

A HISTORY

OF THE

Thirty-First Regiment of Indiana
Volunteer Infantry

IN THE

WAR OF THE REBELLION

BY

JOHN THOMAS SMITH

The Third Colonel of Regiment

WHO WAS WITH THE COMMAND THREE YEARS AND SEVEN MONTHS



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Watterman, of Company A, and quite a number of the regiment who had been left behind sick, rejoined us. October 2d we resumed the march, passing through Columbia, and arriving at Moscow late in the evening of November 4, 1862. Here we went into camp near the town, and put up our tents for the first time since we took them down at McMinnville, on the 3d day of September, 1862, making two months that we had taken the weather, day and night, just as it came, without shelter or protection. November the 5th the regiment was called into dress parade, the first for two months or more. On the morning of the 7th we again broke camp, and were on the march. Arrived at Scottville November 8th, going into camp, and remaining two days. On the 10th we passed through Gallatin, in the State of Tennessee, and, taking the Lebanon road, we reached the Cumberland River, and went into camp after dark. The next day we crossed the river, and marched to Silver Springs, in Wilson County, Tennessee. We remained here in camp until the 19th, when we resumed the march, passing by the Hermitage, and refreshed our memory of the hero of New Orleans, marched on across Stone River, and finally pitched tents on the Murfreesborough pike, near Nashville, Tennessee. We remained here until December 26, 1862, being occupied in camp, guard, and picket duty.

BATTLE OF STONE RIVER.

REPORT OF BRIGADIER-GENERAL CHARLES CRUFT,

COMMANDING FIRST BRIGADE, INCLUDING SKIRMISH AT LAVERGNE,
DECEMBER 26, 1862.

HEADQUARTERS FIRST BRIGADE, SECOND DIVISION, LEFT WING,
IN THE FIELD, BEFORE MURFREESBOROUGH, TENN.,
January 8, 1863.

CAPTAIN,—I herewith submit, for the consideration of the General commanding the division, the following report of the operations of this brigade in the recent action before Murfreesboro, Tennessee.

The brigade broke camp, near Nashville, on the morning of the 26th ultimo. The effective infantry strength of the command on leaving camp was 1,207. It consisted of the First

Kentucky Volunteers, Colonel D. A. Enyart; Second Kentucky Volunteers, Colonel T. D. Sedgwick; Thirty-first Indiana Volunteers, Colonel John Osborn; and the Ninetieth Ohio Volunteers, Colonel I. N. Ross. Captain Standart's Ohio Battery, Company B, First Regiment, was attached to the command for temporary service.

After passing the picket lines near Nashville, this brigade had the advance, preceded by a portion of Colonel Kennett's cavalry command. After various trifling skirmishes and some artillery firing, the enemy's skirmishers were forced into the village of Lavergne. Here quite a force of cavalry, artillery, and infantry (or dismounted cavalry) of the enemy disputed the occupancy of the place. General Palmer ordered me to drive the enemy from the woods on the left, and take possession of the village from that quarter, if daylight would permit. The Thirty-first Indiana and the First Kentucky Volunteers were placed under command of Colonel Enyart, and sent by me to accomplish this. Colonel Murray, of the Third Kentucky Cavalry, having been ordered to report to me for temporary duty, was placed upon the left flank of these regiments, and, with his command, acted very handsomely in protecting it and securing the woods beyond. The regiments above named advanced, towards nightfall, under cover of the cedars on the left, and finding the enemy in force, near the frame church on the west of Stoney Creek, attacked him, and, after a sharp discharge of musketry, ran in on a bayonet charge, and routed him, forcing him across the creek, and occupying the west bank. Our line of skirmishers was then placed in the field beyond the creek and along the outskirts of the village. The conduct of both regiments and all the officers in this skirmish was excellent. The casualties of my command were eight wounded.

The Thirty-first Indiana was withdrawn to the rear to encamp, and Colonel Enyart, with his regiment (First Kentucky), and a section of artillery, under Lieutenant Newell, were left to occupy the position until morning. On the 27th ultimo the brigade reached Stewart's Creek, and went into camp at night. On the 28th (Sunday) the command lay at Stewart's Creek,

