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&245 History of the Fifty-first Indiana veteran volunteer infantry.
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FIFTY-FIRST INDIANA INFANTRY

The Fifty-First Indiana Infantry was organized at Indianpolis, Indiana, during November and earlt December, 1861. It was mustered into Federal service there on December 14, 1861. Nine hundred and thirty-nine off cers and enlisted men were mustered into service as members of the regiment.

Like almost all Civil War units the Fifty-First Indiana Infantry was frequently known by an alternate designation derived from the name of its commanding officer. Names of this type used by or for the regiment are shown below.

Abel D. Streight's Infantry
David A. McHolland's Infantry
William N. Dunny's Infantry
Benjamin J. Spooner's Infantry
William H. Colescott's Infantry
James W. Sheets' Infantry
William W. Scearce's Infantry
Clark Willis' Infantry

Not long after being mustered into Federal service the regiment was ordered to Bardstown, Kentucky. There it was attached to the Army of the Ohio. The unit served in that Army until November, 1862. It then joined the Army of the Cumberland. In April, 1863, the unit was mounted (part of the unit being mounted on mules due to the scarcity of horses) and it participated in a raid deep into Confederate territory, aimed at Rome, Georgia. Almost all of the unit's members were captured at Cedar Bluff, Alabama, on May 3, 1863. The members of the unit were subsequently exchanged and saw service in the Department of the Cumberland. In September, 1864, the unit rejoined the Army of the Cumberland, serving in that Army until August, 1865. The unit ended its career attached to the Department of Texas. Listed below are the specific higher command assignments of the regiment.

Twentieth Brigade, Army of the Ohio	Dec. 1861 - Jan. 1862
Twentieth Brigade, Sixth Division, Army of the Ohio	Jan. 1862 - Sept. 1862
Twentieth Brigade, Sixth Division, II Corps, Army of the Ohio	Sept. 1862 - Nov. 1862
Third Brigade, First Division, Left Wing, XIV Corps, Army of the Cumberland	Nov. 1862 - Jan. 1863
Third Brigade, First Division, XXI Corps, Army of the Cumberland	Jan. 1863 - April 1863
Streight's Provisional Brigade, Army of the Cumberland	April 1863 - May 1863

Garrison, Post of Chattanooga, Tennessee, Department of the Cumberland	May 1863 - April 1864
First Separate Brigade, Post of Chattanooga, Department of the Cumberland	April 1864 - Sept. 1864
Second Brigade, Second Division, IV Corps, Army of the Cumberland	Sept. 1864 - Nov. 1864
First Brigade, Third Division, IV Corps, Army of the Cumberland	Nov. 1864 - Aug. 1865
Attached, Department of Texas	Aug. 1865 - Dec. 1865

After being captured in Alabama, the unit's original commanding officer, Abel Streight, was moved to the Confederate prison facility at Libby Prisoner, Richmond, Virginia. Along with a group of other Federal officers, he succeeded in tunnelling out of the this prison, passing through Confederate lines, and eventaully rejoining his regiment at Chattanooga, Tennessee.

Two members of the Fifty-First Indiana Infantry were awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for their activities. Details on these individuals are shown below.

Captain Marion T. Anderson, Company "D", Nashville, Tennessee, December 16, 1864

> "...led his regiment over five lines of the enemy's works where he fell, severely wounded..."

Captain Milton Russell, Company "A", Stone's River, Tennessee, December 29, 1862

> "...was the first man to cross Stone's River and, in the face of a galling fire from the concealed skirmishers of the enemy, led his men up the hillside, driving the opposing skirmishers before him..."

The Fifty-First Indiana Infantry participated in more than thirty various type engagements during its career. These are identified below. Numbers after the events locate them on the map following this history.

