to the other regiments of our brigade. They have done some good fighting, and I doubt not are gallant men. But the majority of them are without side arms, and hence the great disadvantage in close quarters. When their long range guns are fired they have no alternative but to get out of the way. This often leaves the Rangers unsupported, and exposes them to great danger from an overpowering force. As the evening advanced we drew the cavalry near our left

wing. His infantry following closely behind, brought him to the desired position.

After this complete rout, our regiment bore further towards the left, supposing that the enemy was flanking in that direction. The regiments for some cause had taken a panic and ran to the pike and within our lines. As we neared the infantry on our left, they supposed that we were the cavalry of the enemy and most unfortunately opened a heavy fire upon us. The Robinson's Texas battery poured a terrible fire towards us, which killed several infantry men and one of the brigade. Here Sam Friedberger, Co. D, and Orderly to Gen. Wharton, was seriously wounded in the thigh and breast; Pery Swine, Co. E severely; S. K. Tutwiler, Co. F, through left hand, and J. D. Palmer Co. H, severely in foot. So soon as the mistake was discovered, the firing ceased. L., Blackburn, Co. F. was to-day injured by his horse falling. Dr. Loxey, Brig. Surgeon was captured by the enemy and held a prisoner within the lines. Soon taking our position on the extreme left, we sent out pickets and went into night quarters along a cornfield fence. Wearied from such constant service, soon quiet reigned in the ranks--the men had cast themselves down upon the damp ground for rest. About 11 o'clock, several guns were fired by the pickets, and every trooper sprang to his horse. It proved a false alarm. It was now raining and thus at intervals it continued through the night. We had several alarms and no more rest. It was

thought the enemy would attempt a demonstration upon the Railroad by the Salem pike, and hence constant vigilance was necessary in that direction. Friday morning was dreary and chilly. By daylight we mounted and were placed in line of battle. Hungry and weary, we occupied that position, save now and then changing about during the day and still watching for the enemy. Col. Harrison with a few men, made a reconnoissance in front and reported the cavalry of the enemy in very large force. Now and then it rained very heavily, but there we held our position mounted and ready for battle. After 10 A., a high wind arose and drove back the heavy clouds. It was very cold and augured a clear day to-morrow. Simultaneous with the advance upon our left on Christmas, the enemy also moved upon the Nashville pike. Here he was met by Gen. Wheeler's cavalry, and contested with him every step of the way. After almost a week's effort, he is directly in our front. To-day he deploys into line of battle along our entire front. In the center he takes his position upon a ridge at a distance of something over 1500 yards from our first line and considerably overlapping our left flank. On Sunday we had formed our line of battle about two miles from Murfreesboro' and stretching transversely across Stone river, from the Lebanon pike on the right, to and considerably beyond the Franklin dirt road on the left. During Friday, heavy skirmishing ran up and down the line from the centre to the left, but it was attended with no material results. Late in

the evening it swelled almost into a battle when the enemy attempted to charge upon Robertson's battery. He was repulsed by one of Gen. McCown's Brigades. The battery was badly cut up. For about an hour before dark, we had on the left an artillery duel, which was very spirited, but being at long range the casualties were very few. About dark, our brigade fell back a short distance from the position occupied during the day, and bivouacked for the night. It had now become evident that the attack in force would be upon our left, and Claiborne's division was detached from the right for the purpose of strengthening that point and extending our line. We now had on the left wing four divisions--Cheatham's, Wither's, McCown's, Claiborne's and Wherton's Cavalry Brigade. Wednesday morning brought the last day of the old year.