one-half the brigade on picket duty. On the 29th the brigade advanced from Stewart's Creek, in line of battle across the field, and at night took position in the front, on the Nashville Turnpike, in the cedars, near Cowan's burnt house, about three and a half miles west of Murfreesborough. An effective line of skirmishers was thrown forward, and the open ground to our front firmly held. On the 30th the brigade rested in position, holding the front of woods where it was bivouacked, and the line of pickets to the front during the fierce engagement which occurred on the night of our line. During the night the Second Kentucky (Colonel Sedgwick) was on picket duty. This regiment succeeded in driving the enemy's pickets from the crest in the field near the burnt house. His temporary shelters, along the row of peach-trees on the lane, some sixty yards east of the burnt house, were occupied by my troops after a sharp night skirmish, and held by them, against two charges of cavalry, until daylight the following morning. No pains were spared to explain my position during the night. Support was promised on my left, but did not come. If re-enforced on the flank, this position could probably have been held. One-half the effective force of my brigade was kept out all night, on picket, trying to hold this advanced line. The attempt was partially successful. It was suspected that the enemy had rifle-pits and a large force beyond the crest; but the best reconnaissance I could make, by night, could not furnish the facts. Subsequent knowledge evinced the correctness of the supposition, and also demonstrated the fact that 5,000 troops could not have taken and held the crest which my brigade of 1,200 attempted to reach and hold.

On the 31st ultimo an order was received from the General commanding division, about 8 A. M., to advance in line, with the brigade supporting me on the right and left. The brigade was promptly put in motion, formed in two lines, as follows: The Second Kentucky and Thirty-first Indiana Volunteers (under general charge of Colonel Sedgwick as ranking officer) constituting the front line, and First Kentucky and Ninth Ohio (under general charge of Colonel Enyart as ranking officer)

forming the second line; Captain Standart's artillery was formed in half-battery on each flank of the front line. The brigade, by this formation, exhibited a front of, say, 600 men more or less than a full regiment. Colonel Hazen's Brigade was in position on my left and rear, and brigades of General Negley's Division on the right. Upon giving orders to advance, my skirmishers ran rapidly forward from the wood, and engaged those of the enemy in the open field. They drove them, and my front line advanced promptly up to the rail fence in the margin of the woods. The enemy pushed toward us rapidly, and charged my line in great force and in solid rank. The fight became very severe and obstinate about 9 o'clock A. M. My troops fought with heroism. Every officer and soldier acted well, and seemed to me to accomplish more than could be expected of him. For sturdy endurance, stalwart bravery, and manly courage, it does not seem to me that the conduct of these two regiments here could be surpassed. The enemy were driven back, although superior in numbers. His charge was made in two lines, with the appearance of a four-rank formation, and in most admirable order and discipline.

After the first repulse, and before my line could be advanced, the enemy made a second charge (reserving fire until a close approach was had), which was more furious than before. The Second Kentucky and Thirty-first Indiana nobly held their ground, and, after some thirty minutes' well-directed fire, drove him back again for a short distance. A respite of a few minutes in active firing enabled me to execute a passage of lines to the front, to relieve the first line, the ammunition of which was nearly exhausted. This maneuver was well executed, considering that it was done under a brisk fire of the enemy's skirmishers, the crossfire of flanking parties that had already passed to the right and left of the line, and in face of two of the enemy's batteries.

The rear line, now front, was soon actively engaged. I attempted with it to assail the enemy, and ordered an advance. The first Kentucky, Colonel Enyart, on the right of the line, made a gallant charge, and drove the enemy before it, rush-

ing forward to the crest of the hill, clear beyond and to the right of the burnt house. The fire was so severe from the enemy's force at the burnt house, on the left, that the order to move up the Ninetieth Ohio was countermanded; not, however, until many of the officers and men of this gallant regiment had pressed forward over the fence in line with the old First Kentucky.

The sad list of the killed and wounded of the Ninetieth and First Regiments speaks loudly of the courage and manhood they evinced in this charge. Standart, with his gallant gunners, was throwing in grape and canister from the flanks as my men ran forward to the charge, and thinning the enemy's ranks. He was too strong for us, however, and soon my gallant advance was beaten back to the point of woods. This point was still held. The brigade on the left was never pressed up to my front, and left me exposed from this quarter. General Negley's Brigade, on the right, first advanced with my men; but, yielding to the impulsive charge of the enemy, broke up, and a portion of it drifted, in disorder, immediately to my rear, and left me exposed to the crossfire of the enemy from the woods on the right. We were now completely flanked. Our own troops impeded my retreat. Cannon, caissons, artillery wagons, and bodies of men in wild retreat, filled the road and woods to my rear, precluding everything like proper and orderly retreat. Captain Standart's artillery ammunition was failing rapidly. He was shifting front constantly to keep off the enemy. The cartridges of my men were becoming short. Messages were sent to the rear for re-enforcements and for the reserve brigade of the division. The enemy's fire was upon three sides of my position, and apparently exactly to the rear, in the woods. It was impossible to get ammunition up, to communicate with the General commanding the division, or to obtain re-enforcements.

