

upon the Twenty-first Wisconsin, Lieutenant Colonel Hart commanding. This regiment, led by its efficient commander, behaved like veterans."

On the 31st the brigade moved to the battle-field, taking in one and a few hundred stragglers. January 2d, they advanced the morning to the support of batteries then in action, and received a heavy fire of shot and shell, until, by another change, they went to the extreme front, still under the fire of the enemy, and held that position through the 2d, 3rd, and 4th, a cold rain. General Thomas reports that Colonel Starkweather's brigade reinforced him during the night of the 31st, and bore their share in repelling the attempts of the enemy the morning of the 1st."

The Wisconsin Tenth became engaged with the enemy early on December 31st, as previously stated, the rebels retreating. They made a further advance under a severe skirmish, until they were attacked by a strong force in front, but maintained their position until they received a flank fire, and were ordered to retire. On the morning of the 1st they advanced again, nearly to their former position, and there remained until the close of the battle, without another general engagement. Colonel Chapin reports, that he went into battle with eleven officers, and two hundred and fifty men; lost three killed, one officer and fifteen enlisted men wounded, and six missing.

In the advance on December 26th, the brigade of the 15th Wisconsin gradually drove the rebels to a strong and nearly impregnable gorge in a mountain, which they had fortified by a force of dismounted cavalry and eight pieces of artillery. The order was given to Colonel Carlin to capture that battery. He commissioned Lieutenant Colonel McKee, of the Fifteenth Regiment, to undertake the desperate task. Accordingly, Colonel McKee led the brigade line of skirmishers. They approached to the very mouths of the cannon, which opened upon them with shot and shell. But these intrepid men steadily advanced, followed by the brigade, who soon poured on a tremendous fire, which caused the rebels to yield, leaving one brass six-pounder behind, marked "Shiloh," they having captured it in that battle, the Fourteenth Georgia using it

now. In this charge Colonel Heg was conspicuous in his attempt to reach this cannon, and took possession of it in the name of the Fifteenth Wisconsin. On the morning of the 30th, the regiment was formed in line of battle, made a cautious advance, and Company E was sent out to skirmish, under Captain Ingmundson, who encountered the enemy about twelve o'clock. At two the regiment was ordered to support the skirmishers, and in the engagement Captain Ingmundson was slain. Colonel Heg fell back slowly, and his men, taking refuge behind a fence, held the position until dark, and rested on their arms during the night, in the severe cold, without fire.

On the morning of the 31st, at four o'clock, the regiment was in line of battle. They first supported a battery, and then took a position in rear of the Thirty-eighth Illinois, when they were at length forced to retire, the rebels advancing upon the Fifteenth in solid columns. At this point, Lieutenant Colonel McKee and some others were killed, and several wounded. Colonel Heg then withdrew his men to avoid an overwhelming force of the enemy. Again he posted his troops behind a fence, within four or five hundred yards of the Murfreesboro pike, and poured some destructive volleys into the rebels. Still they were too many for him to withstand, and he crossed the turnpike, rallied his men, and remained there the rest of the day. The losses on the 30th and 31st December were, killed, 15; wounded, 70; missing, 34; total, 119. The report of Brigadier General Carlin testifies to the great bravery, both of privates and officers, in these engagements. The Scandinavian blood was thoroughly tested, and found to be inferior to none in point of endurance and courage.

On the morning of December 30th, the Twenty-fourth regiment left their camp in front, following in the rear of Bush's Battery. Two companies were deployed for a flank movement, ordered by General Sill. To these, after an hour's march, another company was added, the whole moving out farther from the main column. The regiment formed in line about two hundred paces in the rear of the Thirty-sixth Illinois, and on the right of Bush's Battery. They remained in this position, on the edge of a wood, until ordered to advance.