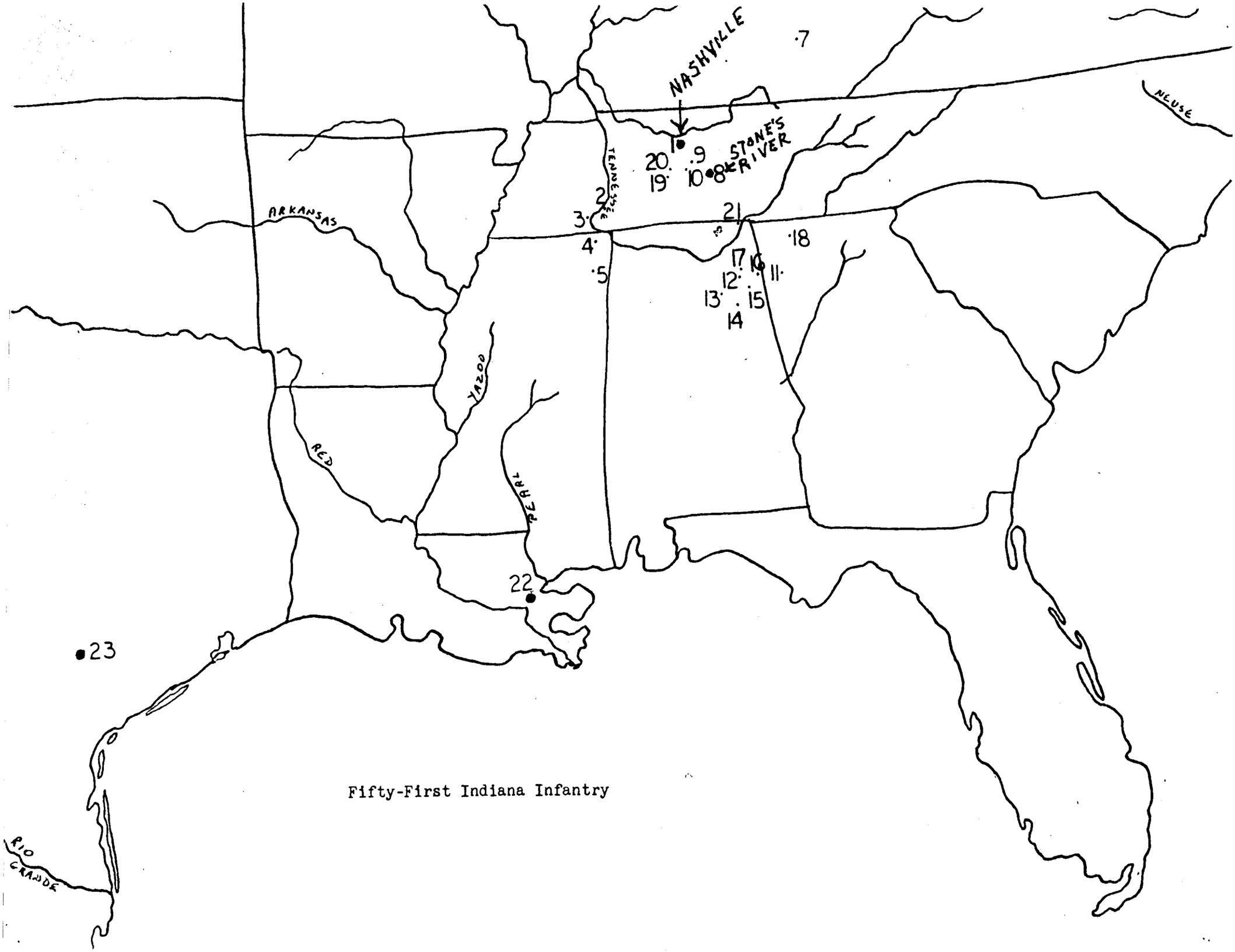
Movement to Nashville, Tenn. (1)	Feb. 7 - March 13, 1862
Movement to Savannah, Tenn. (2)	March 30 - April 6, 1862

Battle, Shiloh, Pittsburg Landing, Tenn. (3)	April 6 - 7, 1862
Advance on and Siege of Corinth, Miss. (4)	April 29 - May 30, 1862
Pursuit to Booneville, Miss. (5)	May 31 - June 12, 1862
Movement to Lousville, Ky. (6) in pursuit of Bragg	Aug. 21 - Sept. 26, 1862
Pursuit of Bragg to London, Ky. (7) & Battle of Perryville	Oct. 1 - 22, 1862
Movement to Nashville, Tenn. (1)	Oct. 22 - Nov. 7, 1862
Skirmish, Prim's Blacksmith Shop, Edmonson Pike, Tenn.	Dec. 25, 1862
Advance on Murfreesborough, Tenn. (8)	Dec. 26 - 30, 1862
Battle, Stone's River, Murfreesborough, Tenn. (8)	Dec. 30, 1862 - Jan. 3, 1863
Reconnaisance to Nolensville (9) and Versailles (10), Tenn.	Jan. 13 - 15, 1863
Streight's Raid to Rome, Ga. (11)	April 26 - May 3, 1863
Action, Sand Mountain, Ala. (12)	April 30, 1863
Action, Crooked Creek and Hog Mountain, Ala.	April 30, 1863
Skirmish, Blountsville, Ala. (13)	May 1, 1863
Action, East Branch Big Warrior River, Ala.	May 1, 1863
Action, Blount's Plantation, Ala.	May 2, 1863
Skirmish, Big Warrior Creek near Gadsden, Ala. (14)	May 2, 1863
Skirmish near Centre, Ala. (15)	May 2, 1863
Action, Gaylvesille, Ala. (16)	May 3, 1863
Action, Cedar Bluff, Ala. (17)	May 3, 1863
Campaign in Middle Tennessee (Tullahoma Campaign) (detachment not captured)	June 23 - July 7, 1863
Action, Dalton, Ga. (18)	Aug. 14 - 15, 1864
Operations against Hood in Northern Georgia and Northern Alabama	Sept. 29 - Nov. 3, 1864
Skirmishes in front of Columbia, Tenn. (19)	Nov. 24 - 27, 1864
Battle, Franklin, Tenn. (20)	Nov. 30, 1864

Battle, Nashville, Tenn. (1)	Dec. 15 - 16, 1864
Pursuit of Hood to the Tennessee River near Bridgeport, Ala. (21)	Dec. 17 - 28, 1864
Skirmish, Columbia, Tenn. (19)	Dec. 21, 1864
Skirmish, Duck River, Tenn.	Dec. 22, 1864
Operations in East Tennessee	March 15 - April 22, 1865
Movement to New Orleans, La. (22)	June 16, 1865
Movement to Green Lake and San Antonio (23), Tex.	July 15, 1865

The regiment served on garrison duty at San Antonio until finally mustered out of Federal service there on December 13, 1865. Returned to Indiana, the unit was officially discharged at Indianapolis.

During its career the Fifty-First Indiana Infantry sustained the loss of one officer and thirty-five enlisted men kiled or mortally wounded. An additional six officers and two hundred and two enlisted men died from disease or other non-battlefield causes.