In this condition the ground was still held for some forty minutes longer than seemed right or proper. My command had some cover in the edge of the woods from the enemy's bullets, and still kept up a fire sufficiently strong to keep them from

rushing into the woods. Seeing my little brigade failing rapidly, and many of its best men carried wounded to the rear, without hope of support or further ability to hold on, I withdrew it in as good order as practicable. The enemy pressed closely, firing constantly into the retreating mass. We faced to rear, and covered the retreat of General Negley's men as well as could be done. The Second Kentucky Regiment brought off three pieces and the Ninetieth Ohio Volunteers one piece of abandoned artillery, by hand, which the enemy were rushing upon and about to capture.

Standart's Battery was saved, with a loss of three men and seven horses. It had but sixteen rounds of ammunition when the order to retire was given. Upon falling back to the edge of the woods on the west side, I met Major-General Thomas, and reported to him, and, with his consent, continued to fall back across the open ground to the turnpike with my shattered forces, now numbering about 500. After forming in line along the turnpike (about twelve miles), the brigade was ordered, by a member of General Rosecrans's staff, to the left, to support a battery on the railroad. It took this position, and held it during the remainder of the day and the night following.

On the 1st instant the brigade was placed in line on the right of the division, in the rear of the interval between the First and Third Divisions. After remaining thus until noon, it was advanced to the front to support Swallow's (Indiana) Battery, posted on a commanding elevation to the left of the railway, and near the ford across Stone River. During the day it was exposed to occasional shelling from the enemy's batteries. On the 2d instant rude breastworks were constructed back of the batteries, and the brigade held the same position behind them. It lay here during the severe fight across the creek, on our left, supporting the batteries, and exposed to a heavy crossfire from the enemy's guns. A higher scene of cool, moral courage, perhaps, has not been evinced, during the war, than that exhibited by my brigade on this memorable day. The line lay still and quiet behind the frail works we had been able to construct, with the shot and shell of the enemy coming from three directions, and bursting above, in front of it, and all around it,

while our own massed batteries were belching out their contents in front of and over it. The roar of artillery was terrific. The smoke from our own pieces, and the bursting of shell of the enemy, at times obscured the line from our view. By some wonderful Providence but three men of the brigade were killed here by the enemy's shells.

About dark, when the enemy were driven upon our left, the brigade was advanced by General Palmer, he gallantly leading two regiments, the Thirty-first Indiana and the Ninetieth Ohio, to the point of woods a half a mile to the front and left of our artillery position, and in line with our advance on the left, across the creek. I followed rapidly with the residue of the brigade across the open field to the General's right, and on line with him. Knowing nearly the position of a masked battery of the enemy, hid by a crest in the field, I ordered the men to cheer loudly as we approached the latter. It had now become dark. As the noise of the last cheer died away, the enemy opened a fire of shrapnel from four small guns. The line immediately lay down under shelter of the crest, and for some thirty minutes the enemy continued to play at us. His shot passed just over our heads, and struck the ground not to exceed one hundred feet to the rear of our line. . . . With assurance of esteem to the Brigadier-General commanding the division, I am, Captain, very truly yours, etc.,

CHARLES CRUFT,

CAPTAIN NORBON,
Brigadier-General, Commanding First Brigade.
Acting Ass't Adjt., Second Div., Left Wing, Potlatch Army Corps.

The casualties of the regiment in this engagement were five enlisted men killed; one officer and forty-four enlisted men wounded; three officers and thirty-four enlisted men missing; total, loss, eighty-seven.

REPORT OF COLONEL JOHN OSBORN,

THIRTY-FIRST INDIANA INFANTRY, INCLUDING SKIRMISH AT LA VERGNE, DECEMBER 30TH.

HEADQUARTERS THIRTY-FIRST REGIMENT, INDIANA VOLUNTEERS,
CAMP NEAR MURFREESBOROUGH, TENN., January 7, 1863.

