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CHAPTER V. THE SECOND REGIMENT

Organization of the Regiment—Sketches of its Field and Staff—Departure for the War—Receptions on the Way—Arrival in Washington—Movement into Virginia—Brigaded under Colonel Howard—Campaign and Battle of Bull Run—List of Killed and Wounded—Part Taken by other Vermonters—Return to Bush Hill—Disaffection towards Colonel Whiting—A case of Discipline—Removal to Camp Lyon—Building Forts—Reconnoissances—a Night Collision—Camp Griffin—Hardships and Suffering—Brigaded with The Vermont Brigade.

The Second Regiment of Volunteers placed in the field by Vermont was a notable regiment. The first of the three years regiments, it was longer in the service than any other Vermont organization except one¹ It had a share in almost every battle fought by the Army of the Potomac, from the first Bull Run to the surrender of Lee; and its quality as fighting regiment is indicated by the fact that its list of killed and wounded in action numbered no less than 751, or forty per cent of its aggregate of 1858 officers and men; while its ratio of killed and mortally wounded was more than eight times the general ratio of killed and mortally wounded in the Union army.

In its original composition the Second was a picked regiment, the companies forming it being selected by Adjutant and Inspector General Baxter from about sixty companies, which tendered their services to the State for the

¹ The Seventh Regiment, which was retained on duty in the Department of the Gulf for nearly a year after the close of the war.

war in the early days of May 1861. The ten companies accepted for the Second were recruited in the towns of Bennington, Brattleboro, Burlington, Castleton, Fletcher, Ludlow, Montpelier, Tunbridge, Vergennes and Waterbury, in the nine counties of Addison, Bennington, Chittenden, Franklin, Orange, Rutland, Washington, Windham and Windsor, thus representing the State at large as fully as any regiment recruited during the war.²

It being deemed all important to secure for the command of the regiment an officer of military education and experience, the Colonelcy was first tendered by Governor Fairbanks, by telegraph, to Colonel Israel B. Richardson of Michigan, a gallant son of Vermont who had won fame and rank in the regular army in the Mexican war. But Colonel Richardson had just accepted the command of the First Michigan Regiment. In declining the offer he recommended to Governor Fairbanks, as well fitted for command, Ex-Lieutenant Henry Whiting, Fifth U.S. Infantry, who had been his classmate at West Point, and was then living at St. Clair, Michigan.

Lieutenant Whiting, who had offered his services to the Governor of Michigan a little too late to receive an appointment to command one of the regiments which that State was raising, was thereupon summoned to St. Johnsbury by Governor Fairbanks and immediately commissioned, on the 6th of June, 1861, as Colonel. Whiting was a native of Bath, Steuben County, N. Y. He was appointed, from that State, to the U.S. Military Academy and graduated in 1841, standing No. 17 in a class of 41, of which George H. Thomas, Israel B. Richardson and other distinguished officers were members. He was commissioned as Second Lieutenant, Fifth

² A company of Irish Americans, recruited in Burlington and Colchester, was among those originally accepted; but being found deficient in number and discipline was disbanded by order of the Governor and the Vergennes company took its place.

U.S. Infantry, and served five years on the Northwestern frontier. In the fall of 1845, war with Mexico being imminent, he was ordered to the Southern frontier. In February, 1846, at Corpus Christi Bay, Texas, just before the U.S. Army crossed the Rio Grande, Lieutenant Whiting resigned his commission. Having married in Michigan, while stationed there, he returned thither and settled at St. Clair, in the lumber business, and was so engaged when the war broke out. He was, at that time, one of the Board of Regents of Michigan University.

George J. Stannard of St. Albans, was appointed Lieutenant Colonel. Though without military education he had already shown strong military tastes. He had been active in the reorganization of the militia, and had attracted notice as one of the best officers of one of the best militia companies, the Ransom Guard, of St. Albans. For two years he had been Colonel of the Fourth Regiment of State Militia and he had, as the pages of this history abundantly show, every instinct and quality of a gallant soldier and a successful commander. Charles H. Joyce, a young lawyer of Northfield, who six months before had been elected Colonel of the First Regiment of State Militia,³ was appointed Major.

The staff was of remarkable excellence. Quartermaster Perley P. Pitkin, of Montpelier, was one of the best that any regiment ever had. His merit was subsequently recognized by promotion to a Colonelcy in the Quartermaster's Department, and by such trusts as the charge of the main base of supplies for the Army of the Potomac. Surgeon N. H. Ballou, of Burlington, was an experienced and skillful physician. Assistant Surgeon B. M. Carpenter, of Burlington, was one of the most capable and promising young physicians in the State. Guilford S. Ladd (of Bennington)

³ Major Joyce subsequently represented the First Vermont District, in the Forty-fourth, Forty-fifth, Forty-sixth and Forty-seventh Congresses.

was Adjutant, and Rev. Claudius B. Smith, a Baptist clergyman, Principal of the "Literary and Scientific Institute" Brandon, was appointed Chaplain. Among the line officers were Captains J. H. Walbridge of Bennington, subsequently the second Colonel of the regiment, F. V. Randall of Montpelier, subsequently Colonel of the Thirteenth and Seventeenth regiments; V. S. Fullam of Ludlow, afterwards Lieutenant Colonel of the Seventh; James Hope, the landscape painter, of Castleton; Charles Dillingham of Waterbury, subsequently Lieutenant Colonel of the Eighth Vermont; Lieutenants Newton Stone, John S. Tyler and A. S. Tracy, who became in succession colonels of the Second; Enoch E. Johnson, under whom, as Lieutenant Colonel, the last of the regiment came home in July, 1865, and other subsequently well known officers.

The uniforms of the regiment were made in Vermont, of cloth of Vermont manufacture⁴ the State providing uniforms for the officers as well as men--and consisted of a frock coat, pantaloons and cap of gray "doeskin," with blue cord. A full regimental band of twenty-four brass pieces was provided.⁵

The companies rendezvoused at Burlington, on the 6th of June, and went into camp, called "Camp Underwood" in honor of Lieutenant Governor Underwood, on the Fair ground, North of the village, in new A tents. The men underwent a rigid inspection, by Lieutenant Colonel Rains, U.S.A., which occupied several days. On the 12th of June, the oath of allegiance was administered to the officers and men by U.S. District Judge Smalley. A single recruit, whose heart failed him, refused to take the oath, and was summarily drummed out of camp by the other members of the company to which he had belonged. On the 19th the arms arrived and were distributed, and somewhat to the disappointment

⁴ Manufactured by Merrill & Co., of Reading, Vt.

⁵ The Bennington Band, F. M. Crossett, Captain.

of the men, proved to be smooth-bore muskets of the Springfield pattern of 1842-- an excellent arm, but not the rifled muskets they had been expecting. Rifles enough to arm a single company (Company A) were obtained; and the smooth bores were all subsequently exchanged for rifled muskets. The regiment was an object of much attention during the two weeks of its stay in the State. Excursion trams brought visitors by thousands to the camp; the women of various towns provided the men with havelocks and towels, and supplied the entire outfit of linen, lint and bandages for the regimental hospital; the Vermont Bible Society distributed testaments to the entire regiment, and St. Paul's Church, of Burlington, gave prayer books to all who desired them.⁶

On the 20th of June the regiment was mustered into the service by Lieutenant Colonel Rains,⁷ was reviewed by the Governor, and received its U.S. standard, which was presented by Governor Fairbanks, and was placed in charge of Color-Sergeant Ephraim Harrington of Company G, a man of gigantic stature, measuring six feet four inches in his stockings, by whom it was bravely borne for two years.⁸

On Monday morning, June 24th, under orders to report at Washington, the regiment broke camp, marching out at the hour set (7 A. M.) to a minute. As it swept through the streets of Burlington, in column by company, the gray ranks,

⁶ The Montpelier company received a handsome flag from the ladies of that town, which was presented at Camp Underwood, by Rev. Dr. William H. Lord, and other companies were remembered by citizens of their respective towns in various ways.