Fifty-First Indiana Infantry

Wm. ROSS HARTPENCE — "HISTORY of the 51ST IND. VOLUNTEER INF" — 1894 — HARRISON, O.

Then Pope got at them in the rear,
And all who could, skedaddled.

CHORUS: Brave Pope was then the man ‖:
From Walk and Pope the rebels slope;
Brave Pope was then the man.

New Orleans had three mighty rams,
And fire-ships also handy,
And thirty thousand fighting men,
To sink poor Doodle Dandy.
But when they came with gentle words,
For fear they'd speak them louder;
She thought she'd just capitulate,
And save her blood and powder.

CHORUS: Brave Foote was then the man ‖:
With lawyer But.* and Farragut,
Brave Foote was then the man.

At Murfreesboro, full of fight,
Old Bragg drew up his forces,
To make a meal of Western boys,
And gobble them by courses;
But when he met old Rosy there,
His appetite forsook him;
The Dutchman might be good to carve;
But he couldn't catch and cook him.

CHORUS: Old Rosy is the man, old Rosy is the man;
We'll show our deeds where'er he leads;
Old Rosy is the man.

A few more blows will close our work,
And homeward we'll be rushing;
And anxious hearts, that sorrow now,
With love and joy be gushing.
And when our heads are silvered o'er,
In telling this day's story;
Some lip of fame will say of us,
'They saved the Nation's glory!'

CHORUS: Old Rosy is the man, &c."

BATTLE OF STONE RIVER.

Christmas was a beautiful day; and we put it in with a foraging expedition. During the day we had some sharp skirmishing; and Perry Hollingsworth, Co. E, was killed,

* Butler.

and two others were wounded. We brought in 18 head of cattle. Next day we struck tents, and advanced to near Lavergne; skirmishing all day. At night it rained, and continued to rain most of the following week.

The first experience of the Fifty-First in this glorious campaign, dates from this skirmish at Prim's blacksmith shop, on the Edmonson pike, on Thursday, December 25, 1862. General Wood's dispatch of that date, says:

"Harker's brigade, which went out this morning for forage, is coming in. He filled his wagons with corn, but had to fight for it. He was attacked in front and on the flanks, and lost 1 man killed outright, and 2 wounded; 1 seriously, the other slightly. The casualties occurred all in the 51st Indiana. Col. Harker estimates the enemy at 600, infantry or dismounted troopers."

Our part of the Army of the Cumberland was organized as follows:

Left Wing, Gen. T. L. Crittenden, *Commanding*.
1st Div., Gen. T. J. Wood, "
3d Brig., Col. C. G. Harker, "
51st Indiana, Col. A. D. Streight.
73d Indiana, Col. Gilbert Hathaway.
13th Michigan, Col. Michael Shoemaker.
64th Ohio, Col. Alex. McIlvain.
65th Ohio, Lt.-Col. Alex. Cassil.
Maj. Horatio N. Whitbeck.

On Dec. 27, '62, Lt.-Col. Garesche', Gen. Rosecrans' chief of staff, dispatched to Gen. Crittenden, at 3:05 P. M.:

"Tell Wood to drive the enemy vigorously, and give them no time to breathe."

How thoroughly this instruction was obeyed, some of the proudest pages of history tell.

The Army of the Cumberland left Nashville with 47,000 men, and had 37,977 infantry, 3,200 cavalry and 2,223 artillery in the battle. It lost 92 officers killed, and 384 wounded; 1,441 men killed, and 6,860 wounded; about 2,800 missing. Lt.-Col. Garesche' was killed by the side of the commander.

The monthly return of the Army of the Cumberland for the month of December, 1862, gives the number in Wood's division, 3 brigades of infantry, 10,605; artillery, 395; total, 11,000.

General Rosecrans' report of this campaign, refers to our brigade very favorably:

"From Nov. 26 to Dec. 26, every effort was bent to complete the clothing of the army, provide ammunition and replenish the Nashville depot of supplies, to insure against want. On Thursday, Dec. 26, '62, the movement began. The left wing began its advance about 11 A. M., the 28th, driving a brigade of cavalry supported by Many's brigade of rebel infantry, to Stewart's Creek, saving the bridge, although the rails were fired. This was Saturday night. On Sunday they rested. On Monday at 3 P. M. a signal from Palmer announcing that he was in sight of Murfreesboro, and that the enemy was running, an order was sent to Crittenden to send a division to occupy Murfreesboro. He ordered Harker's brigade to cross the river at a ford on his left, where he surprised a regiment of Breckenridge's division, and drove it back on its main line, not more than 500 yards distant, in great confusion. He held the position till advised, by prisoners captured, that Breckenridge was in force in front; when, it being dark, he ordered the brigade back across the river, and bivouacked.

The battle began next day, on the left, by VanCleve, who crossed at the lower fords. Wood was prepared to sustain and follow him, but was directed to suspend action. Just then McCook was routed. Harker's brigade was sent further down the Murfreesboro pike, to go in and attack the enemy on the right of VanCleve. There our forces sustained an infantry and cavalry attack, leaving us masters of the original ground on our left. Our losses were:

Losses.	*Killed.*		*Wounded.*		*Captured.*	*Total.*
	Off.	Enl.	Off.	Enl.		
51st Indiana.		7	2	32	9	50
73d Indiana.	2	22	3	48	36	111
13th Michigan.		17	2	70		89
64th Ohio.	1	23	3	61	17	105
65th Ohio.	2	33	8	92	38	173
6th Ohio Battery.		1	1	8	1	11
Aggregate.	5	103	19	311	101	539

From the Report of James Barnett, Chief of Artillery.