CAPTAIN,—I have the honor of submitting to you the following report of the part taken by this regiment in the late action with the rebel army before Murfreesborough, commencing

December 16, 1862, at the town of La Vergne, and ending before Murfreesborough, January 3, 1863:

On the morning of December 26th, when the United States forces were put in motion, our regiment was on picket duty some six miles southeast of Nashville. Before the pickets could be called in, and the regiment in line of march, the brigade to which they belonged was some four miles in advance. The regiment had a very fatiguing march through mud and rain. In passing the forces, we had to take the fields; that made the marching more arduous. At 3 P. M. we joined the brigade one mile west of La Vergne. We were at once ordered to the advance, the First Kentucky on the right, and our regiment on the left, the Second Kentucky Regiment and the Ninetieth Ohio Regiment our support. We were ordered across a field to a woods to the left of the Murfreesborough road. Shortly after we had taken our position, the enemy commenced throwing shell into the woods. We immediately sent out two companies (E and K), and deployed them as skirmishers in advance of our line, and moved on the enemy in line. After advancing about one mile, we came in reach of the enemy's guns. They opened a heavy fire from their rifles and two pieces of artillery, which overreached our line. Our men rushed forward with a shout, which caused the enemy to leave in great confusion. We then moved a short distance to the right, and bivouacked for the night. Both officers and men conducted themselves with coolness and bravery, without receiving any injury whatever.

The next day we moved forward in line of battle, which was continued, from day to day, until the evening of December 29th. We arrived, at nightfall, within a few miles of Murfreesborough, our brigade filing to the right of Murfreesborough pike, about one-quarter of a mile, when we bivouacked for the night. Nothing occurred during the night, except heavy skirmishing in our front.

Early on the morning of December 30, 1862, we were ordered forward to the front of the grove in which we were bivouacked, which order was promptly executed, our regiment on the right, and the Second Kentucky on our left, the Nine-

tieth Ohio supporting the Second Kentucky, and the First Kentucky supporting our regiment. Upon arriving at this position, I was ordered by you to report to Colonel Sedgwick, of the Second Kentucky, who, you informed me, would command the front line. I was ordered to deploy two companies in front of our line as skirmishers, connecting with a like corps from General Negley's Division on the right, and the Second Kentucky on the left, which was immediately done by sending out Companies C and E. Before our lines were established, the enemy opened on us a brisk fire of shell and ball, which continued all day, the balls of the enemies sharpshooters reaching our lines. About four o'clock in the evening we were ordered to advance our line to support a battery, which was done, and we remained in that position during the night, Companies A, B, I, D, and H, relieving, alternately, C and E as skirmishers.

Early on the morning of the 31st we were again ordered to move our lines to support a battery, which was done. Shortly after our skirmishers were driven in by the enemy, our men reserving their fire until all their comrades had joined the line. At this time a heavy force of the enemy appeared in our front, in an open field, on a piece of rising ground, where they opened a severe fire upon our line, which was returned with steady nerve by our men, which soon made them fall back. In a few moments they again returned to the crest of the field, and attempted to charge our line, but the steady nerve of our boys and their deadly aim caused them again to retire. Our men, getting short of ammunition, the First Kentucky Regiment came to our aid, and, passing our line, followed the enemy up into the field; but the heavy force of the enemy in front, and the regiment being exposed to a crossfire from the enemy's batteries, they were compelled to fall back with considerable loss. Our regiment remained in its former position, and held their fire until their Kentucky friends had passed to the rear. They again, with the coolness of veterans, poured another volley into the lines of the enemy, thinning their ranks, and making them, the third time, fall back to their former hiding-place. In a short time the enemy changed their point of attack, and ap-

peared, in great force, on the left of our brigade, and on the right, between our regiment and General Negley's forces. Both our right and left falling back, I was forced to order the regiment to fall back, the men obeying the order reluctantly, and our left, being so far turned before orders to fall back were received, caused our list of missing to be so large. We were also exposed to a crossfire of the enemy's artillery.

Our regiment occupied the front line from the morning of the 30th until 11 A. M. on the 31st, with the exception of a few moments, when the First Kentucky occupied the front. The brigade, falling back through a dense growth of cedar, became scattered somewhat, but were formed again in line ready for any emergency.

Next morning, January 1st, the regiment, with the brigade, took a position farther to the left, as a reserve. January 2d the regiment again took a front position, sending out Company F as skirmishers, and, during this day, they lay in rifle-pits, exposed to a terrific fire from the enemy's artillery. Late in the evening Lieutenant-Colonel Smith and Captain J. T. Smith, Acting Major, with General Palmer, led them in a splendid charge on the enemy, cleaning out a piece of woods occupied by them in force, both officers and men acting heroically, to the entire satisfaction of the brave General.

I can not close this report without calling your attention to the gallant conduct of the officers under my command during the action. Lieutenant-Colonel Smith was always on the alert, cheering the men, passing along the line of skirmishers and the regiment; wherever duty called him, there he was, during the whole engagement. Captain Smith, Acting Major, was always at his post, calm and collected, cheering the men, and directing them where to strike the hardest blow. Captain Hollowell, Acting Adjutant, was always on duty, visiting the outposts, and cheering the men, and where the balls flew thickest, he appeared the oftenest. Captain Waterman, of Company A—I can not speak too highly of his bravery. When one of his men fell, he picked up his gun, and nobly kept it still in use. Captains Neff, of Company D, and Grimes, of Company G, were always at their posts, discharging their whole duty. Lieu-

tenants Pickens, of Company B, Ray, of Company C, Scott, of Company E, Lease, of Company F, Brown, of Company H, Pike, of Company I, and Hager, of Company K, were in command of their respective companies during the whole action, and conducted themselves like old veterans, cheering their men, and directing them to fire with deliberation.