⁷ Reins was a melancholy man in those days. "There can be no better material for soldiers," he said one day to the writer of this history, as they watched the regiment at dress parade. "These men are going to fight. The Southerners, too, will fight hard--and how the blood will flow!"

⁸ Sergeant Harrington served through the war without a wound, and came home a Captain in July, 1865.

filling the street from curbstone to curbstone, it formed a stirring spectacle. Every man bore in his cap the Green Mountain Boy's badge, the sprig of evergreen, and no finer or more effective looking regiment was seen during the war. It numbered 868 officers and men. Five men were left in hospital. A train of twenty four cars, drawn by two locomotives, bore the regiment to Troy, N. Y. Here a concourse of many thousands greeted the troops at the Railroad Station, and committees appointed by the "Sons of Vermont" of Troy, took them in charge. The officers were entertained at private houses, an ample collation was provided for the men in the Railroad depot, and General Wool renewed the regiment, before its departure. In New York, where the regiment arrived next morning, another enthusiastic reception took place, one feature of which was the presentation, in a ringing speech by Hon. E. D. Culver of Brooklyn, of a beautiful regimental standard, the gift of the Sons of Vermont in New York.⁹ The regiment was also addressed by ex-Governor Hiland Hall and U.S. Senator Foot of Vermont. The regiment was quartered in the Park barracks, during its stay of seven or eight hours in the city. On its way to the Jersey City Ferry, in the afternoon, multitudes of citizens lined the streets and greeted the Vermonters with cheers and offerings of flowers.¹⁰ The New York papers,

⁹ The Vermonters in New York had organized for the occasion, as follows: Hon. E. W. Stoughton, President; Geo. Folsom, Esq., and Hon. D. E. Wheeler, Vice-Presidents; C. L. Benedict, Esq., Secretary, and B. Murray, Esq., Treasurer. Reception Committee: Major John A. Pullen, Rev. E. H. Chapin, Geo. E. Rogers H. F. Spaulding, Wm. B. Hatch, Horace Greene, D. A. Heald, Leslie Baxter, Warren Leland, C. W. Prentiss, C. P. Peck, Edgar Starr, George Curtis, Seth B. Hunt, J. R. Spaulding, Geo. Folsom, Jno. Bradley; also, representing Brooklyn, Wm. Weston, C. L. Benedict, H. A. Johnston. Committee to present colors: B. Murray, Jr., E. A. Stoughton, S. S. Scott, A. M. Lyon, Wm. C. Conant, J. H. Eldridge, Peter Starr, Rev. E. H. Chapin. Committee on badges: C. L. Benedict, Alderman Mott, C. P. Peck. The badge selected was a sprig of Hemlock.

¹⁰ Among these was a basket with the following note: "Will the Colonel of the Second Vermont Regiment please accept for his regiment the accompanying basket of evergreens, from a Vermont lady, who has trimmed them with the scissors with which her mother, Millicent Barrett, cut the papers for the first cartridges that were used at Concord, Mass., and Bunker Hill, in 1775."

which as a rule had only good words for the Green Mountain boys throughout the war, were especially complimentary.¹¹

The regiment passed through Philadelphia at midnight of the 25th, receiving the cordial Philadelphian greeting and refreshment, so many soldiers learned to be grateful for, in the following years. It marched, with loaded muskets, through Baltimore, and reached Washington on the morning of the 26th and went into camp on Capitol Hill, three fourths of a mile east of the Capitol. Fourteen regiments were then in camp there.¹²

During the two weeks of its stay on Capitol Hill the regiment was occupied with daily drills.

The movements preliminary to the first great battle of the war were now in progress. Alexandria and Arlington Heights had been occupied by the Union forces, and General Scott was organizing the army which under General McDowell was to move against Manassas where General Beauregard had an army of nearly twenty thousand. From the 1st to the 15th of July the regiments which were to form McDowell's column were moving across the Potomac, and encamping around Alexandria and on Arlington Heights in a gradually widening circle. The Second Vermont was ordered into Virginia on the 10th of July. It went by steamer

¹¹ The following from the N. Y. Herald, of June 26th, is one of many similar paragraphs: "The First regiment of Vermont have already figured with honor to themselves on the battlefield, and it is evident from the physique and general cut of the Second, that they will not be second to the first on the field of action. All the staff officers of this fine regiment appear to be highly educated men, who know exactly how to prosecute the work in which they are about to engage. The men are nearly all six footers."

¹² One of these, the 8th Minnesota, had in its ranks, by actual count, 170 native Vermonters, being one sixth its entire number.

to Alexandria, and thence by rail to Bush Hill five miles west of Alexandria. Here, at a point in advance of any troops in that vicinity, it went into camp, on the handsome place of Commodore Forrest then in the confederate service. Next day a detachment of three companies, under Major Joyce, was thrown out to the bridge at Springfield, about five miles from Fairfax Court House. A day or two later, the Third, Fourth and Fifth Maine regiments having arrived at Bush Hill, the Vermont Second was brigaded with them under command of Colonel O. O. Howard of the Third Maine. The regiment remained here, till it started on the brief campaign of Bull Run.

THE FIRST BATTLE OF BULL RUN

On the 16th of July, the largest army ever collected on the American continent, began moving to the front. It was in five divisions under Generals Tyler, Hunter, Heintzelman, Runyon and Colonel D. S. Miles. Howard's Brigade was the third of Heintzelman's division, the first and second brigades being commanded by Colonels W. B. Franklin and O. B. Wilcox. One division (Runyon's) remained back to guard the communications. The other four-- numbering, all told 28,000 men, with 49 guns marched to the West by as many roads. Heintzelman's division moved on the extreme left, by the country road running on the south of and parallel with the Orange and Alexandria Railroad, the Second Vermont bringing up the rear of the column. Colonel Whiting and his field and staff officers were as yet without horses and marched on foot with the men.¹³

The march of the division was delayed by the burning of bridges, and by other obstructions. A stream was crossed

¹³ Major Joyce bought a horse on the way to Bull Run, and was the only mounted officer, on the march out and back. Horses for the field officers were subsequently sent from Vermont.

on a single string-piece of hewn timber; and it was after midnight before the regiment stopped for a short rest. After three hours sleep, the men were roused, and at 8 o'clock of the 17th were again moving. The brigade camped that night near Sangster's Station (two miles south of Fairfax Station) where some provisions left by an Alabama regiment in its hastily abandoned camp afforded supplies to the men, whose three day's rations had already begun to give out, under the wasteful ways of new troops. The three confederate brigades stationed at Fairfax Court House, Fairfax Station and Centreville fell back without show of resistance, and General McDowell established his headquarters at Fairfax Court House that night.