After several days of gloom and rain, the sun rose clear and beautiful. There at early dawn stood those two vast armies in silent battle array, it would almost seem that instead of foes confronting each other for the work of death, it was some brilliant parade to celebrate the departure of the year that was just passing away. But at length the cavalry moves forward, and soon a volley of musketry on our left told plainly that the work of death had in reality begun. A few moments more and the battle cry passed from point to point until the whole line from left to center was one unbroken blaze of fire. About 6 o'clock the divisions of McCown, Claiborne and Cheatham were ordered to charge. The enemy was strongly

planted in a dense thicket where the out-cropping of the limestone rock formed a natural fortification. Swiftly, but with a perfect line our troops emerged from the skirt of timber in which they had been sheltered, and moved across the open plain which intervened. By and by the division of Withers, which had been exposed to a murderous fire from the enemy, was thrown forward with tremendous force. The battle now became terrific: crash upon crash of musketry stunned the ear; the ground trembled with the thunder of the artillery; the thick cedars rocked and quivered amid the hail of iron balls, and the air was rent with the explosion of shells. The enemy seemed determined to stake the fortunes of the day upon holding the position which he occupied, and offered a most determined resistance, but it was not in human courage to withstand the impetuosity of that fearful charge. "Victory or death" seemed the motto of every soldier, and both commanders and men caught the inspiration of the hour, and onward they swept, whilst at every step the leaden hail poured through and through their ranks, until their course could be traced by the dead and dying. Still onward they pressed. Nothing could impede their course, artillery and infantry were alike disregarded, whilst the enemy was driven before them like the leaves before the wild tornado. Prisoners were captured by hundreds and the ground was literally blackened with the bodies of the wounded and the dead. Such a charge is seldom witnessed. Thus they swept for several miles through open fields, and cedar forests, across rocks

and fences, over ditches and ravines. As though for a death struggle the enemy threw brigade after brigade, battery after battery across their track, but their course could not be stayed, the order was given "to charge" and they were scattered like chaff before the wind. In the meantime the cavalry was not idle. Just as we moved into position, a terrific yell came sounding out upon the frosty air. It was from the Texas infantry brigade of General Ector, which rested upon our right. They were charging the position occupied by Gen. Wellich, (it was his regiment with which the Rangers fought when Col. Terry was killed,) and in a few minutes he was a prisoner, and his battery in their possession. Forward our brigade dashed under the lead of Col. Harrison, who acted Brigadier throughout the fight, and passing across a thick belt of timber, they formed in the open fields and swept forward. The Rangers occupied the centre. We could now see the Yankees in the distance running for life. Soon squads were overtaken and hurried to the rear. Onward swept that outer wing. The horses seemed to catch the spirit, and they dashed forward with fresh speed. To our right the Confederate flag was flying, and the infantry was keeping pace with us, sweeping everything in their course. The farther we charged, the more inspiring. At length we were within view of the Wilkinson pike, already some 5 miles having been passed over. A large wagon train was seen hurriedly moving towards the enemy's centre. That was a prize worth capturing, and if

possible the chase became more exciting. Prisoners were now sent to the rear by scores. Quickly the pike was gained, and our brigade bore to the right and charged upon a battery which stood in a commanding position. Soon the gunners were driven back and two guns were brought out by the Fangers.

His cavalry in vain attempted to charge upon us. Here again we met one of his choice cavalry regiments--the 15th Pennsylvania. It is called "The Anderson Troop," and was Gen. Buell's body guard. But they could not stand before the dash of the Texas Rangers. We drove them from the field, leaving six or eight of their killed, besides capturing a number of them and their horses. Serg't A. L. Baines, Co. K, was killed here. This point was four and a half miles from Murfreesboro' on the Wilkinson Pike. The infantry were also pressing the right of the enemy across this pike and driving it upon the centre. All his hospitals, with the surgeons, upon his right wing, were now within our lines. They had unceremoniously taken possession of all the private dwellings on this pike, often driving the occupants out without the privilege of removing any of their valuables or property, and now all were in our hands. But the cavalry chase was not to end here. The wagon train was within his lines, and Gen. Wharton ordered its pursuit. It was near the Nashville Pike and in the rear of his main army. Col. Harrison dashed after it and soon discovered its location. The enterprise was hazardous, but the prize was valuable.

