

Confederate Veteran Articles Regarding 44th Mississippi

FORTY-FOURTH MISSISSIPPI AT MURFREESBORO

Some time ago a correspondent of the VETERAN sent a newspaper article in which appeared the statement that the 44th Mississippi regiment made a charge in the battle of Murfreesboro with not a man having any other weapon than his bare fists, but that when they emerged from the fight there was scarcely one of the survivors who could not show a Springfield rifle captured from the enemy. Reference is made to that now in the interest of getting the truth of it. It seems incredible that a whole command should go into battle unarmed, though not surprising that they should come out with better arms than they went in. The Confederates knew how to do that. Survivors of the 44th Mississippi are asked to tell about this happening. The comrade who sent the newspaper clipping had talked with Union soldiers who were in that battle, and they said the Confederates charged them mounted on artillery horses.

As to the statement that the above organization (known as Blythe's Mississippi regiment) made a charge in this fight with no weapons other than their fists and that upon emerging each survivor was armed with a Yankee rifle, the "Official Records" tell us that this regiment was in Chalmer's Brigade of Wither's Division, and before it got fairly in its brigadier was knocked out, and consequently when the next ranking officer, Col. W.T. White, of the 9th Mississippi, had been located and took charge the brigade as a unit had ceased to exist; but as the 44th lost four killed, thirty-one wounded, and seventeen missing in the charge, it goes to show that they were among those present on this occasion. If General Chalmers or Colonel White had made a report of this battle and the 44th had gone in unarmed, the fact would certainly have been mentioned; but as they did not, it will have to be proved or disproved by some one that was there with them. Personally, I don't believe it was possible, as General Bragg had reported a short time previous to this that for the first time since the war started they had more arms than they had men to wield them, and I feel sure that he would have kept enough to supply his own army. As there were seven thousand small arms captured from the Yankees in this battle, I judge that the 44th got their share, especially as they had more of a chance for plundering on account of being (from no fault of theirs) mixed in with a disorganized body. There is a noted instance of a charge of unarmed Confederates on record, but not this one.