During the next day, Howard's brigade rested, though stirred during the afternoon by the booming of Tyler's and Richardson's guns in the premature and inconclusive fight at Blackburn's Ford—the first sounds of battle that had ever reached the ears of most of the men. At 5 P. M., the brigade moved and marched five or six miles to a point on the Braddock Road, two miles east of Centreville, around which place the army encamped that night. Here General McDowell waited two days to reconnoitre, and ration his army-- a delay which was one of the chief causes of the first great Union defeat, as it gave the enemy just the time needed for Johnston to reinforce Beauregard with the Army of the Shenandoah. The rest, however, was very grateful to the men, who had felt severely their three days of marching and standing to arms. Rations were scanty in the camp of the Second and the men eked them out by foraging for honey and chickens in the surrounding farmyards.

The terrain of the coming battle is too familiar to need description. The historic stream of Bull Run, whose abrupt banks made it a formidable military obstacle, runs in a general course from north to south. Crossing this at right angles by a stone arch-- the famous " Stone Bridge" so prom-

inent in all accounts of the battle-- ran the Warrenton Turnpike, the broad macadamized road way which was to be such a thoroughfare of armies in the four years to come. Along the right bank of Bull Run General Beauregard had disposed his army, now numbering 22,000 men and 29 guns. It was swelled by the arrival of Johnston and the Confederate Army of the Shenandoah, during the battle, to 32,000 men and 59 guns.

General McDowell's original plan was to make his main assault upon the Confederate right, and he had complimented Heintzelman's division by selecting it to turn the enemy's right and make the leading attack, and had placed it on his own left for that purpose. But inspection of the ground led him to change his plan; and on Thursday night he announced to his division commanders his purpose to turn the enemy's left instead of his right. Heintzelman's division was still to share in the main attack, and was accordingly moved from the extreme left to the right. The order of battle directed Hunter and Heintzelman to move in the latter part of the night and cool of the early morning, cross Bull Run at the unguarded ford of Sudley Springs, two miles north of the Stone Bridge, and surprise and roll back the Confederate left. Tyler was then to cross at the Stone Bridge and complete the destruction of the enemy. It was a good plan-- Bull Run has been well called one of the best planned and worst fought battles of the war-- if it had succeeded, another civil war would have become necessary before slavery and secession were destroyed.

McDowell's orders were issued on Saturday. That evening Colonel Howard addressed the men of the Second Vermont, with the rest of his brigade, saying that it was probably the last time they would all meet on earth, and dwelling more than was wise on the perils before them; but nothing could dampen the spirit of the men. They welcomed the contest, and were as sure of victory as that there would

be a battle. The troops were roused at half past two next morning; but Heintzelman made but little progress till after daylight, as Tyler's division, moving first, and behind time, to the Stone Bridge, filled the turnpike. Hunter's division, which preceded Heintzelman, followed Tyler's with ever-accumulating delays. The sun was well up before Heintzelman was under way; and as Howard's brigade was the last of the division, and the Second Vermont the rear regiment of the brigade, it was seven o'clock before the Vermont regiment was fairly in motion. The men left their tents standing, and moved in light marching order, with forty rounds of ammunition in their cartridge boxes.¹⁴ They took their blankets, thrown over their shoulders, but left their knapsacks in their tents where they were found by the enemy, thirty-six hours after.

Between two and three miles out from Centreville, Heintzelman's division turned off from the turnpike by the wood road leading north to Sudley Ford, over which Hunter had preceded him. As Howard turned from the turnpike into this road, he was halted by General McDowell, who was superintending the movement in person. McDowell had become apprehensive lest the enemy should cross Blackburn's Ford and attack his left,¹⁵ and he held Howard's brigade to help Miles's division, which he had disposed along the Centreville ridge to resist any such attack, in case of need. The Confederate reports show that such an assault on the Union left was definitely ordered by General Beauregard; but before it was executed the clouds of dust raised as the Union columns moved round to the north, told the Confederate commanders of the danger which threatened

¹⁴ The cartridge was that so much used during the war on the Confederate side, containing a ball and three buckshot, for the smooth bore muskets.

¹⁵ General McDowell's Report.

their left, and abandoning the counter demonstration they hurried brigades and batteries thither, leaving, only a few companies to guard the Stone Bridge and the lower fords.

For over four hours Howard's brigade waited wearily at the spot where it was halted by McDowell, the latter part of the time being enlivened by the sounds of the battle now going on in terrible earnest across Bull Run. The roar of artillery and rattle of musketry thickened, rolling to the south as Hunter and then Heintzelman became engaged and pressed back the enemy. The latter had been driven back over a mile, to and beyond the Warrenton turnpike. Sherman's and Keyes's brigades (of Tyler's division) had forded Bull Run above the Stone Bridge and were pressing the rebel centre, and thus far all was going well. Considerable portions of

the Confederate army had in fact given up the day as lost, and having thrown down their guns were streaming towards Manassas in utter panic. But Johnston and Beauregard had hurried in person to the spot, and a new line was formed by them, composed at first of twelve regiments and twenty-two guns, soon heavily strengthened by fresh troops now arriving both from the Shenandoah and from Richmond. The line was formed in the edge of some woods which afforded concealment and protection, while their batteries swept the plateau south of the turnpike, on which stood the house of Mrs. Henry,¹⁶ near which the hardest fighting of the day took place. It was here that Ricketts's battery was thrice lost and thrice recaptured and finally abandoned. Here the Union advance was checked, and here the retreat began. It was here, and as the last effort to hold the enemy back, while the demoralized fragments of the divisions that crossed Bull Run were withdrawn, that the Vermonters did what fighting they had to do in this their first battle.¹⁷

When General McDowell discovered that Hunter and Heintzelman's were encountering heavy opposition, he sent back for Howard's brigade. The order to join the division reached Howard between twelve and one o'clock. The Stone Bridge was then guarded by but four companies of South Carolina troops, and if the Union commanders had only known it, he could easily have forced a passage by the turnpike, and reached the field by a march of three miles. But his orders were to follow the route taken by the division, and he accordingly made the long detour by Sudley Ford. It was an exhausting march, in the very heat of the day. The

¹⁶ Mrs. Henry, a bedridden old woman, was killed in her bed, during the battle, by fragments of exploded shells.

¹⁷ "Across the [Warrenton] road was another hill or rather elevated ridge or tableland. The hottest part of the contest was for the possession of this hill, with a house on it. The force engaged here was Heintzelman's division, Wilcox's and Howard's brigades as the right."—General McDowell's Report.

brigade had made two miles when an order came from General Heintzelman to hurry forward at double-quick. It was obeyed, though only the stoutest could stand the pace, and after a mile of it, the numbers of the men who fainted and fell out of the ranks made it plain that less haste would be greater speed. The rest of the march was accordingly made at quick time. The brigade reached the field about three o'clock, meeting, after it passed Sudley Spring, the disorganized remnants of a brigade, which had made its fight and was pushing for the rear.¹⁸ Guided by an aid of General Heintzelman, it was at once sent to the right and front.