with a portion of the Rangers he attacked it, drove off the cavalry guard and captured some 2000 prisoners, 300 or 400 wagons and a battery. At once he ordered it turned towards the rear. Every man was engaged, and success seemed certain; but after holding it for some time, the remainder of the brigade failed to come up to his support, and the cavalry of the enemy coming upon him in force, he was compelled to relinquish the rich prize. Had the Rangers been aided in this grand effort, it would have proven the most successful haul of the day. Few as they were, most manfully did they fight the cavalry that was thrown in force upon them. We were within their lines two miles, and within 500 yards of Gen. Rosencrans's headquarters. Here we met a heavy loss. Our casualties today were, viz:

Co. A--Alfred Storchan, wounded and left on the field.

Co. B--Lieut. W. H. Sharpe, wounded seriously through the body; C. Cosse, slightly in throat; J. E. Esses, severely in left arm; Jno. Molver, severely in leg; James Patterson (new recruit) badly in spine; E. B. Thomas, in hand; Joe P. Harris, badly in thigh. Missing: W. R. Hendricks, Doc. D. Harris, Joe Stewart, Wm. Ward.

Co. C--E. F. Burris, shot through the arm. Missing: W. H. Slaughter, F. G. Kennedy.

Co. D--P. M. Mullins, thigh, badly; Wayne Hamilton, leg, badly; K. E. Rector, arm, twice, and a prisoner. Miss-

ing; Ord. Serg't Jno W Hill, P. J. Watkins.

Co. D--Missing: W. B. F. Byrd, Aaron Compton, D. J. Hall.

Co. F--F. A. Green, slightly in hand; Serg't J A Holman.

Co. G--Lt Wm Ellis and R. D. Burns wounded.

Co. H--J. T. Walker, Capt and Insp Gen'l, badly in leg; S. Gallaher, wrist and breast slightly; J. H. Louthar, slightly in hand.

Co. I--Lt J H Parramore, slightly in heel; Lt Wm E Jones, badly in foot; S G Jackson, arm shattered; F P Dimmit, in foot; Henry Stevens, flesh wound in arm; Joe Hardy, shoulder.

Co. K--Missing: J F Matthews, S Epperson.

The remainder of the day the brigade was engaged watching the movements of the enemy. We camped on the field that night. Thursday morning they were off early with Gen. Wheeler and his cavalry on a raid to Lavergne, where they succeeded in destroying some 200 wagons and captured 300 prisoners and one one piece of artillery. Friday and Saturday they were alternately on the right and left wings watching the movements of the enemy. Being engaged with the surgeons, I have not witnessed their labors since Wednesday. They are now between this and Murfreesboro', covering the retreat of that portion of the army on this pike.

Wednesday was the great day of the fight.--Breokinridge's division attacked the enemy on our right, on Friday, and the fight was terrible. We drove the enemy some distance, then he rallied and we were forced back again. With occasional skirmishes, it rested thus until Saturday night, when Gen. Bragg began a retreat. The enemy is badly crippled in his men and trains, and is reported retreating also. With victory on our side, we cannot divine this movement. We cannot but ask, cul bono? The abandonment of Murfreesboro' loses to us the moral effect of our victory.

But still our troops are in the best spirits. It was a matter of great surprise to all when on Saturday night our army moved from its position. It may be strategic. It may be a needful change of base--time will decide the wisdom of our withdrawing from the battle-field after holding it three days. A portion of our army started on the Manchester pike and a portion on the Shelbyville. They seem to be moving towards Tullahoma. The Federal cavalry are following us in this di[re]ction. Whether Rosecranz is bringing his army we cannot definitely declare. Our scouts reported, on Sunday morning, that his army was not within 7 miles of Murfreesboro'. Mystery, as yet, envelopes the movements of both armies, but we do know that our enemy is badly cut up. He had 60,000 men, according to the lowest estimate. We had 40,000, and not one-half of these were engaged in the battle. I have seen no official report of our loss, but the general impression is, that the