"Capt. Bradley, on the morning of the 31st, moved with Col. Harker's brigade in its advance to check the enemy on the right, and held with it, its position through the day. On the 2d he held a position on commanding ground near to the right of the railroad. When the attack was made on the left, he changed front to fire to the left."

From the Report of Gen. A. D. McCook, Comdg. Right Wing.

"December 30, '62 * On arrival at the pike, I found Col. Harker's brigade retiring before a heavy force of the enemy. I immediately ordered Robert's brigade, of Sheridan's division, to advance into a cedar wood, and charge the enemy, and drive him back. * Col. Harker, commanding a brigade in Wood's division, performed gallant service."

From the Report of Gen. P. H. Sheridan, Comdg. 3d Division.

"On the 30th Schaefer's brigade was put in action directly to the front and right of Wood's division, on the left-hand side of the railroad. The brigade advanced through a clump of timber, and took position on the edge of the cotton field, close on the enemy's lines, relieving Wood's division, which was falling back under heavy pressure."

General Crittenden's Report.

"My command left camp near Nashville, Dec. 26, '62, and reached the point where the battle of Stone's River was fought just before dusk on the evening of the 29th. The march from Nashville was accompanied by skirmishing. The gallant and handsome things done by the several portions of my command during this march, have been mentioned in detail. * It was about dusk, and just at a moment when Wood and Palmer had halted to gather up their troops, that I reached the head of my command. These two generals had their divisions in line of battle, Wood on the left, and Palmer on the right, with the enemy in sight, and evidently in heavier force than we had yet encountered them; it was evident they intended to dispute the passage of the river, and fight the battle at or near Murfreesboro. At this moment I received orders to occupy Murfreesboro with one division, encamping others outside. I immediately gave the order to advance, and the movement commenced. Wood was ordered to occupy the place. * At this time it was dark. Gen. Wood had declared that he was hazarding a great deal for very little, to move over unknown ground, and thought that I ought to take the responsibility to disobey the order. * I suspended the order one hour. By this time Gen. Rosecrans came to the front, and approved what I did. In the meantime, Col. Harker, after a sharp skirmish, gallantly crossed the river. * As soon as possible I recalled Harker, * and he recrossed without serious loss.

On the morning of the 31st, when the battle began, I occupied the front near the pike, Palmer on the right, Wood on the left, and VanCleve in reserve, to the rear and left. * The right was driven back. The confusion of troops hindered forming. Being soon reinforced by Fyffe's and Harker's brigades, the enemy was pressed vigorously, too far. They came upon the enemy massed to receive them; who, outnumbering and outflanking them, compelled them to fall back. They did so in good order. From this time, the great object of the enemy seemed to be to break our left and front. When the troops composing the center

and right wing of our army had been driven by the enemy from our original line of battle, the 1st and 2d divisions of the left wing still nobly maintained their position, though several times assaulted by the enemy in great force.

Gen. Wood being wounded on the 31st, the command devolved on Hascall, on Jan. 1, '63. On the night of the 31st, he rested 500 yards in the rear of the former line, the right resting on the position occupied by Stokes' Battery. On the 2d, Hascall's division laid half an hour in the early part of the day under the heaviest cannonading we endured. Many were killed, but the men would not flinch. That night they encamped a little in advance of the position Beatty had occupied on the river. In this position the troops remained till Saturday night, when the river began to rise; and the rain continuing to fall, all recrossed the river. Sunday, it was learned that the enemy had evacuated Murfreesboro."

Gen. T. J. Woods Report.

"The country occupied by the bodies of hostile troops was favorable for a small force to retard the advance of a larger one. The country between the cultivated tracts is densely wooded; and much of this is interspersed with thick groves of cedar. It is undulating also, presenting a succession of swells and subsidences. On Saturday, Dec. 27, '62, I ordered Hascall to take the advance on either side of the pike. Lavergne was the first object to attain. The enemy was strongly posted in the houses and on the wooded hights in our rear, and opposed us by crossfire.

Sunday, 28th, we remained in camp, waiting for the right and center to get into position.

On Monday, 29th, the advance was resumed. Harker's brigade was on the left of Wagner, in the advance, and Hascall's brigade was in reserve.

Arriving within 2½ miles of Murfreesboro, we found the enemy in force immediately in our front, prepared to resist seriously and determinedly our further advance. I halted the center, and Harker's brigade occupied the wood, in part of which Wagner was posted, and extended the left into an open field. We remained in this position till Tuesday, 30th, the skirmishers keeping up an active firing.