The fighting of the Union troops at that portion of the field had been for some time a series of disconnected attacks upon the enemy's line. An artillery duel between Griffin's and Ricketts's batteries and a superior number of Confederate guns, had been maintained till the Union cannoners had been killed or scattered by the enemies musketry. Porter's, Franklin's and Wilcox's brigades had been brought up and regiment after regiment sent forward, only to retire in disorder. The Fire Zouaves of New York had made their short fight and been scattered by a charge of Virginia cavalry under Colonel J.E.B. Stuart, with whom, in later days, our Vermont cavalry became acquainted. The First Minnesota had been led up by General Heintzelman in person, and repulsed. The Fourteenth New York had made a gallant advance, and gone back quicker than it went forward. The battalion of U.S. Marines ordered to support the Fourteenth New York had thrice broken and thrice been rallied, and then fled in rout, leaving one of their officers, a gallant

¹⁸ "As we approached the field we met Colonel Wilcox's brigade all disbanded. The privates said to our men as we passed: 'hurry on; we drove them two miles; you won't catch them, if you don't hurry.' Yet the sight of so many disorganized men looked very suspicious to me."—Colonel Whiting's manuscript.

young Vermonter, Lieutenant Robert E. Hitchcock, dead upon the field; and so of other regiments. Hunter and Heintzelman were wounded; Wilcox was wounded and a prisoner; Ricketts was lying wounded under his deserted guns; Griffin had with difficulty withdrawn three of his guns, which were met by the Second Vermont as the latter went forward, leaving three on the field. The day was, in fact, already lost for McDowell, though the Vermonters at least were no more aware of it than were the Confederate generals.

It was during this last lull of exhaustion and dawning consciousness of general disaster on the Union side, and of doubt what was next to happen on the Confederate side, that Howard's brigade was put into action. It was ordered forward by Heintzelman, evidently with little hope of retrieving the day, probably with no other object than to hold the enemy in check while the rest of the army was withdrawn. As it moved into the open ground on the ridge the sight was not encouraging to such of the officers and men as took any sense of the situation. Not a gun was firing on the Union side, and no organized body of troops, except their own, was in sight in that part of the field¹⁹, while the enemy's line, now visible in front, was still firm, protected by fences and woods, and in the not remote distance on the right, the brigade of General E. Kirby Smith (a Connecticut renegade) just arrived on the field from the Shenandoah, could be seen advancing unopposed.

"The fact," says Colonel Whiting, in his brief and fragmentary report, "that we saw no infantry organized, gave us a good deal to think of, till we came to where the rifled cannon balls fell around. Then, not hearing any artillery from our side, the fact burst upon us, that all of our troops in the neighborhood except our brigade, were routed."

¹⁹ "We did not see that day on the field any other organized troops." —Colonel Whiting's manuscript.

Nevertheless the brigade moved forward. The Second Vermont, marching by the flank, moved steadily up the slope, and over a low crest, near the pike, where it came under the fire of the enemy's batteries. By one of the first shells from these Corporal R. H. Benjamin, of Company C, was instantly killed, and First Sergeant U. A. Woodbury, of Company H, had an arm taken off. This was the first life lost in action, and the first sleeve emptied by a rebel shot, among the Vermont troops.²⁰

Eight or ten men of the Second Vermont were wounded while passing over the ridge. Moving on, into a hollow which afforded shelter from the enemy's fire, Colonel Howard formed his brigade in two lines of battle, the first composed of the Second Vermont and Fourth Maine and the second of the Third Maine and what was left of the Fifth Maine, half of that regiment having scattered under the artillery fire. The Second Vermont marched steadily up the slope and was the first regiment of the brigade upon the crest.

It made this movement alone, the Maine regiment which

²⁰ Russell H. Benjamin was a young man of 30, and a resident of Brattleboro. He was in the employ of the Vermont and Massachusetts Railroad company, when the war broke out, and enlisted when the first company of three years' troops was organized in that town. He was a member of the color-guard, and gave promise of being a good soldier. He was struck by a fragment of a shell, and instantly killed. His body was borne to one side by his comrades and laid under a tree; and was subsequently buried on the field by the enemy. He left a widow.

Sergeant Woodbury of Elmore, was a student in the Medical department of the University of Vermont, in April, 1861. He enlisted in the Fletcher company of the Second, and was the Orderly Sergeant of the company. A fragment of the same shell which killed Corporal Benjamin took off his right arm. He was as taken to the rear to a cooper's shop near Sudley Church, used as a hospital, where his arm was amputated near the shoulder, by Surgeon Ballou. He was captured with the rest of the severely wounded, and after lying a week in the cooper's shop was taken to Richmond, and remained a prisoner till October, when he was released and received an honorable discharge from the service, to which he returned the next year as a Captain in the Eleventh Vermont. He was subsequently transferred to the Veteran Reserve Corps.

should have been the guiding regiment on its right hanging back, and in fact never reaching the line where the Second halted. Passing over the ridge and half-way down the slope beyond, the Second Vermont halted in sight of the enemy's line, plainly visible in the edge of the woods and behind a rail fence, from 200 to 300 yards distant.²¹ Here the regiment opened fire, and fired from ten to fifteen rounds per man, with the effect of causing the withdrawal of a considerable portion of the enemy's line within the shelter of the woods. Seeing to the right some Confederate troops moving by the flank towards the woods in front of the regiment, Captain Walbridge, of Company A, whose men were armed with Springfield rifles, requested permission of Colonel Whiting to move his company in that direction and attack them. This request, which later in the war would have been deemed a rather peculiar one under the circumstances, was granted. Walbridge marched his company some distance to the right, halted, and opened fire with noticeable effect, the enemy moving hastily into the shelter of the woods. Lieutenant Colonel Stannard, who showed in this his first battle the coolness and courage which marked his conduct in so many subsequent fights, seeing Walbridge's movement, went after him, to order him back to the regiment; but learning that he had the Colonel's permission, left him there.

The Second Vermont held its position, receiving repeated volleys of musketry, for about half an hour, during which Colonel Howard ordered up his second line, or as much of it as could be formed; and the Third Maine, after having been once dispersed, as it passed over the crest, by the enemy's artillery fire, and falling back to re-form in the hollow below, came up in the rear of the Vermonters and

²¹ Supposed to have been the brigade of Colonel T. J. Jackson, who gained in this battle his title of "Stonewall Jackson," and two South Carolina regiments under Colonels Kershaw and Cash, with Kemper's battery.

commenced firing over their heads. About this time the concentration of the fire of the enemy's batteries, opening from the right as well as left upon his position, becoming serious, Colonel Whiting gave the order to cease firing, and to march "by the flank" to the right. Only a portion of the regiment heard the order, and obeyed it. The rest remained, but ceased firing under a cry, which ran along the line, that they had been firing on friends instead of foes.²² The sight of some rebel colors, in the skirt of the woods, soon undeceived them, however, and they began firing again, firing in all some twenty rounds, when gradually discovering that the rest of the regiment had retired and that the line behind them had departed, they fell back by companies and squads, some, however, remaining till their ammunition was about exhausted. All halted under the cover of the crest, where the regiment was again formed; then fell back over the plateau under a sharp fire; and then, discovering that the army was in full retreat, hastened after the retreating masses. Meantime Company A. maintained its advanced position, and was joined by a battalion of U.S. troops, believed to have been Major Sykes's battalion of U.S. regulars, which was the last Union force of any size to maintain its organization in this part of the field. Perceiving, soon after, that the latter had fallen back to the right and rear and were forming square to resist cavalry,²³ Captain Walbridge joined the regulars with his

²² Captain Walbridge states that a Confederate officer or soldier came from the woods to within hailing distance of the regiment and shouted "You are firing on your friends."