Lieutenant Ford, of Company A, after the regiment fell back, on the morning of the 31st, after Captain Waterman was missing, took command of his company, and nobly imitated the gallant conduct of his veteran Captain. Lieutenants Clark, of Company D, Hatfield, of Company H, Brown, of Company F, Fielding, of Company E, Roady and McPhetridge, of Company G, and Haviland, of Company B, were at their places throughout the whole action, ying with each other in noble deeds of valor.

Assistant Surgeon Morgan was ever attentive to his profession, close in the rear of the regiment. Close thereby he established his hospital, and refused to leave the wounded soldiers, but nobly remained with them, suffering himself to be taken prisoner rather than leave them to suffer. The same is also true in regard to Dr. McKinney, Hospital Steward, who was also taken prisoner.

I can not speak in too high terms of the conduct of Sergeant-Major Noble, who gallantly buckled on the cartridge-box, and took a rifle, and was in the front rank of the line, dealing out lead pills for the secesh. Sergeant Douglass, of Company K, who was discharging the duties of a Lieutenant, was active in leading his brave men to the post of honor. And, indeed, it is not necessary for me to speak of individuals; every commissioned officer and non-commissioned officer and private of my command did his whole duty, without an exception, as did all the officers that came under my notice of the entire brigade. Brigadier-General Cruft was at his post, ever watchful of his command, fearing no danger where duty called him; frequently riding along the line, waving his hat and cheering his command in the hottest of the contest. Of the few killed on the field, three were of the color-guard.

JOHN OSBORN,

Colonel Commanding Thirty-first Regiment, Indiana Volunteers.

General John M. Palmer, in his report of the battle of Stone River, speaking of the action on December 31st, says: "I only saw the regiments of Cruft's Brigade fighting early in the day. I had no fears for them where valor could win." In relation to the afternoon of Friday, January 2d, he says: "The First Brigade (Cruft's) was posted to support a battery on the hill near the ford. During the heavy cannonading the brigade maintained its position with perfect coolness. While the engagement was going on across the river, a rebel force of what seemed to be three small regiments entered the clump of woods in front of the position of our batteries on the hill near the ford. I ordered up two of Cruft's regiments, and upon approaching the woods halted them—told them it was my purpose to clear the woods at the point of the bayonet. To get the proper direction guides were thrown out, the proper changes made, bayonets were fixed, and these two regiments, the Thirty-first Indiana and the Ninetieth Ohio, ordered to clear the woods.

"They went in splendidly. It was done so quickly that the rebels had hardly time to discharge their pieces. They fled with the utmost speed. These regiments behaved handsomely."

In this charge I only know of one man being killed—Sergeant Henry D. Lehman, of Company F, a splendid soldier and a good man every way. We held this ground until towards midnight, and returned to our position near the batteries on the hill, where we remained until the retreat of the enemy.

After the Thirty-first and Second Kentucky had taken position, on the morning of the 31st, in front of the cedar woods, and near the "natural well," and after the skirmishers had been sent out, it was suggested by the Acting Major the building of a stone fence or wall for breastworks. The men laid down their guns and went to work, and in a few minutes you would have thought that every man was a natural-born stonecutter, and that each one was a master-builder. A rail fence in our front was thrown down, and by the time our skirmishers were driven in, our position was next to impregnable. We were here attacked by the brigade of rebel General J. R. Chalmers, consisting of the Seventh, Ninth, Tenth, and Forty-first Mississippi Regiments

and Blythe's Mississippi Regiment, together with the Ninth Mississippi Battalion of sharpshooters. The first charge made, Chalmers was carried off the field so severely wounded he did no further duty. The charge was repulsed with fearful slaughter. It made a second charge, and the result was that the brigade was so completely wiped out that the organization was destroyed. Chalmers's brigade was supported by the brigade of General D. S. Donelson, consisting of the Eighth, Sixteenth, Thirty-eighth, Fifty-first, and Eighty-fourth Tennessee Regiments. After Chalmers's total defeat—almost destruction—Donelson's Brigade came up with deliberate, steady step; but General Polk, in his report, says the slaughter was terrific. The Eighth Tennessee lost 306 out of 425, the colonel of the regiment being killed. The Sixteenth Tennessee lost 207 out of 402. Polk says: "All the line in their front was carried, except the extreme right of Palmer's Division. This point, which was the key to the enemy's position, and which was known as the 'Round Forest,' was attacked by the right of the (Donelson) brigade. It was met by a fire of musketry and artillery which mowed down half its number."