On Wednesday morning, 31st, it was reported that the enemy was moving large bodies of troops to his left. My division was roused at 5 o'clock, got breakfast, and before daylight was ready for action. I directed Harker to commence the movement with his brigade. * A long wooded ridge within a hundred yards of the stream extends along the southern side of Stone River. On the crest of this ridge the enemy appeared to be posted in force. During the morning some firing had been heard, but not sufficient to indicate troops seriously engaged; but a sudden and fierce roar and rattle of musketry burst on us at this moment, which indicated that the enemy had attacked the right wing in heavy

force; and soon the arrival of messengers confirmed the indications. I stopped crossing, withdrew Hascall's and Harker's brigades, and moved to the right and rear, to reinforce the center and right. * The falling back of the right wing, brought our lines into a crochet. * The enemy was seen concentrating large masses of troops in the fields; and soon they moved forward to the attack. * The artillery in our front line, as well as that in the rear of the center and left, poured a destructive fire on the advancing foe; but on he came, till within small-arm range, when he was repulsed and driven back." * *

About 10 o'clock, Wednesday morning, 30th, General Wood was struck by a minie ball, on the inner side of his left heel, tearing open the boot, and lacerating the foot; a severe contusion was inflicted also, but he did not dismount till 7 o'clock that evening. After he arrived at Dayton, Ohio, on leave of absence, he wrote, referring to the evening of Monday, 29th, when Harker's brigade was ordered to cross the river, and the order was countermanded:

"Before, however, the order was suspended, Harker's brigade had crossed Stone River, under a galling fire, driven in the enemy's outposts, and seized a strong position, which it held until nearly 10 o'clock that evening."

Gen. Hascall's Report as Division Commander.

"When the command devolved on me, the division was considerably scattered, as Col. Harker's brigade had been in action all day on the extreme right, and had not returned. About 11 P. M. that day, Harker returned with his brigade. The line was now nearly at right angles with the railroad, Harker's brigade resting on it. In this position we lay all next day, Jan. 1, '63, with nothing to break the silence, save picket firing and an occasional artillery duel. Each brigade was in line of battle; and occupying so much front, kept the men constantly on the alert. Most of the other divisions had reserves, to relieve some. We maintained this position till 8 o'clock on the morning of Jan. 2. At this time the enemy opened the most terrific fire of shot and shell that we sustained during the entire engagement. During the night they had massed several batteries in our front, with a line a quarter of a mile long, and all at once they opened on us. Bradley's battery opened a brisk fire, till Stokes' battery, in their rear, opened with grape, which took effect on Bradley's men, and compelled Bradley to retire. The infantry, however, kept their position, though suffering severely.

Col. John W. Blake, of the 40th Indiana, was so drunk and unfit for duty, that he was arrested and sent to the rear. When next heard from, he was in Nashville, claiming to be wounded, and a paroled prisoner. I recommend his dishonorable discharge."

Report of Maj. S. Race, Chief of Artillery.

"About 6 A. M., Dec. 31, '62, Capt. Cullen Bradley's 6th Ohio Light Battery and Harker's brigade moved to the extreme right, where they were engaged in a most severely contested battle. Before superior numbers of the enemy, the brigade and battery (after repulsing the first attack of the enemy,) were obliged to retire; but not without disputing every inch of ground."

Col. Harker's Report.

"The 3d Brigade, 1st Division, Left Wing, 14th Army Corps, Dept. of the Cumberland, formerly 20th Brigade, 6th Division, left Stewart's Creek about 10 A. M., Monday, 29th ult., marching most of the time in line of battle, with the right of the line in rear of the left of the 2d Brigade, Col. Wagner commanding. Our skirmishers soon came upon the enemy's cavalry, engaging them briskly, and driving them slowly before them. We proceeded in this manner, cautiously feeling our way, until our left arrived at the left bank of Stone River, which was reached about 4 P. M. Up to this time we had suffered no casualties from the enemy's skirmishers. We took up a position near Stone River, about 400 yards to the left of the Nashville and Murfreesboro pike, the 2d Brigade, Col. Wagner commanding, being on the right, and the 1st Brigade, Brig. Gen. Hascall commanding, being on the left, and somewhat to the rear, owing to the conformation of the ground. We remained in this position till about dark, when we received orders to proceed to Murfreesboro. Stone River being fordable in our front, we at once commenced crossing the stream. Throwing a long line of skirmishers over the stream, orders were given to the 51st Indiana, 13th Michigan and 73d Indiana to cross simultaneously, to form on the opposite bank, and to press forward and seize the commanding hights beyond; while the 64th and 65th Ohio, with Bradley's Battery, were directed to follow as rapidly as possible. The skirmishers had barely left the bank of the river, before they were vigorously attacked by those of the enemy, concealed in a thicket and behind a fence in our front. Our skirmishers in no way daunted by this fierce assault of the enemy, pressed gallantly forward, driving the foe, until they came upon the enemy in force. The skirmishers were soon supported by the front line of the brigade. The enemy seemed to have been entirely disconcerted by this bold movement of our troops, and fell back in confusion. In this movement our loss was two killed and three wounded. This slight loss must be attributed to the able manner in which the officers of the brigade conducted their commands. A prisoner taken, reported an entire division of the enemy on my front; and movements along the entire front and flanks indicated that a strong force was near me. I reported this to the general commanding the division; at the same time stating that I could hold the position until reinforced. I soon received orders to recross the stream; which I did; occupying the same ground as before crossing. This movement was so quickly executed, as not to excite the suspicion of the enemy. Too much praise cannot be accorded to the brave officers and men of this brigade, for their bravery and skill in driving a concealed enemy from a strong position, after nightfall, and holding their ground in the face of an enemy three times their numbers.

On Dec. 30, '62, * about 8 A. M., the enemy's battery, stationed on an eminence near the right bank of Stone River, opened a severe fire of shot and shell upon my camp. Bradley's battery was ordered into position, to engage that of the enemy. After a severe engagement of 15 minutes, Capt. Bradley succeeded in silencing the enemy's battery. My command sustained no loss in this engagement.