²³ Taking a position on the extreme right in front of several regiments of the enemy, I opened an effective fire upon them and held my ground until all our troops had fallen back, and my flank was turned by a large force of horse and foot. I then retired a short distance in good order, and facing to the enemy on the crest of a hill, held his cavalry in check which still threatened our flank. At this stage of the action, my command was the only opposing force to the enemy and the last to leave the field." Report of Major George Sykes, Commanding Battalion U.S. Regulars.

company and helped form the square. The formation had been hardly completed, however, when a furious cannonade was opened from a Confederate battery which accompanied the cavalry. The order to "reduce square" was at once given and obeyed with alacrity. The situation was not a pleasant one, and Walbridge thought it best to return to the regiment. While marching back, he noticed a line of the enemy at the edge of the woods in front, and proposed to his men to take a parting shot at them. This was done, and was replied to by a volley from the enemy, big enough to have swept Co. A from existence; but only one Vermonter was wounded by it, a ball passing through his cheek. This was the last fighting done that day by any portion of the regiment, and must have been almost if not quite the last done by any organized portion of the Union Army on the field of Bull Run.

Hastening back to where he left the regiment, Walbridge found it and all the Union forces gone, and followed the retreat, halting once and forming his company in a piece of woods, to resist an expected attack of "Black Horse Cavalry," which, however, did not come. The company then mingled with the fleeing crowd.

The Second Vermont maintained its organization--and was the only regiment of Howard's brigade that did so-- till after it re-crossed the turnpike, and till it reached a spot where a jam of ambulances, artillery and ammunition wagons filled the road to Sudley Ford. The contagion of the panic under which nearly one-half of McDowell's army had dissolved, here struck the Vermonters; and though some of the best of the company commanders kept with them some of the best of their men, for the rest it was pretty much every man for himself. They returned by the roundabout way over which they went, fording Bull Run near Sudley Ford, and Cub Run at the so-called "Suspension bridge" where the blockade of wagons and artillery took place which gave the enemy their

largest capture of guns, and reaching their camp at Centreville between nine and ten o'clock P. M.

Colonel Whiting's account of the retreat is as follows: "Colonel Howard was not visible. It seemed unmilitary for me to order a retreat; but it seemed necessary. I ordered: Cease firing: Shoulder arms: Right face: March!, When part way off the field, say four hundred yards, I looked around and as it seemed the left (of the line) had not heard my command and had not started; and the Captain of the company on the right seemed to think his company might do some more service yet, and was loathe to leave the field. But little time elapsed before we were all over the hill. I chose marching off the field by the flank, fearing that by marching line, as we came on, the line might be broken, and present the appearance of too hasty a retreat. Had my command been heard and obeyed the manner of leaving the field would have been more satisfactory. The regiment was broken up, going over the thickly bushed hill. On coming out to a clear place, I inquired of some officers, of the casualties. They said the Captain of the color company was left on the field.²⁴ I proposed to accompany them to bring him off. While we were talking a mounted officer rode up and told us we would all be taken prisoners in ten minutes. We then proceeded a little to where there was an assemblage of stragglers. Colonel Howard ordered me to form line, which I did. He ordered the Maine regiments to do the same, which they did not. I was ordered to march my regiment back to Centreville. We had proceeded but a little way on the narrow road, being driven out every few rods by artillery teams. Though I had not seen any of the rebs in pursuit I presumed the mounted officer that warned us to leave had seen them, and that we should probably meet them at the next cross roads. So I

²⁴ This, however, was not the case. Captain Todd was helped off from the field by some of his men, was placed by Lieutenant Colonel Stannard on a stray horse which he caught, and reached the camp that evening.

directed the regiment down a wooded stream and waded the one it emptied into. When opposite the cross roads, we heard the firing and yelling we anticipated. When a little way out of Centreville we met the reserve."

By eleven o'clock that night most of the stragglers were in camp. As a general thing the men brought their muskets with them²⁵, and though all early threw away their blankets many brought in blankets which they had picked up on the retreat. That the regiment compared favorably with the others of the brigade in point of discipline is indicated by the fact that of the 616 men officially reported missing, of Howard's brigade, but 91 were of the Second Vermont, though it was the largest regiment in the brigade. The Fourth Maine reported 119 missing, and the Fifth Maine no less than 333 missing. In fact, as will appear shortly, but ten unwounded Vermonters were captured, and but thirty-one in all. The official reports of the Federal loss,²⁶ made immediately after the battle, though generally accepted on both sides, were beyond question exaggerated, by reporting as missing stragglers who soon rejoined their regiments, and by counting twice men who were included in the lists both of wounded and prisoners. If the total loss of McDowell's army, as officially reported, was as much exaggerated as that of the Second Vermont regiment, the aggregate should be lessened by nearly one-half. In General Heintzelman's report of the casualties of his division, the loss

²⁵ "I do not think that over one in twenty threw away their muskets." Statement of Captain Elijah Wales.

²⁶ The casualties of the two armies, as stated in the official reports, were as follows:

Union, Killed, 481; wounded, 1011; missing 1216; total, 2,608.

Confederate, " 387; " 1582; " 13; " 1,982.

The Union losses were confined to the seven brigades and five batteries, numbering 18,572 officers and men, and 24 guns, which General McDowell took across Bull Run.

of the Second Vermont is stated to have been 6 enlisted men killed, 1 officer and 21 enlisted men wounded, and 1 officer and 91 enlisted men missing—a total of 120. Its actual loss was 2 enlisted men, Corporal Benjamin of Co. C and Victor Goodrich of Co. F, killed;²⁷ 1 officer, Captain Todd of Brattleboro who received a ball through the throat,²⁸ and 34 enlisted men wounded;²⁹ and 1 officer, Captain J. T. Drew, of Burlington,³⁰ and 30 enlisted men missing, all of them being captured a total of 68.

²⁷ Victor Goodrich was a young man of 23, from Roxbury, a blacksmith by trade, and a general favorite with his comrades, one of whom says that just before leaving camp at Bush Hill, Goodrich mounted a box and began to dance, saying "Boys, I am going to have one more good dance and it may be my last one." Such it proved to be. He fell soon after the firing began, his head pierced by a musket ball which passed through it from ear to ear. His body was left where he fell.

²⁸ Capt. Todd was the youngest captain in the line. He resigned in January, 1862; but subsequently enlisted in the Eleventh Vermont, and served through the war. He was again wounded at the Battle of Winchester.

²⁹ Killed. Corp. R. H. Benjamin, Co. C; Victor Goodrich, Co. G.

Wounded. Sergeant Major William Guinan, hand. Co. A-- A. J. Royce, thigh, cheek. Co. B-- J. Bolton, thigh; W. Gifford, hand; A. S. Howard, Edward Knox, P. Lloyd, J. McKean, John Streeter, Co. C-- Capt. E. A. Todd, throat; Corp. C. B. Rice, leg, Corp. E. L. Keables, face; E. P. Gilson, M. K. Pratt, arm, amp. Co. D-- John Gowing, foot; A. Hill, leg; S. Leger, arm; E. Murphy, head Co. E-- G. W. Pierce, Co. F. T. Clury, head, slight; C. Harran, hip; H. Stearns. Co. G-- J. H. Bell, slight; W. L. Jones, slight; F. Nelson, slight. Co. H-- Sergeant U. A. Woodbury, arm, & N. Dunbar, arm, George Steefer leg. Co. I-- H. K. Austin, T. J. Jaquish, J. Leonard, arm, H. Tole Co. K-- A. Lawrence, James Walker.

