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CHAPTER XXX.

THE SHARPSHOOTERS.

Company F, First U.S. Sharpshooters—Organization—Departure for Washington—Camp of Instruction—Joins Army of the Potomac—The Peninsula Campaign; Yorktown; Hanover Court House; Mechanicsville; Gaines's Mill, and Malvern Hill—Second Bull Run—Fredericksburg—Attached to Third Corps—Chancellorsville—Gettysburg—Wapping's Heights—Kelly's Ford—Mine Run—Wilderness—Spottsylvania—Cold Harbor—Siege of Petersburg—Weldon Railroad—Expiration of Three Years' Term—Burgess's Mill—Assigned to Fourth Vermont—Final Statement.

Companies E and H, Second U.S. Sharpshooters—Organizations—Camp of Instruction—Assigned to McDowell's Corps—March to Falmouth—Sent north to intercept Stonewall Jackson—Railroad accident—Pope's Campaign; Rappahannock Station; Sulphur Spring and Second Bull Run—South Mountain—Antietam—Fredericksburg—Attached to Third Corps—Chancellorsville—Gettysburg—Wapping's Heights, Kelly's Ford and Brandy Station—Mine Run Campaign—Re-enlistment—Attached to Second Corps—The Wilderness Campaign—Totopotomoy and Cold Harbor—Siege of Petersburg—Deep Bottom—Boynton Road—Fall of Petersburg—Close of Service.

The organization of the United States Sharpshooters as a distinct branch of the service, was due to Hiram Berdan of New York. Impressed by the need of skilled shots, armed with long-range rifles, to meet the marksmen so numerous in the Confederate ranks, he called the attention of the War Department to the subject. The result was the commissioning of Mr. Berdan as a colonel, and the enlistment in the first year of the war, under the direct authority of the government, of two regiments of sharpshooters. The eighteen companies comprised in these regiments were recruited in the States of Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, New Hampshire, New York, Pennsylvania, Vermont and Wisconsin. Of the total number, the Green Mountain State furnished more than one-sixth—more in proportion to popu-

lation than any other State—sending into the ranks of these regiments not less than *six hundred and twenty* superior marksmen, and furnishing two lieutenant colonels and a number of other officers to the commands. The sharpshooters were men of superior spirit and endurance, as well as skill. The lists of their killed and wounded, which far exceeded the general ratio of the army, indicate the danger and severity of their duty. They took part in almost every important battle fought by the Army of the Potomac. Their officers made few reports. Fighting commonly in detachments, the credit for what they accomplished was usually appropriated by the larger organizations to which they were attached. Yet it is safe to say that the service they rendered was second in value to that of no other equal number of enlisted men who took part in the war for the Union; and the writer of these pages deeply regrets the necessity, imposed on him by the limits of this volume, which compels him to condense their brilliant record into such small compass.

The conditions for enlistment required that each recruit should, in a public trial, firing from the shoulder and without telescopic sights, in ten shots place ten bullets within a ten-inch ring, at a distance of 200 yards; and this test was rigidly exacted. The uniform was distinctive, being of green cloth, to harmonize with the colors of nature, with leather leggings and knapsacks of leather tanned with the hair on. Most of the men took out their own rifles, which before they took the field were exchanged for Colt's revolving rifles, and later for a better arm.

COMPANY F, FIRST UNITED STATES SHARPSHOOTERS.

Vermont was one of the first States to respond to a circular sent by Colonel Berdan to the governors, conveying authority to recruit companies of sharpshooters. A com-

mission as captain was thereupon, in August, 1861, issued to Dr. Edmund Weston, Jr., of Randolph, and by him and subordinate recruiting officers in other towns, over 100 marksmen who passed the test were recruited within a month.

The First Vermont company organized at West Randolph, September 13th, 1861, with 113 men, officered as follows: Captain, Edmund Weston, Jr., of West Randolph; First Lieutenant, C. W. Seaton, of Charlotte; Second Lieutenant, M. V. B. Bronson, of Rutland; First Sergeant, H. E. Kinsman, of Royalton. Next day the company left the State for the regimental rendezvous at Weehawken, N.J., whence in ten days it went to Washington to a Camp of Instruction, and was mustered into the United States service, October 31, 1861, with three officers and 100 men, the 13 in excess of the regulation number being rejected. The men were here drilled by Lieut. Colonel Frederick Mears, of the regiment, and improved in marksmanship under Colonel Berdan's instructions. On one occasion they displayed their skill before President Lincoln and General McClellan, and some surprising shots were made, Colonel Berdan hitting, at 600 yards, the right eye of the painted figure of a man, used as a target, having before announced that he would do so. President Lincoln himself took a rifle from Sergeant Peck of company F. and took part in the firing.