On the 31st, about 8 A. M., I received orders from Gen. Wood, to cross the river with my command. The movement was commenced, in obedience to Gen. Wood's order, but was suspended for a few minutes by an order emanating from Gen. Crittenden. While awaiting further orders, Maj. Gen. Rosecrans passed my command, and gave me direct instructions to proceed immediately to the support of the right wing of our army, which was yielding to an overwhelming force of the enemy at that point. We had hardly commenced moving toward the right, when a Confederate battery located on the south bank of the river, opened on us, killing 1 man and wounding 2. Not stopping to reply to this battery, we pressed steadily forward. On approaching the right, much confusion was visible; troops marching in every direction; stragglers to be seen in great numbers; and teamsters in great consternation, endeavoring to drive their teams they knew not whither. My progress was impeded by the confusion, while the enemy was pouring shot and shell upon us from at least three different directions, wounding several men in my command. The brigade was, however extricated from this perilous position as soon as possible, and pressed on to a position on the extreme right of our line; Col. Fyffe's brigade, of Gen. VanCleve's division, being immediately on our left. After reaching this last position, my brigade marched in two lines, the 51st Indiana on the right, 65th Ohio on the left, the battery a little retired and opposite the interval between; 64th Ohio on the right of the second line, the 73d Indiana on the left, with the 13th Michigan in the rear of the caissons. We marched in this order about half a mile, when our skirmishers came up with those of the enemy, and the fire became brisk in front. About this time a battery from the enemy, situated in a cornfield, and nearly opposite my right flank, opened upon my command with canister. In order to get a commanding position for artillery, and at the same time to guard well my right flank, which I was fearful the enemy would attempt to turn, I moved the command a little to the right. While this movement was being executed, an officer reported a strong force and a battery of the enemy in front. No sooner had I taken position on the crest of the hill, than a most vigorous engagement commenced. * When it had continued twenty minutes, it was reported that the troops on my left had given way, and the enemy was already in

the rear of my left flank, and about two hundred yards from it, pouring a destructive cross-fire on my troops. It became necessary to fall back.

My thanks are due to Col. A. D. Streight for valuable information of the movements of the enemy during this engagement.

On Jan 1, the 1st division was moved a little to the right and rear. My brigade occupied a central position in the division, on the front line of battle, and a short distance to the left of the Murfreesboro pike. We were hardly in position, before the enemy drove in our skirmishers. Bradley's battery, with others, opened a destructive fire of case-shot and shell, driving the enemy from our front, and sustaining no loss.

Jan. 2, Bradley's battery being in position on a small eminence on our front, supported on the right by the 64th and 65th Ohio, behind a small clump of trees, and on the left by the 51st Indiana, lying in a skirt of timber; while the 13th Michigan and 73d Indiana were in reserve, 3 batteries of the enemy opened on us. They were promptly responded to by Capt. Bradley and another battery on my right; when the most fearful artillery engagement ensued which I had yet had the experience to witness. The enemy having our range quite perfectly, poured upon us a most destructive fire, causing the battery on our right to be abandoned, but Capt. Bradley continued his well-directed firing, until the enemy's batteries were silenced. While this engagement was going on, Capt. Stokes' battery posted in our rear, opened upon us, mistaking us for the enemy. During the engagement we had 1 man killed, and 11 wounded. About dark we were ordered to cross Stone River. My brigade was placed in the front line. We were hardly in position, before the enemy opened on us, killing 1 man of the 64th Ohio. During the night we constructed breastworks of rails, and remained on the front till 9 A. M., Jan. 3, when we were relieved and ordered to the rear in reserve, where we remained till about 3 P. M., when we were again ordered to the front, to relieve Wagner's brigade, and occupied a position on the left of the 1st Division. We remained in this position till about 1 A. M., Jan. 4, when we received orders to recross Stone River. We crossed the stream and took position in rear of the main body of our force, and about 500 yards to the left of the railroad, where we remained till the troops occupied Murfreesboro.

Capt. Francis M. Constant, Co. G, and 2d Lieut. Alfred Gude, Co. H, 51st Indiana, were wounded.

From Dec. 29 to Jan. 2, inclusive, my brigade occupied some portion of the front, and during each day some portion of the forces under my command were engaged with the enemy, and sustained greater or less losses. For the cheerful manner in which they stood up under these fatigues and exposures, they are entitled to commendation. I must also mention a circumstance worthy of notice, which occurred on Friday, Jan. 2. The enemy's sharpshooters, taking advantage of the woods in our front, and to the right and left, had crept up sufficiently near our camp, with the evident intention of picking off our general and field officers. They annoyed me exceedingly, firing at every mounted officer or man who appeared near the front. Desirous of dislodging this concealed foe, I directed the skirmishers to advance, and clear the woods if possible. Capt. Chambers, of the 51st Indiana, had command of the skirmishers, consisting of 40 men from his own company, Companies B and D, 73d Indiana; Companies H, E and K, 65th Ohio; Company E, 64th Ohio. The little detachment numbered only 120 men. The enemy's force was much larger. Our skirmishers drove them until they were checked by the enemy's batteries. Thus these brave men not only drove a concealed enemy from a strong hiding place, but elicited valuable information concerning the position of his masked batteries. This act of gallantry elicited the praise and admiration of all who witnessed it."