³⁰ Capt. Drew had been ill for several days before the battle, but followed the regiment to the field, with the assistance of a field officer of another regiment, who placed him for a time on his horse. Being helpless from vomiting and weakness he was taken into one of the hospitals near the field. From this after a short rest, he started again for the field, met the regiment on the retreat, was assisted along the road by two or three of the Vermont boys, and finally placed by them in an ambulance, which was overtaken by the rebel cavalry. He was carried to Richmond, spent nearly 13 months in rebel prisons, came home with shattered health, resigned in October, 1862, and subsequently served in the Invalid Reserve Corps.

Of the 31 men captured, 21 were wounded and three, Corporal Keables and E. P. Gilson of Co. C, and John Gowing of Co. D., died of their wounds in Richmond. The survivors of the rank and file were paroled and released, after six months, imprisonment, in the following January.

The colors were brought from the field, riddled with bullets and torn by a shell. It is well to remember that the, panic in which the Vermonters shared was, at worst, no greater than history has recorded of veteran troops at Waterloo, Solferino, and other famous battles; that the nearly equal numbers of killed and wounded of the two armies shows that on the whole the battle was fought, until the retreat began, with equal courage on the two sides; and that while their victory was a complete one, the Confederates did not know it, till they learned it from Washington.³¹

Colonel Whiting, in his fragmentary report, says of his regiment that "officers and men exhibited the utmost coolness and bravery in the presence of the enemy." This is also the testimony of their brigade commander. Responding to an address from the non-commissioned officers of the Second Vermont, on the occasion of the departure of the regiment from his command, Colonel Howard said: "I remember you on the march, before the 21st of July, at Sangsters, at Centreville, and on that memorable day at Bull Run. I often speak of your behaviour on that occasion. Cool and steady as regular troops, you stood on the brow of that hill and fired your thirty-six rounds, and retired only at the command of your Colonel. "Colonel Howard could not say as much for any other regiment of his brigade. The Second

³¹ "You will not fail to remember," wrote Jefferson Davis to General Beauregard, August 4, 1861, "that so far from knowing that the enemy was routed, a large part of our forces was moved by you, in the night of the 21st, to repel a supposed attack upon our right; and the next day's operations did not fully reveal what has since been reported of the enemy's panic." Official Records, Vol. II, p. 508.

Vermont really did most of the fighting that was done by Howard's brigade, which General Heintzelman says "for some time gallantly held the enemy in check." It went as far to the front and fought as long as any union troops; and there was testimony from the other side that it did good execution.³²

Among the incidents of the battle, the good conduct of the surgeons is worthy of mention. Surgeon Ballou established his hospital in a cooper's shop, near Sudley Church, when he performed several amputations and was efficient in care of the wounded till our army had left the field, when taking some wounded men in an ambulance, he followed the retreating army with them till the ambulance broke down, after which, as he could be of no more service, he made his escape on foot.

Assistant Surgeon Carpenter was detached from the regiment, by order of a superior officer, before the battle, and stationed at a small house on the turnpike, in charge of a number of sick and disabled men. All of these who could walk, joined the retreat. Dr. Carpenter then posted himself in the road, pistol in hand, halted every wagon that came along, and when he could not persuade compelled the unwilling drivers to take in one or more of his sick and wounded men, till all were taken. He then, in company with a surgeon of another regiment, followed the column to Centreville. The men thus assisted never forgot the service rendered them by the resolute young Vermont surgeon.

Of the many other incidents of the battle one only can be narrated here.

³² "We found a Richmond newspaper at Vienna, (Va.,) and it stated that the Vermont 2nd regiment was cut all to pieces (at the Battle of Bull Run,) all but twenty men. It said the Vermont soldiers were the best the unionists had, and congratulated the rebels on having killed us all off, because almost every shot of ours was sure to kill a man." --Letter from Captain Solon Eaton, October, 1861.

When the regiment was inspected for muster into the service, a young man who had enlisted while a student in the Fairfax, (Vt.) Theological Seminary, named John C. Thayer, was rejected, on account of a stiff wrist. Thereupon, as he could not go out as a fighting man, he accompanied the regiment as a company cook. He was left in camp when the regiment marched across Bull Run and listened to the sound of the battle till he could stay behind no longer, when, obtaining a musket from a disabled soldier, he started for the field. On the retreat he was overtaken on the turnpike by a troop of Confederate cavalry. An officer separated himself from his company, and spurred his horse towards young Thayer, with a summons to surrender. The answer was a shot from the Vermonter's musket. His assailant fell dead from his horse, and Thayer took from his body his sword, sash and field glass, and made good his escape, with four bullet holes through his blue blouse. He returned to Vermont soon after, taking his trophies with him.³³

The good service rendered by Vermonters in this battle was not confined to the Second Vermont regiment. A gallant son, of Vermont, Captain E. R. Platt, Second U.S. Artillery, was in command that day of two sections of artillery, which repulsed a formidable demonstration made about five o'clock P. M., against the left of the Union position. This was made by Jones's brigade of South Carolina and Mississippi troops, which crossed Bull Run at Blackburn's Ford after the retreat of the Union right and centre, and advancing up a ravine nearly gained a commanding position on the flank of Miles's division before it was discovered that they were not Union troops.

Major Henry

³³ Colonel Radford, Thirtieth Virginia Cavalry, who led the Cavalry pursuit along the turnpike, mentions the death of Lieutenant B. H. Bowles, who he says, was separated from his company during a charge, and killed. This may have been the Cavalry officer who was shot by Thayer.

J. Hunt, afterwards the able chief of artillery of the Army of the Potomac, commanding the artillery at that point, made hasty disposition of Platt's guns and two rifled pieces, and as the Confederate column emerged from the ravine it was received, says Hunt, "with a perfect storm of canister." "No troops," he adds, "could stand it, and the enemy broke and fled in every direction, taking refuge in the woods and ravines; and in less than fifteen minutes not a single man could be seen on the ground which had so recently swarmed with them. The infantry regiments had not found it necessary to fire a single shot."³⁴ General Hunt always attached extreme importance to Platt's vigorous cannonade.

Another gallant son of Vermont, Colonel Israel B. Richardson, commanded the brigade which moved "in good order" last along the Centreville ridge that night, and covered the retreat of the Union army.

After an hour's rest at Centreville the weary men of Howard's brigade were roused and marched, the Second Vermont bringing up the rear, to Fairfax Court House. They lay there till day light, and then continued their retreat to Alexandria.

The regiment was quartered on the night of the 22d in

³⁴ Report of Major Hunt, Vol. II, Official Records.

The following is an extract from a letter addressed to Colonel Platt by General Hunt, after the close of the war: "At Bull Run, July 21, 1861, the attack on our left near Blackburn's Ford, made by D. R. Jones's brigade, assisted by a portion of Longstreet's and Rone's cavalry, was repulsed by the artillery. This artillery consisted of your battery of four Napoleons, and a section of Edwards's Rifle Battery. The fighting was at close range. You used only canister, and the enemy was promptly defeated and put to flight. This was due principally, if not entirely, to your guns, and its immediate effect was, as stated by the enemy, to throw Jones back across the river; to cause a suspension of the pursuit of our right; and to cause Ewell who had crossed at Union Mills and was moving to Centreville, to retrace his steps and hurry to Blackburn's Ford. Centreville was thus saved, and by its safety secured the retreat of our army, and I do not hesitate to say, saved Washington from capture by the rebels. * * * That success say, due mainly to the battery under your command.

the city market building of Alexandria, and remained there till the 25th, when it moved back to its old camp at Bush Hill.³⁵ Arriving there the men stacked arms and lay down on the ground, not in a cheerful condition of mind or body. Many of the weaker men were sick from exhaustion. All were without tents or overcoats, and many without knapsacks or blankets, and there was no uniformity of arms, many of the men having changed their guns for others picked up on the retreat. There was also a lack of confidence in their regimental commander, on the part of a considerable portion of the regiment, which ripened later into a serious controversy. The process of recuperation, however, began at once. The regiment shared the revival of confidence following the appointment of General McClellan to the command of the Army, and the establishment of stricter discipline. Colonel Whiting was active in efforts to restore the equipment and morale of the regiment, and a report that new Enfield rifles would soon be distributed did much to cheer the men.