killed, wounded and missing will sum up 6000. That of the enemy is four times as many. I was over the field for three days and I believe his loss in killed was four to our one, at least. He lost about ten Generals in killed and prisoners. We captured 43 pieces of artillery and several ambulances heavily loaded with select medical stores, whilst some 400 wagons were burned. We also captured some 7000 prisoners. I think these figures will approximate his loss. Thus crippled, with his army demoralized, as they undoubtedly are, although Gen. Bragg is retreating, we claim a decisive victory. History will give it to us. Our friends at a distance should not feel despondent, for we are not in this condition. We lost but very few prisoners--many a noble spirit has fallen--among these we have Gen. Raines, of Tenn, and Gen. Roger A. Hanson, of Ky.,--indeed, the great wonder is that many more are not numbered with the dead. When I recount the dangers through which our regiment passed and the many narrow escapes, I am astonished that so very few have been seriously injured. We did not, perhaps, carry over 300 into these series of fights, and an unusual proportion of our officers have been more or less wounded, whilst a majority have had horses wounded or killed under them. Of all that number but very few have escaped without being hit by a bullet either in the body, their horse or clothing. Col. Harrison having the command of the Brigade, acted with his accustomed coolness and bravery, always in the advance, he seems unconscious of danger. Cher-

ever duty calls, there he leads his men. He had one horse shot under him near Nolinsville, and during Wednesday's fight was slightly wounded in the thigh. Gen. Wharton was constantly moving, and it mattered not whether it was a place of danger or no, there he took his position and issued his orders. Acting as Major General, he managed his force with great judgment and manoeuvred with skill and success. Contrary to his usual experience, he has escaped so far uninjured, although having a horse shot under him. When the brigade was under command of Col. Harrison, Major Rayburn led the Rangers in a most gallant manner, until compelled by indisposition to leave the field, when Capt. Cook took his place. During the greater part of Wednesday he commanded the regiment. Indeed, for several months, the Captain has discharged, in a most creditable and acceptable manner, the duties of a field officer, and has now been for some days in command of the regiment. Should a vacancy occur by any means, no one would sooner be chosen to fill the place than he, and certainly none more competent or gallant is found among us. He also had a horse shot under him. To Mrs. Culick and Hill we are indebted for special attention to our wounded. They were as well provided for as our circumstances would permit. Some were left on the march in the hands of friends, during and since the battle, some were left in private houses and others were sent to hospitals. Co-operating with them, I can bear testimony to their kindness,

attention and skill in this department. A few fell inside the lines of the enemy--of their fate we are as yet ignorant. We mourn for our fallen comrades, and deeply regret their loss when now our country needs so greatly their services, but it is the Lord's will, and we bow in submission to the hearts so sadly bereft--those crushed by the tidings of sorrow which shall come upon them--we offer the consolations of the Gospel--there is found our only hope. In a temporal view of these afflictions, it will be a pleasure in future days to say that such an one fell in the ranks of the Texas Rangers, when battling for his country and her independence. History will record the heroes of this glorious struggle. R. F. B.

Rangers' Camp, Near Shelbyville, Tenn., )  
January 15th, 1863. )

Falling thus far in forwarding my last by a private hand, I will add a few lines more. After a visit to Winchester, our wagon train, returned again to this point, and the brigade is now encamped some four miles out on the Murfreesboro' pike. Here our tents are pitched, whilst all the available material is on duty, some five miles further towards the enemy. It seems that General Bragg was only directed to fall back, if necessity required such a step, to the hills beyond Duck river; but the telegraph operator, by mistake, said "Elk river," and this caused a portion of our army a weary march thirty miles beyond

the point and back again. But it is mostly concentrated here now, and we are in good condition to meet the enemy should he approach. We have been having some very heavy rains lately; these may cause the Cumberland to rise and bring him supplies, reinforcements, &c. These things may bring cheer to his broken ranks, and he may venture another movement forward. But I presume it will not be without some annoyance and considerable risk and loss of wagons and stores. Gen. Wheeler, Wharton, Forrest and Morgan have now 17,000 cavalry, and with such faithful attendants hanging upon his flanks, now and then dashing upon his rear and making a circuit of his whole army, he will have a lively time away from his gunposts. A portion of his force is now 8 miles this side of Murfreesboro'. He but await his advance. Gen. Bragg seems busily engaged in making the preparation to give him a hearty welcome along the banks of Duck river. He has just issued the following:

HEADQUARTERS, ARMY OF TENNESSEE, )  
 Winchester, Jan. 9, 1863. )

Soldiers of the Army of Tennessee:--

Your gallant deeds have won the admiration of your General, your Government and your country. For myself I thank you, and am proud of you--for them I tender you the gratitude and praise you have so nobly won. In a campaign of less than one month, in the face of winter, your achievements have been unparalleled. You have captured more than ten thousand prisoners, taken and preserved thirty pieces of artillery and

seven thousand small arms, in addition to many thousands destroyed. You have besides captured eight hundred wagons, loaded chiefly with supplies which have been destroyed or brought safely to your lines, and in pitched battle you have driven the enemy before you, inflicting a loss at least of three to one greater than you have sustained. In retiring to a stronger position without molestation from a superior force, you have left him a barren field on which to bury his hosts of slain and rally and recuperate his shattered ranks. Cut off from his Government both by rail and telegraph, and deprived of supplies by the interruption of his communications, we shall yet teach him a lesson for the rashness of penetrating a country so hostile to his cause. Whilst the infantry and artillery defy him in front, our invincible cavalry will assail him in flank and rear, until we goad him to another advance, only to meet another signal defeat. Your General deplures, in common with you, the loss of your galliant comrades who have fallen in our recent conflicts. Let their memories be enshrined in your hearts as they will ever be tenderly cherished by their countrymen. Let it be yours to avenge their fate and proudly to emulate their deeds. Remember that your fate is to the foe, and that on you rests the defence of all that is dear to freemen. Soldiers! the proudest reflection of your General's life is to be known as the commander of an army so brave and invincible as you have proven. He asks no higher boon than to lead such men to victory. To share their trials, and to stand

or fall with them, will be the crown of his ambition.

BRAXTON BRAGG,

Gen. Commanding.

This document speaks for itself. Stirring scenes are yet before us; much work is left to be performed. When the day of trial comes, this army will not be found wanting. In all this programme, the Texas Rangers will be assigned a conspicuous place. But under our gallant leaders, we will not mar the brilliant record of the past.

For whenever one noble spirit falls on the field of conflict, there is another ready to take his place. Or should he be promoted to a higher position, his mantle of authority descends upon those who will wear it honorably, and leave no spot upon its texture. During the battle of Wednesday, the 31st, Col. Thomas Harrison was acting Brigadier, and how admirably he filled the position, I have mentioned before. He still is commanding the brigade. I understand Gen. Wharton is ordered by Gen. Bragg to mount several of the dismounted Texas Regiments in this army, and this will give us another brigade. I know not upon whom the honor will be conferred, but I do know that Col. Harrison is worthy to receive such a position, and will bring a mature judgment, great military skill and heroic bravery to the discharge of its duties. William B. Sayers, who has so faithfully, efficiently and gallantly filled the office of Sergeant Major, and then Adjutant of our Regiment, has been acting as Adjutant General to Col. Harrison. His modesty united with his