Col. Streight's report agrees with those already given, except in a few details. It begins at about 4 P. M., Dec. 29, '62, when we arrived on the west bank of Stone River, half a mile north of the Murfreesboro and Nashville pike, and two miles from Murfreesboro. Here we were ordered to halt; and we remained till dark, when we got orders to cross the river, preparatory to moving upon Murfreesboro. As we were fully aware that the enemy occupied the opposite bank, and as none of our troops had up to that time crossed the river, it was necessary to proceed cautiously, to avoid running into an ambuscade. Companies A and F were deployed as skirmishers, and ordered to cross in advance, and engage the enemy briskly; and if possible, to seize the hights on the east side of the river. No sooner had our skirmishers crossed, than the rebels opened fire on them briskly, from under cover of a fence but a few yards distant. Our skirmishers rushed forward on double-quick, and charged upon the rebels, who instantly fled from their hiding places. At the same time it was discovered that a large number was concealed in a field of standing corn on the hillside; and fearing that they would overwhelm our skirmishers, the whole regiment was hastened forward at double-quick. Before the regiment had entirely crossed the river, information came that the rebels were advancing in line of battle just beyond the crest of the ridge, about 400 yards to our front. It was at once determined to seize

the crest before the rebels could get there, if possible; and we started on the run forward. The entire ridge seemed to issue forth a continuous flame of fire, yet not a man faltered, but each seemed to strive to reach the desired point in advance of his comrades. The boldness of the movement, and the alacrity with which it was executed, with a well-directed fire, struck terror to the rebels, who fell back in dire confusion. Orders came just then to advance no further, but to hold our position. The colonel ordered the men to lie down, so as to conceal them as much as possible; and in a few minutes the rebels were seen advancing on our position. They were allowed to come within thirty steps, when we opened fire on them with such effect, that they hardly waited for reply, but broke and fled again. In a few minutes reinforcements joined us on our right and left. We remained there, without further molestation, till about 10 o'clock that night, when orders came to retire to the opposite bank of the river. After waiting till the rest of the brigade had recrossed, the Fifty-First followed; at the same time withdrawing our skirmishers in good order. The regiment was marched about 500 yards from the ford, where it bivouacked for the night. Light shirmishing was all that occurred, till the morning of the 31st, when it was evident, from the terrific roar of artillery and musketry, that the rebels were turning the extreme right of our army. We were at once ordered at double-quick to the right and rear; but had only moved a short distance, when we came within range of the enemy's artillery; yet, though several of our boys were wounded, with no chance of striking at the enemy, we moved a distance of more than a mile, with as perfect regularity as if we had been on drill. And even when we came in contact with hundreds of excited, noisy, jangling teams and teamsters, every command was quietly and promptly obeyed, without confusion. After marching about 2¼ miles, we reached the extreme right of the army. We had hardly halted, before we were ordered forward in

line of battle across open cotton and corn fields. Companies A, B and F were deployed as skirmishers to cover our extreme right and front. In this order we proceeded half a mile, when our skirmishers, approaching the crest of a ridge in front, were fired upon by a large force of rebels, concealed in standing corn. Instantly the whole line was forwarded at a double-quick; our skirmishers soon came upon the enemy, when a well-directed fire sent them skurrying through the corn like the shoats at Gadara. Again we were fortunate in wresting from the rebels an advantage in position. We had a fine chance at them as they were skedaddling down those long furrows, for about 400 yards; large numbers of them falling under the superior marksmanship of our Hoosier boys. Shortly after we had taken possession of the ridge, Lieut.-Col. Colescott, in command of the skirmishers, sent word to Col. Streight that large masses of troops were seen moving toward a piece of woods to our left and front. Streight at once notified Col. Harker, and requested that the 6th Ohio Battery be sent to the ridge we were then occupying. The battery was soon on the ground, but not too soon; for by the time it was in position, the rebels had engaged the troops to our left. Capt. Bradley opened a most withering fire, enfilading them at a distance of not over 500 yards. They were in column four regiments deep. Their dead were literally piled in heaps, by the terrific fire from this battery. The battle had been raging about three-quarters of an hour, when word came that the division on our left was falling back. At the same moment Col. Harker ordered us to fall back; which we did in good order, taking off all of our wounded. Having no instruction where to form, we took possession of the first advantageous ground, expecting to give the enemy battle; but we were soon ordered to resume the position we first occupied on the extreme right. Companies H and C were now deployed as skirmishers. Again we were approached by the rebels, and had got fairly engaged, when they broke

and fled from the field in great confusion. It was nearly night now, and the contest was ended for the day. Other troops came up, and we were again ordered to the position we occupied the day before; where we bivouacked for the night. Early next morning, we were ordered into position about half a mile to our right and rear, where we remained through the day. Companies A and G, and one company from the 73d Indiana, were sent forward as skirmishers, to drive the rebels from a piece of woods half a mile to our front; which was accomplished in short order. We had nothing further to do that day.

On Jan. 2, Col. Streight took Co. H, with several volunteers from other companies, and drove the rebels from the woods formerly occupied by the 21st Brigade. The contest was very severe for a short time, but our boys finally got the advantage, and what was left of the johnnies, skedaddled. Ten rebels were left dead on the ground, and their wounded were scattered in every direction. This was the last engagement in this campaign in which the Fifty-First participated.

We took 19 prisoners; 1 major and 1 captain. From careful observation made by Col. Streight, on the various grounds over which the Fifty-First fought, he said:

"I am convinced that we have killed not less than 60 of the enemy; and by adding five times that number, the usual proportion of wounded to those killed, we have a grand total of 360. These figures, though seemingly large for the amount of loss sustained by us, I feel confident could be fully verified by the facts. Most of the ground fought over by my regiment has not been covered by other troops, and in nearly every case we have been placed where it was easy to decide which were our killed. The success attending us, in most cases, and our small loss, I think is attributable in a great measure to the advantage taken of the ground.