On the 6th of August the regiment was renewed by General McDowell, and complimented on its "good condition."

Night alarms were frequent at this time, and the men repeatedly fell into line in the darkness and stood under arms till dawn, to discover that it was only a scare on the part of some of the more excitable troops around them.³⁶

About this time the disaffection towards Colonel Whiting came distinctly to the surface; and as it became serious enough to be brought to the attention of the Legislature of

³⁵ As indicating the demoralized condition of the regiment it may be mentioned that it took Lieutenant Colonel Stannard, who was in command, Colonel Whiting having gone on to Washington, nearly two hours to get the regiment into line, for the march to Bush Hill.

³⁶ One night a German orderly, of a Pennsylvania regiment, rode into camp, shouting loudly: "Turn out your long rolls!" Another night a trembling, (or perhaps only shivering), aid summoned the Colonel to make ready to receive an immediate attack, as the rebels were moving on him "in three columns." The columns did not appear, however.

Vermont by formal resolution³⁷ it requires notice in this history. The trouble really began at the first organization of the regiment, in dissatisfaction with the Governor's selection of a man who was not a Vermonter, nor in any way known to the people of Vermont, for the command. But the jealousies thus aroused were not shared by many, and would probably have been soon overcome by one who, to the many excellent qualities possessed by Colonel Whiting, had added the characteristic of personal bravery. This, it must be admitted, was not conspicuous in him. He meant to do his duty; but not to expose himself any more than was necessary. The men discovered this in the battle, and in various newspaper letters and articles, he was distinctly charged with showing the white feather at Bull Run.

On the 12th of August Colonel Whiting preferred formal charges against Major Joyce, charging him with violating the army regulations by writing a letter to the *Burlington Times*, "the object of which," the specification stated, "was the praise of many, but especially the censure of Colonel Whiting" and with "publishing a malicious falsehood in stating that he (Joyce) at Whiting's request gave the order to advance against the enemy, to the regiment, and saw it executed, when in fact the order referred to was given by Colonel Whiting and executed by him."

Pending trial on these charges, Major Joyce was ordered under arrest, having the liberty of the camp only. The Major was popular with the regiment, and had the sympathy of the larger part of the line officers and of many of the men. A paper requesting Colonel Whiting to resign the command of the regiment was drawn up and signed by a

³⁷ A resolution was introduced in the House of Representatives, Nov. 12th, 1861 to the effect that the officers and soldiers of the Second Regiment do not generally repose that confidence in their commander, Colonel Whiting, which is necessary to their usefulness;-- and that he be respectfully requested to tender his resignation as Colonel.

majority of the commissioned officers. The staff and a few line officers declined to sign the paper,³⁸ and the Lieutenant Colonel and Surgeon united in a guarded letter to Governor Fairbanks, in which they attributed the reports prejudicial to Colonel Whiting, to the statements of a noncommissioned officer who had been reprovved by the Colonel for drunkenness, and expressed surprise that such reports against an officer whose conduct had been approved by his brigade and division commanders, should have been taken up by the press. The Colonel was not without other defenders, and Colonel Howard's statement that Colonel Whiting was at his post when the first line of the brigade of which the Second Vermont was a part, began firing,³⁹ was published. But while these statements tended to quiet the public clamor, and satisfied the Vermont Members of Congress, who looked into the matter, that the case was not one requiring executive interference, the disaffection with Colonel Whiting was not so easily abated.

Major Joyce, in a written communication, expressed regret that he had written the portions of his published letter which he had discovered to be in violation of the army rules, and withdrew the same; but he remained under arrest till the 23d of September, when General Smith released him, the order saying it was difficult to get a general court martial assembled, and that the General "deemed that Major Joyce had been kept sufficiently long in arrest to satisfy the ends of justice." The news spread quickly through the camp, and the regiment turned out and greeted the major, on his return to duty, with three times three cheers.

Early in August the Third Vermont regiment having been raised and sent to Washington, and the immediate

³⁸ This was never presented to the Colonel.

³⁹ "Colonel Whiting was at his post when I left for the second line, and I refer to his report, for notice of his field and other officers. They were not wanting." Report of Colonel O. O. Howard, Official Records.

recruiting of two more three years regiments having been ordered, General W. F. Smith formed the purpose of making a Vermont brigade of the four regiments thus raised and to be raised. In pursuance of this plan the Second regiment was detached from Howard's brigade, and ordered to move to Camp Lyon, on the heights in Georgetown commanding the "Chain Bridge" across the Potomac, where the Third Vermont had now been stationed for two weeks. The Second moved thither on Monday August 12th, taking cars to Alexandria, and went into camp between the camps of the Third Vermont and Sixth Maine. The change to the higher ground and purer air of the Georgetown heights was favorable to the health of the men. The rations improved in quality; the quartermaster procured supplies of new shoes, shirts and stockings, which were much needed. Skirmish drill and target practice were added to the company and battalion drills, and the regiment improved rapidly in general condition. On the 20th of August the regiment was sent twelve miles up the river, to Great Falls, to guard the fords, and remained there five days, when it returned to Camp Lyon. The men spent a good deal of work in making their camp comfortable, and had got it into excellent shape, when orders came to leave it.

In the first week in September General McClellan began to occupy the portions of Virginia within sight of the dome of the Capitol, and on the 3rd General Smith's brigade, consisting of the Second and Third Vermont, the Thirty-third New York, and a battery, was moved across Chain Bridge, to occupy positions selected for the sites of extensive fortifications to be erected on the Virginia side of the Potomac. The march was made at night, with as much caution as if in presence of the enemy. Moving out a mile from the Bridge, on the Leesburg pike, the brigade encamped in a hickory grove. To this camp the somewhat formidable title of "Camp Advance" was given, under the impression that the

movement meant a speedy advance upon Richmond. Exchanging muskets for picks and shovels, the men now had pretty steady fatigue duty, at first in the erection of earthworks for their own protection, and afterwards in the construction of Forts Ethan Allen and Marcy, which were to guard the approaches to Chain Bridge.

On the 10th of September, while at work in the trenches of what was to be Fort Ethan Allen, the Vermonters had a new sensation, in a visit from President Lincoln, who was accompanied by General McClellan. Very few of them had ever seen Mr. Lincoln, and to all it was the first sight of the new commander of the army. Hundreds of the men improved the opportunity to shake hands with the distinguished visitors. The soldierly bearing of General McClellan was especially approved; and not a man doubted that under him the expected advance would be a march to certain victory.

Details for picket duty were frequent, and as secessionists and confederate scouts were plenty outside the lines this service was not without danger. Private William E. Snow, of Company H, was shot on picket and died from his wounds, in the enemy's hands, on the 11th of September. The occurrence was not discovered by his comrades at the time; and one of the mournful contingencies of army life was exemplified by the fact that his name stood for years on the record as that of a deserter, instead of as a good soldier, who gave his life to the discharge of his duty.