great precision, his correctness in official duties, with a tried courage, make him a model young officer. This change, with Maj. Rayburn's serious indisposition, developed upon Capt. Gustave Cook the command of the Regiment during the greater part of the day. His ability to lead the Texas Rangers was fully tested in the celebrated "wagon charge," and late in the evening when a regiment of Federal cavalry was thoroughly routed and chased. Indeed he has everywhere proved himself a soldier prepared to meet any emergency. He was assisted in the command by Capt. Pat Christian, who acted as Major. In this position he proved himself the gallant soldier and skilful officer. For over a year the Captain of company I, he has filled the place with great credit to himself and his men. Always present with them, sharing in their privations and dangers, cheering them by his humor and wit, he has, already made for himself a name among the brave and when promoted to the position he now temporarily occupies, he will bring the experience that will make him an efficient field officer. Sergeant Major J. M. Claiborne, has also discharged the duties of Adjutant in a manner most creditable to himself and satisfactory to the regiment. But time or space will not permit me further to specify where all behaved so nobly, and gained for themselves the admiration of the army. Added to their previous fame, the achievements of the second battle of Murfreesboro', they now stand second to no other troops in the army of Tennessee. Wherever Texans are found, they win a name on the battle field. On our left wing was Gen. Estor's brigade, composed of the 10th, 11th, 14th and 15th

Texas, and on that glorious charge, which should immortalise the fame of any troops, they were conspicuous. They first broke the stillness of the morning with a genuine yell, as they rushed upon the foe, and onward they dashed until the victory was complete. But their ranks were sadly thinned. It is said that they were at one time charging a battery, and a rabbit springing up before them, with a shout they dashed after it until caught, and then rushed upon the battery, although passing through the very jaws of death, and it seemed but for them a holiday sport, until it was captured. The gallant 9th was also in the fight, but I do not know its position. Just before leaving Nolinsville, Lieut. Gordon, of company A, was the hero of a brilliant excursion, in which he captured 14 prisoners. Gen. Wharton ordered him to take a detachment of the Rangers and capture a heavy picket guard on the N. Pike. It was composed of infantry and cavalry. The guide was mistaken in their position, aiming to get in their rear, else he would have bagged the whole party. Striking the pike in their front, he ordered a charge. The enemy was on a hill and gave him a round as he advanced, and then broke for their lines, their reserve, which was in heavy force, only saving the entire party from capture. Lt. D. A. Terry, aid to Gen. Wharton, and Eugene Griffin, company H, led the advance with Lieut. Gordon. He met no loss. It was a bold and successful affair, and reflected great credit on the Lieutenant. We are now having very disagreeable weather, a heavy and cold rain storm has been succeeded by a freeze and fall of snow. Many have been without tents, it is very trying, and will produce its effects.

THE TRI-WEEKLY TELEGRAPH, February 13, 1893

R. F. B.

but the soldier just bear and hope. Yours.

Letter from the Rangers.

Correspondence of the Telegraph.

FIFTEEN MILES FROM SHELBYVILLE, )  
 on Fayetteville Pike, Feb. 2d, 1863 )

Editor Telegraph--We are now in Lincoln county. Although wearing the name of the despot who governs the U. S. and wages an unholy war against those who wish neither his rule nor his shield of protection; yet it nobly eschews all relationship with the namesake. It has responded to the South most nobly, and stands among the first in its offering of men to this glorious cause. Almost a week ago the brigade started forth upon an expedition, the destination of which was a profound secret to the uninitiated. But doubtless ere this the mystery is solved and some grand surprise has been given to the enemy, or perhaps some brilliant achievement has been accomplished. Whilst we were engaged in the irksome work of picketing on the Surresboro' and Shelbyville, pike after the battle for some two weeks, Gens. Morgan, Wheeler and Forrest were on the more desirable work of harrassing the enemy in his rear, capturing his gunboats and transports and performing great feats generally. Now that he is thoroughly aroused and vigilant, our brigade is sent forth to perform some similar feat, and will be expected to have similar success. The expedition will call forth the military genius of Gen. Jno. Wharton, but he will doubtless prove himself equal to his brother Brigadiers, as he has done before when an emergency demanded his presence

