

Levi Sipes Narrative of Battle of Murfreesboro

Note about the narrative: Collection of information sheets re. Civil War veterans, some being personal narratives were individually catalogued, vuz. Levi Sipes', giving an account of the 51st Ind. Inf. from Mar 1862 thru the end of the war, containing several good comments on battles, particularly Murfreesboro, and on incidents involving Union men and officers.

Narrative

[beginning is missing] of Stone [sic] River, and showed Gen. Bragg the Nerve and grit of Western Troops. After leaving Nashville, it was nothing but a Continuous fight the whole thirty miles to Murfreesboro, It came near being a battle at Triune, the 29th lost quite a number of men, and had the name inscribed on our Battle Flag. On the 29th of December we got across Stuart's Creek, and fought all day for Position, were in line of battle at night ready for the attack we knew would come in the Morning. Gen. Crittenden, Thomas L. commanded the Left of our Line. Gen. Geo. H. Thomas the Center and McCook the Right. The plan of the Rebel Generals was to Crush our Right. There was a continual moving of Troops from their Right Wing to ours all night, their movement was done as stealthily as possible. but our Outposts Could hear them plainly. The result was that we were outnumbered at about 3 to 1. flesh and blood could not stand the odds, and we were driven to the Turnpike, that is the 2nd Division. There, Gen. P.H. Sheridan got the 3d division in action and the Rout was stopped, all this happened Early in the morning, the 5th Ohio Battery Captain Alfred Edgerton Commanding, was attached to our Brigade, He had asked permission of Gen. Johnson to take his horses to water, as they had not had a drop all night, standing hitched to the guns. The little Creek was not more than 10 Rods from the line, they never got a horse back to a gun, the attack was so fierce and desperate, they turned the guns and let us have some of our own Shells. I did not see McCook, but Gen. Rosecrans halted his horse on the Turnpike, surveying the Field. An Aid [sic] rode up with the words, Gen. McCook is killed, I remember the reply of Rosecrans as well as though I heard it yesterday. "Men that fight must Expect to get killed, let us fight this Battle," and away he went to another part of the field, The last desperate attack of Bragg, was on our Left on the afternoon of the 31st, when he massed his troops I think about 10 Regiments deep, they had to cross the River, of course it was very shallow. Our Artillery was also Massed in the Cedar Thicket, any Soldier who saw the bravery displayed in the Charges made during that three hours [sic] struggle, would say there was no discount on the "Johnnies" [sic] Bravery. The Artillery would mow a great gap in their ranks, and they closed up like Magic. Stone [sic] River actually run red with blood, as might be Expected in a struggle of such duration, our losses were heavy Enough. The 34th Illinois lost quite heavy, I think we buried 1250 killed dead on the field, I presume nearly the same number died of wounds, The Regiment lost its Colonel by Capture. He took a trip to Libby Prison for his

Health. The Major did the Honors for the 29th in the absence of the Colonel, who was not Exchanged