

44th ANNIVERSARY OF STONE RIVER  
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Interesting Story of Bloody Contest Written by Johh McCabe on the  
Battlefield

This, the 31st of Dec. and tomorrow, the 1st of Jan. is the 44th anniversary of the memorable battle of Stone River, during the Civil war and in commemoration of that battle and the participation of one of our fellow citizens who wrote to his family the following letter a few days after the battle giving a graphic description of that awful struggle, we republish the letter which appeared in the Daily Citizen twelve years ago believing it will be read by many new readers ~~xx~~ with as much interest as when first made public. The letter follows:

Headquarters on The Battlefield.

January 5, 1863.

Dear Wife and Children: The great battle of Stone River is over and I am alive, thank God! I wrote to you last Sunday and told you of the hardships we passed through marching from Nashville to Stuard Creek, where we laid in camp all day Sunday, when I wrote to you last.

Well, I will tell you what I can about the battle, It was the first one that our regiment was in and would be glad if it would be the last one. At 7 o'clock the bugle blew "Fall in!" and we formed in line of battle on one side of the creek, and the "Johnnies" were on the other side. The command was, "Forward, march!" We started in line of battle. The order was forward, and we had to go. We went. The creek was frozen over and we had to wade it that cold morning; but we wouldn't have cared for that so much if the rebels had not been shooting at us. We got wet up to our waists. We marched all day in line of battle, over bushes, fences and streams. It was a hard day on the Eighty-four. It was a fight all day. The skirmish line firing continually. We camped on the battlefield that night. It was very cold. We had no blankets, nothing but the clothes we had on our backs. I didn't think so much about the cold as I did about the "Johnnies." We moved around considerably getting in position. Tuesday the rebels had made a stand here, and every man knew what was coming. The 84th was on picket Tuesday night. Wednesday morning we were relieved and thought we would have a soft snap. Our colonel ordered us out in line and made us a little speech; told us the hard battle was coming and this would be our first battle and to remember what State we were from. He said: "If there was one in the regiment that thought he wouldn't go through the fight, come to him and he would give him a pass to go to the rear." I would have given my right arm to go back to the rear that morning, though I would not say so. In less than 30 minutes from the time we broke ranks we were in the fight. The "Johnnies" had surprised McCook on our right. Though they were pressing our men hard we knew from the firing that we would soon be in it. I had time to say a short prayer and thank God. The Lord answered that prayer and I don't believe there was a man in the regiment but what prayed that morning.

About this time the "Johnnies" were coming, driving our men out; we were demoralized and panic stricken; our hardest struggle was along the pike. The line of battle was about eight miles long and we were in the center. Here I had a little of experience. We were ordered to lay down and fire at will; I could not get my gun to go off; I laid on my back, picking powder in the tube of my gun in order to