and a trial of his skill and judgment in leading his brigade. We expect something worthy such an expedition will be accomplished before they return. Everything in this quarter is quiet. We learn that the Yankees yesterday surrounded and surprised some of Wheeler's pickets, who relieved us wounding a few and capturing a number. The surprise was doubtless through carelessness on their part. The army of Tennessee is resting after the fatigue of the late battle, and is preparing for further deeds of heroism whenever the foe shall come after us. Now our line of defense forms a sort of obtuse triangle, having its apex at Tullahoma, and the lines formed by our left resting on Shelbyville on the one side and our right resting on Manchester on the other, constituting the sides of the angle. Gen. Joseph E. Johnston arrived at Tullahoma a few days ago, and will doubtless superintend the reorganization of this army, in order that it may be the better prepared for action, efficiency and victory, than at any previous time. Gen. Bragg has headquarters at Tullahoma, and is still the subject of much criticism in the journals, some sustaining and others utterly condemning him. But history will doubtless do him ample justice, and show the reasons for the retrograde movements of the army. But I believe that if he was removed from this command and some one, in whom the people and the army would have more confidence, was put at the head of the "army of Tennessee," it would inspire more general confidence and make fresh enthusiasm among the troops. Under his generalship,

the soldiers have no encouragement to peril life and often lay it down for a glorious victory, because they do not believe that he will improve it, but on the other hand by falling back, will lose such of its advantages. It is very certain that we gained a most decisive victory at Murfreesboro', and more than ever are we convinced of the fact by their own correspondences, whose letters are now being republished in the South, and it is moreover believed, that had the battle been vigorously renewed on Thursday morning, their army would have been driven back in confusion and utter disorganization to Nashville; but by delaying day after day, the enemy recuperated his broken ranks, and inspired his dispirited troops with the belief that we were so crippled that we could not renew the attack, and then on retreating and thus permitting him to occupy Murfreesboro', the entire moral effect of the victory, was lost to us in the North, and also to no small extent in the South. Could we have but repulsed that army, and we had the ability to do it, as were those at Fredericksburg and Vicksburg, who can tell the results which would have followed? But their apparent victory here gave the North renewed assurance that the rebellion would be crushed out in Middle Tennessee, and this compensated to some degree for their defeats in the East and the West. One glorious victory gained here and the enemy routed, would have a magic effect upon this army, and this noble people. May heaven yet grant us such a blessing.

We have many rumors by grape vine and telegraph and through

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the press of mediation and recognition and armistice, but as yet we have nothing positive, although the signs of the Northern times seem to intimate that soon a thorough change will take place in public feeling there, and the mutterings which are coming across the great waters, are continually deeper and more earnest in our behalf. All these things seem to us satisfactory evidence that already we have seen "the beginning of the end." The impression is gaining ground in well informed military circles, that a few months more of earnest, faithful and successful efforts on our part, will bring to our hearts and homes and country, the blessings of peace. Great and growing dissatisfaction seems to pervade the Northern army, as will be seen by the resignations, removal and dismissal of their Generals. The proclamation of Lincoln, which is the crowning infamy of all his diabolical schemes for our ruin, seems to have its results, and the work will go on until those results will bring great benefits upon our cause. I think we have only to trust in God, "keep our powder dry," and do our duty as becomes those to whom a mighty trust is committed, for a little while longer, and after the long weary seed time, in which we have gone forth with tears, we will be permitted to return bearing with us "the sheaves" of the riches; and most precious harvest which the world has ever witnessed. These signs, which bid hope to spring up in our hearts--which seem prophetic of the nearing and glorious future, when our young nation shall enter the Canaan of her rest and prosperity--should not cause us to relax one effort

or to cease executing one well matured plan for carrying on this war; but on the other hand inspiring our hearts with fresh hope, we should renew our efforts and increase our prayers for God's presence to still be with us and his blessings to still follow our arms, until our enemy is utterly overthrown and we are free. This once accomplished, then our glorious Confederacy will take her place in the great family of nations, and although the youngest born sister, yet by no means the least or most unworthy, for already by her heroic devotion to the cause which lies so near the heart of her people, by her sacrifice, her gallant deeds, her glorious achievements in arms, she has extorted the unwilling praises and admiration of the civilized world. Unity in our councils and our hearts, successes upon the field and upon the sea should not cause us to forget that "vigilance," coupled with desperate deeds, is the price of our liberty. Whilst our foe is distracted in his counsels and paralyzed by the dissensions among his people, this should bind our hearts together as the heart of one man, so that we can gain an advantage over our proud, defiant and insolent foe, and compel him also to acknowledge our independence and allow us to go in peace, that we may worship God under our own vine and fig-tree, and choose the form of Government which will best subserve our interests, protect our institutions make us prosperous and happy.