In consequence of the terrible slaughter of Chalmers's Brigade, which were all Mississippians, that part of the battle-field is known as "Mississippi Half Acre." When we went into position here in the morning, we connected with Negley's command on our right, and with Hazen's Brigade on our left. There had been, however, quite a gap between Cruft's Brigade and Hazen's, and besides Hazen's Brigade was not as far advanced to the front as that of Cruft. This gap, however, was covered by the Brigade of Gross, who was held as support to Hazen. We held our position here after the repulse of Chalmers and Donelson's Brigades until Negley's right had been so far turned that the line of battle stood at right angles with our line. In the meantime the ammunition of the Thirty-first and Second Kentucky having been about exhausted, an attempt was made to relieve them by sending in the First Kentucky to take the place of the Thirty-first, and the Nineteenth Ohio to relieve the Second Kentucky. When the First Kentucky had nearly reached our

position, the Colonel gave command to charge. The Thirty-first was ordered to lie down, and the First Kentucky charged immediately over us, and actually carried a few members of the Thirty-first with it, who had not heard the command to lie down. The First Kentucky soon encountered such an unequal force, and being exposed to a crossfire of both musketry and artillery, that it rapidly fell back, and again charged over the Thirty-first, closely followed by double lines of the enemy. As soon as the First Kentucky had all passed to the rear, the Thirty-first gave the enemy such a deadly volley that they fell back as rapidly as they had come. Gross's Brigade, which was in reserve to our left, in rear of Hazen, had been "about-faced" to re-enforce Negley, who soon repulsed the enemy in our rear, but leaving the gap between the brigades of Cruft and Hazen open and unguarded, which let the enemy in on our left, and soon we would have been completely surrounded. I looked for our support, and found it was gone. It was self-evident that the time had fully come for us to get out; hence orders were given to the regiment to get back through the cedar woods, every fellow for himself, and rally at the railroad. The regiment all started, except a portion of two companies on the right. I attempted to ride up to them to repeat the command, the rattle of battle being so terrific that it was difficult to make yourself heard. But the impudent Johnnies ordered me to surrender. This, however, I declined to do, and took to the bushes. I passed out through the wood a little to the left from the way most of the regiment had gone, and after getting about to the middle of the woods my attention was called to the report of a gun very near at hand. To my dismay I discovered quite a large rebel soldier, and just about the same time he discovered me. He immediately sprang behind a tree, and began to reload his gun. Just at this time, and in the very nick of time, John S. Moore came running up, and said, "Get out of here quick." I at once pointed out to him the Johnnie behind the tree, the tree not being quite large enough to completely hide him, the point of one shoulder being considerably exposed. Moore laid his gun on a cedar limb, and, deliberately taking aim, fired. The

Johnnie fell, and then we did not stand on the order of our going, but we went. In getting out of the woods I found General Rousseau planting a battery, which had no support whatever. He wanted to know where my command was, and I told him up on the railroad. He requested me to bring it down to support his battery, which I agreed to do, and galloped over to the road, where I found the regiment in line, and we double-quickd back to the battery, and had the satisfaction of seeing the General give the enemy grape, canister, shrapnel, shell, and solid shot effectively. This closed the fighting as a regiment for the last day of the year 1862. The official reports detail pretty correctly the transactions of the regiment during the rest of the engagement.

There is a mystery in connection with the official report of the battle of Stone River. The Colonel and Lieutenant-Colonel had both been more or less indisposed, and for several days both had been excused from duty by the surgeon. About December 8, 1862, the commissioned officers of the regiment, by an election, recommended me for promotion to Major. Hence I was detailed a few days before the battle to act as Major. The Colonel and Lieutenant-Colonel, however, had remained most of the time with the command, and both were with us for a while on the morning of December 31st; but I did not see either of them after we fell back through the cedar-grove until after the battle was over, the command of the regiment being in my hands. A few days after the battle the Colonel requested me to assist him in making his report. Soon after the report was forwarded it was returned, with an order for the man to make the report who had commanded the regiment. I then re-wrote the report, making very few changes, all of which the Colonel approved. I signed the report as commanding regiment, and forwarded it. Some time afterwards, General Cruft, with a view to compliment me, remarked that he would have sent all the reports made to him back, if he had thought there would have been like improvement on them. As I had written both reports, I did not very highly appreciate the compliment. But I have always supposed that the official report of the transactions of the regi-

ment in this battle was made by me, but I find that the report on record was made by Colonel John Osborn, and it is not the one written by me for him either.