*Including Company A with  
2<sup>d</sup> Lieut. George Bleyer. It was*

*in this action  
Bleyer was wounded*

*as  
described*

*30 Dec 62*

Five companies were sent to support the battery, which was hotly engaged with the enemy's artillery, while the balance of the regiment occupied an exposed position in the open field, where they had previously advanced, losing several men from the fire of the enemy. Finally, all the regiment were ordered to protect the battery, which the rebels were making efforts to capture. Night having put an end to the engagement, pickets were posted, while some sought to prepare coffee. The night was intensely cold, and the men were nearly frozen. At early dawn they were, however, ready again for action. The firing soon commenced, their column coming close on the rear of the skirmishers. The men were ordered to fire, but it was soon observed that another column of the rebel forces was coming from the woods on the right flank. In this difficulty, the regiment was ordered to break to the rear by companies, but all the officers not hearing the order, some confusion arose. Shortly the regiment was again formed in line in the open field, to the right of the log house which was used for a hospital. It is worthy of remark, that no regiment could have more rapidly moved into line again after retiring, surrounded as they were by confused masses of fugitives, many of them veterans of some of the hardest fought battles of the war. Soon after the regiment was moved up to the woods, where it joined the Eighty-eighth Illinois, and was then under the immediate command of Colonel Greusel. Marching through the Cedar Swamp, where they were exposed to a terrific fire of artillery and infantry, they soon reached the Murfreesboro Pike. Seeking the shelter of a thicket, skirmishers were deployed, and a watch kept for the enemy's cavalry. Moving farther up to the right, they supported a gun of the First Ohio Battery.

January 1st, the regiment returned, following the Eighty-eighth Illinois, and marched down to the Cedar Swamp, a mile beyond Stone River, where they were ordered to erect temporary breast-works. They occupied this position until the evening of the 2d, and then changed to the left of Bush's battery, near the Thirty-sixth Illinois. From this position they went into camp near Stone River. The loss of the regiment, in killed, wounded, and missing, was 173 men.

Among these were Lieutenants George Bleyer, of Company A, and Christian Nix, of Company D. Lieutenant Bleyer's death was the more lamentable as the wound from which he died was received from one of our own batteries while the regiment was lying in front of it. After this battle the regiment had but about 200 men left fit for duty. The following extract from the diary of Sanford J. Williams, Twenty-fourth Wisconsin, Company B, gives a vivid description of some of the stern and terrible realities of the battle:

My wound spouts blood fast, and I stop it by buckling my overcoat strap tight above the knee. The shells strike all about me, tear up the earth, burst, and kill wounded as well as others. George Rockwell has his right leg nearly severed close to the groin, poor fellow! and little George Merrick has a ball through him, entering a little below the navel, and coming out through the left hip. Lemuel Cochrane and Richard Joyce are killed, and many others killed and wounded, whose names I can't get. I crawl some rods through a hail-storm of missiles coming over and through the enemy from our own guns; the roar of cannon, and the howl and growl of shells is terrible! I am soon picked up, and carried in and laid on the floor of an old log house, which is covered with wounded and dying. The floor is swimming with slimy blood, and the shells are tearing through the roof and body of the old house, driving the splinters in all directions. One shell strikes on the floor, and cuts four wounded men in two.

THURSDAY, January 1st, 1863.—Weather clear and warm. The battle still rages, but too far off towards Stone River for any thing to reach us—some two miles away. The roar of the artillery makes the ground shake, and the moans of the wounded mix with other sounds. It is awful; and they die fast. The bodies are carried out, and the wounded brought in and put in their places. Hundreds lie outside and have no shelter. I wonder if they know at home how we are spending New Year's Day in our own gore?

FRIDAY, January 2d.—Clear and warm. No surgical care yet. Nothing to eat. (They are within the rebel lines.) I suffer badly with my wound to-day. At noon a little flour and water is mixed up and given us, partly cooked; it tastes very good. George Rockwell died this evening, in great pain. He said, "Tell Mr. and Mrs. Burchard (relatives of his) I have done my duty—I did my best." Then he said last, "I am growing cold, Sanford," and expired in a few moments. Good-bye to you! as true a soldier as ever died for his country. All paroled this eve. Can still hear the roar of battle in front.

SATURDAY, January 3rd.—Windy and rainy all day. No surgeon yet; must lay and bear it, though it is terrible. Wounded are dying fast. Can still hear the roar of battle, near all day, but can't learn how it is going. The rebels say they are whipping us. The dead blood on the floor begins to smell bad! Horrid, indeed!

SUNDAY, January 4th.—Beautiful and warm; the birds sing like June at home. No surgeons yet. I suffer a good deal to-day. At daylight the rebels are skedaddling back over the field fast. Glory to the right in battle! They are whipped!