On the 11th Companies A, Captain Walbridge and F, Captain Randall, which had been detached from the regiment a week previous and stationed with a section of Mott's Battery as an outpost on the Leesburg pike, formed part of a force sent out by General Smith to Lewinsville, a little hamlet consisting of a church and three and four houses, five miles west of Chain Bridge, to reconnoitre. They supported Griffin's battery during an artillery duel with Rosser's Con-

federate battery, and were complimented by Captain Griffin for their steadiness.⁴⁰

On the 20th 150 recruits, enlisted by officers of the regiment who had been despatched to Vermont soon after the battle of Bull Run, arrived at Camp Advance and were distributed among the companies, bringing up the aggregate of the regiment to about a thousand men.

Scouting parties were frequently sent out, one or two of which had the excitement of exchanging shots with the Confederate cavalry pickets.

On the 24th the camp of the regiment was moved out about a mile toward Lewinsville but the chief work of the regiment continued to be fatigue duty, in the construction of the ramparts of Fort Ethan Allen. This was a large fort, covering six acres, and intended to mount fifty guns. Its construction involved an immense amount of hard labor, the larger share of which was borne by the Vermonters and was recognized by General McClellan, by giving it the name of Vermont's Revolutionary hero.⁴¹ By the same order, an earthwork near the Georgetown reservoir, also built by the Vermonters, was designated as "Battery Vermont."

September 25th the regiment formed part of a column of 5,000 men, with which General Smith made an unresisted reconnoissance to Lewinsville. On the night of September 28th, the regiment participated in a night expedition, which resulted, as such expeditions so often did in the early part of the war in a collision between Union troops in the darkness. It received little public notice, and is alluded to, rather than described, in the official reports; but it was really more serious affair than the more famous one on the night march to Big Bethel. The force detailed comprised half a

⁴⁰ A fuller account of this reconnoissance is given in the history of the Third Regiment, in Chapter VII.

⁴¹ General Order No. 18, Army of the Potomac, September 30, 1861.

dozen regiments, among which were the Second and Third Vermont, and numbered about 5,000 men under the command of General W. S. Hancock, now coming into notice as a brigade commander under General William F. Smith. It was intended to surprise the Confederate outpost at Munson's Hill, and to occupy that point, from which the rebel flag so long floated in plain sight from the Capitol of the Union. The column started about nine o'clock in the evening, the night being cloudy and dark, and was passing through some woods about four miles out, about midnight, when the Seventy First Pennsylvania regiment, at the head of the column, was fired on by a portion of the Fifth Pennsylvania Cavalry, known as the "Cameron Dragoons," which had been sent out in advance of the infantry, and, missing their way in the darkness, had come by a roundabout way back upon the Union column, which they took for a Confederate force, sent to meet them. The firing alarmed the whole command, and was followed by a second similar collision, in which a portion of the Sixty Ninth Pennsylvania fired into the Seventy First Pennsylvania, which returned the fire. Among the features of the affair was a stampede of artillery horses, which dashed through and over some of the infantry, injuring a number of men, and a skirmish between several of the frightened dragoons and some men of the Second Vermont, the former firing into the latter, who returned the fire, killing one and wounding another of the dragoons. In all nine men were killed and twenty-five wounded in this unfortunate affair. The Vermont troops, however, escaped with nothing worse than bruises. After order was restored, the column halted till daylight, when most of the regiments marched back to their camps. The Second Vermont remained, by General Hancock's orders, and bivouacked on Vanderwerker's farm, three miles from their camp, for two days, when, information having been meantime received of the evacuation of Falls Church and Munson's and Upton's Hills by the Confederate forces

stationed there, which had quietly withdrawn while the Federal regiments were firing into each other, the regiment returned to camp.

Among the results of this affair, was the most extensive case of discipline that ever occurred in the history of the regiment. When the order to fall in was given on the evening of September 28th, Lieutenant Phillips of Company F and a detail of about 100 men, who had just come in from picket duty, acting on the theory that volunteers were not obliged to regard orders which did not seem to them reasonable, ignored the command and remained in their tents. Their absence from the ranks was not discovered by Colonel Whiting till the next forenoon, when he also learned that one of his captains had gone back to camp, with a number of his company, without orders. Charges were thereupon preferred against all concerned in this breach of discipline. The noncommissioned officers and privates, to the number of one hundred and fifty, were tried by regimental court martial, and sentenced, the former to be reduced to the ranks and the latter to fines and the guard house. Captain Randall and Lieutenant Phillips were placed under arrest, and in December following, by sentence of court martial, the Captain was suspended from duty for thirty days, and the Lieutenant dismissed the service.

During the last week of September, the men were cheered by the arrival of the Fourth and Fifth Vermont regiments, which went into camp close by them; but in other respects their condition was not cheerful. They needed their lost overcoats in the autumn fogs and chilly nights. The cold rain storms beat through their old and thin tents, and their uniforms, faded by the summer sun and worn with fatigue duty, matched their thin faces. About this time partial supplies of army clothing were secured from the Government, and the army blue began to mingle with the gray in the ranks; but the supply was insufficient, for the Government

had more men to clothe than it had uniforms, and the sick roll became large before the needs of the men were supplied.

On the 10th of October a further short advance into Virginia was made by General Smith's division, now numbering upwards of 13,000 men of all arms, which was slowly edging out to the front. As a part of this advance, the Second Vermont, with the other Vermont regiments, moved out four miles to Johnson's Hill, near Lewinsville, and established the camp called Camp Griffin, after the gallant commander of Griffin's Light Battery. Here they remained for five months.

On the 17th of October, Lieutenant Colonel Stannard with four companies of the Second and a company of cavalry, made a reconnoissance to Vienna, five miles distant, finding that the Confederate force stationed there up to the previous night had fallen back to Fairfax Court House.

The destitution of the troops as regarded clothing became more serious as the season advanced. October 21st, General Smith informed Governor Fairbanks by telegraph, that the men of the Second and Third regiments were suffering for want of clothing, and that 850 coats, 1,500 pairs of pantaloons, and 100 tents were needed at once to make the men comfortable. This was followed by a communication to the Vermont Legislature, then in session, signed by Colonel Whiting, and by nearly all the officers of the regiment, certifying that the men of the Second regiment had been suffering since the middle of September for want of sufficient clothing and tents and that the supply obtainable from the government fell far short of the present wants, and asking, the Legislature to furnish the needed supplies. Quartermaster General Davis was at once despatched by the Governor to Washington and Camp Griffin, and on his return reported that the general government had partially supplied the regiment and would do so fully as soon as possible. Furthermore, that the war department preferred to furnish

all supplies itself, since the presence of both the State and general governments as purchasers of army goods in the market would tend to enhance prices and make needless embarrassment to both. The State authorities of Vermont, though anxious to do their utmost to provide for the wants of the Vermont troops, acquiesced in the views of the war department. The latter gradually provided the needed supplies; and by the last of October the regiment was in a fair condition as regarded health, clothing, equipment and discipline.

During the month of October the Third, Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Vermont regiments arrived at Camp Griffin, and the first Vermont Brigade was fully organized. With that noble brigade the Second regiment now became identified, and in the history of that brigade, to be related in subsequent chapters, the history of the regiment will be largely embodied. Some episodes and incidents belonging exclusively to the regiment, will, however, properly have place in this regimental record.