During this engagement the Thirty-first Regiment was a part of the First Brigade, Brigadier-General Charles Cruft commanding; Second Division, Brigadier-General John M. Palmer; left wing Fourteenth Corps, Major-General Thomas L. Crittenden.

A few days after the battle, the Thirty-first Regiment, together with the brigade, moved out to Cripple Creek, some eight miles east of Murfreesboro, and went into camp, where it remained until the 24th of June, 1863. The five and a half months we spent in camp here on the banks of this naturally deformed, classic stream was possibly the most pleasant of our experience. True, we were on picket one-fourth of the time, and we were regularly and thoroughly drilled. Made quite a number of reconnaissances and foraging expeditions. The weather was generally pleasant, our supplies were abundant, and the enemy had received such terrible punishment at Stone River that they kept at a safe distance. The most disagreeable encounter the writer had while there was an unprovoked attack he made on a skunk. The loss in this little action amounted to a valuable suit of clothes. On one occasion the Thirty-first went out as a guard with a brigade train for forage. Some five miles southeast of camp we came to a farm and a nice crib of corn. Orders were given to take the corn without disturbing the building. In returning from putting out some pickets, we noticed corn-cobs in the fence-corners, all along the lane. We immediately went to the Negro quarters, and inquired of an old colored woman how they came there, and were informed that a regiment of rebel cavalry had been there every day for more than a week, at about one o'clock, and fed their horses. The picket force was at once doubled, and the corn-crib torn down, and in thirty minutes the corn was all loaded into our wagons. We prepared papers showing the amount and value of the corn we had taken, and took them to the house to present to the good woman; but we did not find her in a very amiable temper. After a little conversation, we wrote "a se-

cessionist" across the face of the papers, and were about to take our leave, when some of the boys inquired if she would sell some chickens. She said they were all for sale at fifty cents apiece. A chicken was caught, and she was offered fifty cents in fractional currency. This was more than she could endure, and she fairly stormed. Some one showed her a facsimile Confederate bill. This she accepted gladly, and in a few minutes she had no chickens, but plenty of facsimile. Two Captains of the regiment made an arrangement to go back the following Thursday to get some butter; but when the time came, they failed to procure a pass, and, in consequence of said failure, they were quite liberal in their denunciations of the regimental commander; but they felt quite different that night when a little colored boy came in with a message from the colored folks, not to come, for the place was alive with rebels waiting for them.

On the first day of April the regiment, in connection with some other troops, were sent out to Woodbury to attack some rebel cavalry that were supposed to be there. We made a night march, and came on to the enemy early in the morning. After a sharp skirmish we captured some forty prisoners, one sutler stand, and three wagons loaded with whisky and tobacco, and, in a day or two, returned to camp.

SUMMARY.

From May 4, 1862, the time we left Corinth, Mississippi, to January 3, 1863, the close of the battle of Stone River, was about eight months, or two hundred and forty days. During all this time the regiment was considered in camp ninety-nine days. It actually had its tents up but fifty-six days, leaving one hundred and eighty-four days that the men were exposed to the inclemency of the weather, just as it came, without shelter of any kind, and the worst weather that came found us without our tents, and on short rations.

During this time the regiment was under fire, in actual battle, twelve days, beside various skirmishes that sometimes amounted to quite a respectable little battle.

The regiment marched from Fort Donelson to Fort Henry;

then went by boat to Pittsburg Landing; then skirmished and fought its way to Corinth; then marched to Booneville and Jacinto, Mississippi. From there it marched to Iuka and to Eastport, in the northeast corner of Mississippi; thence, by the way of Tusumbia, Florence, and Rogersville, to Athens, Alabama; thence north across the State of Tennessee, passing through Reynolds Station and Nashville, to Gallatin, near the Kentucky State line. Thence back through Nashville, Murfreesborough, Liberty, and Smithville, to McMinnville, near the foot of Cumberland Mountain. Then a couple of days' march up into the mountain and return. Then we start out on the famous Buell-Bragg foot-race, back through Nashville to Louisville, Kentucky; then to the Perryville battle-field; and thence through Danville, Stanaford, Crab Orchard, Mount Vernon, across Rockcastle River, up onto Wildcat Mountain, to Nelson's Crossroads, to Goose Creek salt-works in Clay County, the southeast part of Kentucky; and thence back through Mount Vernon, Somerset, Columbia, Glasgow, Scottville, to Gallatin, Tennessee; thence, by a circuitous route, crossing the Cumberland above Nashville, and into camp near Nashville; and thence to the battle-field of Stone River, near Murfreesborough, having marched, in the meantime, more than three thousand miles.