Feeling grateful beyond expression, for the brave soldierly bearing, and prompt manner in which both officers and men performed every duty assigned them, I feel a great delicacy in mentioning names."

Captains Russell, Chambers and Flinn, and the men under them received mention for distinguished services.

Marion Fitch came to the regiment just as it was going into action on the first day. He had no knowledge whatever of a gun, save the little experience he had in hunting frogs and kildees down on the creek near his home; but he grabbed a rifle, and soon was cracking away with as good will as some of the veterans. Many other "troopees" who were equally inexperienced, made records in that fight.

While crossing the river on the night of Dec. 29, a ball from a rebel rifle passed over the heads of the men in front, striking George W. Holbrook, a recruit of Co. F, square in the forehead. He dropped forward in the river, but his body was recovered and taken back. He was very tall, his hight being 6 feet, 7 inches. He had enlisted but six days before.

During a lull in the first day's fight, John Gasper, Co. C, sat down on a spur of a large tree to rest. On the second day, the fortune of battle brought him to the same spot. Just then a big solid ball struck the same tree, scattering chips in every direction. Gasper gave a big sigh, and an expression of relief.

"What's the matter?" asked a comrade.

"Come mighty nigh bein' shot!"

"How?"

"Why, that ball struck right where I sat yesterday!"

As we fell back, on the 31st, Martin Phillippe, Co. E, was struck by a bullet in the back part of the right calf, the ball splitting, and fitting itself so firmly around the bone, that the ball had to be chipped off. In the Raid, near Rome, Ga., the same soldier had a similar experience, a ball entering the left calf, exactly as in the first instance it entered the right.

As we moved over, on the morning of Dec. 31, to take position on the right, Capt. M. T. Anderson, Co. D, was seriously wounded in the head, by the concussion of a shell. At the same time, Orderly Sergeant David Denny, Co. E, lost the skirt of his overcoat, that was swept away by a

cannon ball. Many other comrades received similar little courtesies; and were thankful that they were no worse.

Among the many brave acts of our boys, was the capture of a rebel major, by Corporal Clements, of Co. C, who marched his prisoner to the rear, with 9 others, and turned them into the "bull-pen."

Up to this time, war had been more of a school—a sort of system of experiments, than otherwise. From this time on, we got down to business; and the reports show an enormous increase in the killed and wounded in battle. It was found much cheaper and better in the long run, than to chase around over the country after skedaddling rebels, or to lie in camp, waiting for them to attack us. And, as usual, the common soldiers arrived at this point long before the generals did. It was found that strategy was only the method of cowards. More pluck was needed; indeed that was what conquered the rebellion. And right there comes in the point of comparison between the hobbling tactics of the Corinth campaign and the Bragg chase, with their respective originators and managers. Anybody could figure on the possibilities of a campaign; but it took real soldiers to fight. We had got the poor material weeded out pretty much; and when the order came to go in where the battle raged, every eye brightened, and every form straightened up to its full hight, as the command rang down the line:

"'Tention, Fifty-First! Load at will!—fix bayonets!—forward!—fire at will!—march!"

Quickly the bayonet flashed from its scabbard, and clicked as it was firmly fixed; then hands flew to cartridge-boxes, teeth tore off the end, the charge was thrust into the muzzle; the rammer slipped nimbly from its place, to drive home the deadly ball, and returned as swiftly to its socket; finger and thumb placed the cap, and all was ready in a moment, and the column was moving forward. They step cautiously, observing meanwhile the alignment; carefully inspecting cartridge-boxes, to see that they are well

supplied with ammunition. Then the balls begin to whiz about their heads; but they do not falter. Batteries are pounding away; trees and every other sort of shelter are taken advantage of; shells fall thick and fast, and general havoc ensues. Then the colonel again shouts:

"'Tention, Fifty-First! Fire at will!—charge—with a yell!"

And no power on earth could withstand the awful combination of such a terrific volley, such a withering yell, and the gleaming of those murderous bayonets! A rebel flag is shot down. More yells follow; as the miserable rag is torn to pieces, to be sent home in the next letters.

Thus the battle rages, to the end; and our boys come up smiling after each sanguinary round.

Jan. 4 '63, was spent in burying the dead; and on the 5th our army occupied Murfreesboro, which was most elaborately fortified.

We were satisfied with fighting, and were glad to rest. We had had a hard time since Christmas; without tents, and fighting more or less every day, much of the time on short rations, and part of the time without any. It had rained most of the time, too; but amidst all these trials and hardships, the boys stood it well.

The fall of Murfreesboro, and the complete rout of Bragg's army, was a terrible disappointment to the copperheads of Indiana, who had planned to openly recognize the rebel confederacy, and to still further divide the Union by antagonizing the Northwest and the New England States. Their scheme was badly frost-bitten.

"INDIANAPOLIS, IND., Jan. 3, 1863—9:20 P. M.

HON. E. M. STANTON, *Secretary of War:*

I am advised that it is contemplated when the Legislature meets, to pass a joint resolution acknowledging the Southern Confederacy, and urging the States of the Northwest to dissolve all constitutional relations with the New England States. The same thing is on foot in Illinois.

O. P. MORTON,
Governor of Indiana."