At this late date, I will acknowledge a beautiful present received some months ago by the regiment. It arrived last summer, during my sickness, and was at once carried on the Kentucky expedition; hence the omission on my part to mention it before. I refer to the appropriate and neatly executed flag presented by Miss Eliza E. Groce and Miss Annie Jefferson, of Hempstead. Being a parallelogram in form, the ground work is composed of a deep red, French merino, having ten broad bars of blue silk running crosswise on either side. Upon these are twelve small white stars, and one larger, where they meet at right angles to the centre. It is ornamented with a neat and tasteful border. A graceful blue silk streamer flies from the top of the flagstaff, bearing on the one side the inscription. "We conquer or die;" and on the other, "Ferry's" a five pointed star with the word TEXAS between the points, Rangers."

The flag has been committed to the protection of Ensign Albert C. Jones, Co. 9, who is assisted by Corporals W. W. Locke, Co. E, and Aaron Burlison, Co. D. The fair donors may be assured that in the keeping of these gallant men our flag will be borne safely thro' the thickest of the battle, and will never fall into the hands of the enemy whilst there is a Texian arm spared to rescue it from such a disgrace. Often, when the conflict rages with its greatest fury, are our colors seen proudly waving in the breeze, and calling to the rally or indicating a preparation for the desperate charge.

We are continually undergoing changes in the regiment. Co. B (the "Archers Greys") is now Gen. Wharton's body guard. Lieut. M. L. Gordon, Co. A. has been promoted to a captaincy, and now commands a spy company, made up from the brigade. Samuel Ashe, Co. B. is promoted to 1st Lieutenant under him. The work of disintegration which is constantly going on from our ranks in promotion, transfers and special detail, has its effect in diminishing our effective force; but still we are expected to take our position and maintain the name and brilliant fame which has been gained in the past.

We have now associated with us in the brigade the "11th Texas." They were previously dismounted, and after a considerable experience as infantry, they have been mounted again. The "11th" belonged to Gen. Ector's Brigade, and was under the lead of its lamented Col. Burks, one of his most efficient regiments. He fell whilst gallantly leading it in the charge on the 31st, at Murfreesboro'. By his death it has met an irreparable loss. The boys are overjoyed at the prospect of being cavalymen again. Col. Boudin is now commanding them. It is a burning shame that such horsemen as Texans are, and I may justly add, such fighters, too, should be put in the infantry service, when so many are mounted who are merely, as General Bragg once said, in answer to an inquiry about his cavalymen, "men on horseback." Poorly mounted, poorly armed and shamefully poor horsemen, they are often a reproach to

this honorable arm of the service, and are a loss to the web  
foots where they would be compelled to do good fighting— Al-  
though these Texians are in our brigade, yet the old Rangers,  
ever jealous of their title, and proud of their name which has  
been so dearly purchased, have adopted a new device which  
will distinguish them from the 11th: you will now see their  
hats branded thus; a five pointed star with the word TEXAS  
between the points, the name TERRY over the star, and the  
letter R in centre of star.

Whatever may be their changes, whoever may lead them,  
yet they cherish the name and memory of their lamented Colonel,  
who so early fell upon the field of battle, with an undying  
love. Never will they consent to be known in this war, nor  
yet upon the page of history, by any other name. It was he  
who first gave prestige to the regiment; he who led it from  
the land of flowers, and upon the bleak hills of the "dark  
and bloody ground," in its first brilliant charge upon the  
enemy, sealed his devotion to his country, by a life which  
could be illly spared when the demand for men was so pressing.

R.F.B.

THE TRI-WEEKLY TELEGRAPH, March 11, 1863