During this time the regiment was on detached service, and almost entirely alone for a period of forty-one days.

The most laborious marching we had to do was what was called "flanking." The troops followed the road, and each regiment would detail a company, one-half of which were thrown out on each side of the road, two or three hundred yards, and march in Indian file, keeping as near the same distance as possible from the troops in the road. Of course fences, hills, and ravines had to be crossed, streams had to be waded, thickets and briar patches had to be penetrated, and, at the same time, you had to keep up with the troops in the road.

Another laborious duty, one that got to be quite burdensome, was "train guarding." When at any point away from the depot of supplies, brigade and division trains would be sent, and troops

detailed to guard them. The trains, of course, would be given the road, and the guards would have to march as best they could, and, in the event a team got stuck in the mud, the guards had to lay down their guns, and put their shoulders to the wheels. This train guarding was almost an every-day business, and the Thirty-first Regiment, somehow, was lucky in getting jobs of this kind to do. I do not suppose, however, that on this line we did more than our proportionate share. It was astonishing to see how quick a wagon could be repaired. If an axle should break, with scarcely no tools, and with no material except such as could be picked on a farm where the rails had all disappeared, a man or two would go to work, and the next morning the wagon would be up and ready for use. The method of repairing a wheel was different. If a wheel gave way, the teamster would drive to one side of the road, and wait till night, and then look out for a teamster who was off his guard, or a wagon that was not under the immediate eye of a sentinel, when it was only the work of a moment to take a good wheel off and put the broken one on. I have heard it said that sometimes a wheel would be carried five miles before the exchange could be made. It was insisted that there was no stealing in this, for the wagons all belonged to Uncle Sam, and that they were working for him. Be this as it may, it had all the symptoms of stealing.

The 24th day of June, 1863, we struck tents, and bid farewell to Camp Cripple Creek, moving out in a southeast direction until we came to the Murfreesborough and Bradyville pike, passing Bradyville, and up Dug Hollow, where we had some pretty heavy skirmishing; had one man killed, and one wounded. We continued our march toward Manchester, arriving there the evening of the 27th. We remained here a few days, marched in the direction of Tullahoma, until we got to Elk River. We remained here until the 5th of July, when we returned with the division to Manchester, and went into camp on the railroad. We remained here until August 16, 1862, when we broke camp, marched out on the McMinnville Road, following it until the next day, and turned in towards the mountain on the road to Dunlap. We waded Colens River on the 18th, and near noon

came to the foot of the mountain. The regiment was detailed to assist the train up the big hill, which we succeeded in doing soon after nightfall, and the regiment went into camp on the top of the mountain the night of the 19th. During the forenoon the next day we came up with the division, and moved on across the mountain, and down into Sequatchie Valley, arriving at Dunlap in the evening of August 20th. We remained here until the 1st of September, and found that there were a large number of Union people in this part of Tennessee. They came in, in large numbers, on Sunday, to hear Chaplain Gilmore preach. They were all delighted with the sermon, and many were profoundly impressed.

The first day of September found us again on the march, passing down the valley, and through the town of Jasper, and arriving at Shellmound, on the Tennessee River, on the evening of the 3d, at nine o'clock. The Thirty-first was ferried across the river in small flatboats, about eleven o'clock at night, being the first troops to cross, and was immediately sent out on guard or picket duty, while the remainder of the division was crossing. We remained here at Shellmound until the 5th, and what time we were not on duty, we were diligently putting in the time exploring Nickajack Cave, the mouth of which was a large, subterranean cavity, in which a regiment of men could find perfect shelter and safety from any cyclone, from which quite a number of narrow cavities led out to large halls or rooms. It was said that large quantities of saltpeter were procured here; but the works were quite rude and simple, consisting mainly of old-fashioned ash-hoppers.

BATTLE OF CHICAMAUGA.

REPORT OF COLONEL JOHN T. SMITH,

THIRTY-FIRST INDIANA INFANTRY.

HEADQUARTERS THIRTY-FIRST REGIMENT, INDIANA VOLUNTEERS, }
CAMP NEAR CHATTANOOGA, TENN., September 28, 1863. }

CAPTAIN FAIRBANKS, A. A. G.:

SIR,—I have the honor to submit, herewith, a report of the part borne by the Thirty-first Regiment Indiana Volunteer Infantry, in the late engagement with the Confederate forces