In November Lieut. Colonel Mears resigned, and on the 29th of that month William Y. W. Ripley of Rutland, Vt., was appointed lieutenant colonel. He had seen service as captain of company K of the First regiment; was 29 years old, a man of high intelligence and spirit, of commanding figure, an admirable shot, and possessed of qualities which amply justified what might have been the doubtful experiment of bringing to the command—which during most of its service devolved upon the officer second in rank—an outsider, known to few of the officers and men. Lieut. Colonel Ripley

took hold of his duties with enthusiasm, and was ably seconded by Major Caspar Trepp, a Swiss who had seen service in European wars. The regiment remained during the winter in the Camp of Instruction and became proficient, especially in skirmish drill, in which the orders were given by bugle. Chambered breech-loading Colt's rifles were supplied and reluctantly accepted, as the men had no confidence in them. March 20th, the regiment was attached to the division of Fitz John Porter, then about to join the army under McClellan at Fortress Monroe, and on the 22d joined the division at Alexandria, was taken by steamer to Hampton, Va., and went into camp half-way between that place and Newport News.

The first service of company F was in a reconnoissance in force on the 28th, to Big Bethel, where a slight skirmish took place with a party of the enemy's cavalry, who experienced the accurate fire of the sharpshooters. April 4th, in the advance of the army up the peninsula, the sharpshooters led the right hand column, to the front of Yorktown. Here, April 5th, company F took position in a peach orchard, alluded to in the Confederate reports as "Palmentary's peach orchard," surrounding a farm house and its out-buildings, about 500 yards from a line of breastworks running from the main Confederate redoubt in front of Yorktown to the head of Warwick Creek, garrisoned by troops under command of General Gabriel J. Rains, who mustered in the first three Vermont regiments. The range was soon obtained and gun after gun in front was silenced, for 1000 yards to right and left. At one time the staff and escort of a general officer came within range as they passed over a knoll behind the works, and about half the saddles were emptied by the sharpshooters. The enemy in turn placed some marksmen in small pits in advance of their works, and among others wounded by them Corporal C. W. Peck of company F received a severe wound—the first man of the company hurt by a hostile bullet.

One spot was soon marked as the covert of a particularly skillful rifleman, and a duel took place between him and one of the New Hampshire company, named Ide¹. Several shots had been exchanged between them, when Ide fell dead, shot through the forehead, and the enemy, who were watching the shooting, raised a cheer. Their exultation was short, however, for Colonel Ripley, snatching the loaded rifle from the dead man's hand, and taking his place behind the corner of a building, soon saw the Confederate marksman raise himself into view. The two rifles cracked simultaneously. The rebel bullet came so nearly through the corner of the house against which Ripley leaned that it bruised his shoulder. Ripley's bullet found its mark, and no more shots came from that spot, or cheers from the enemy. The work of the sharpshooters this day was highly praised by General Porter, and their fire is alluded to in Magruder's report as especially deadly. As the siege progressed the opposing rifle-pits were advanced within 50 yards of each other, and several skirmishes took place in them, in which company F took part.

While here the first lot of 100 Sharpe's rifles was received, and they were issued to company F, in recognition of its efficiency. It was a superior arm and entirely satisfactory to the men. The Vermont sharpshooters were among the first troops to enter Yorktown after the evacuation, and hauled down the Confederate garrison flag.

The next time company F met the enemy was May 27th, near Hanover Court House, when, leading the advance of Morell's division of Porter's corps, to which it was attached, it found at a fork of the roads the way disputed by Branch's brigade of North Carolina troops. These were dislodged, with the loss of a 12-pound howitzer, in the capture of which company F had a prominent part. Later in the day Morell returned to assist Martindale, who had been left to hold the fork of the roads and had been heavily attacked, and drove back the enemy, who lost 600 men captured. Company F

¹ [editors note: John S. Ide, although credited to New Hampshire, was born in Windsor, Vt.]

had three men wounded this day, one of them mortally. ²

The regiment was in camp near Gaines's Mill, in front of Richmond, for a month, furnishing daily details for picket duty where the danger was greatest. In the battle of Mechanicsville, June 26th, it was brought in to assist McCall's division at the close of the day; slept on the field, and next day, withdrawing before daylight, covered the retreat of the column to Gaines's Mill. Here, in the battle of the 27th, the sharpshooters were posted along the edge of a ravine in front of the line of Morell's division. There was heavy skirmishing during the afternoon in which each side by turns gained and yielded ground. When at nightfall Morell was forced from his position by superior numbers, the sharpshooters, though almost out of ammunition, retained their position till the general disruption on right and left compelled them to withdraw. The regiment was commanded this day by Lieut. Colonel Ripley, and he was active in reforming the broken Union lines for the final stand. Three men of company F were wounded, two of them mortally. ³

The regiment marched with the army in the famous change of base. On the 29th it was posted on the New Market road near Glendale, or Charles City Cross-roads, and repulsed several advances of the enemy's cavalry, and that night company F accompanied General Porter on a reconnaissance; struck and drew the fire of the enemy's pickets; and then joined the main column of the Fifth Corps moving on to the James. At noon of the 30th it reached Malvern Hill, where the regiment took a brilliant part in the battle of the next day. In this it was deployed in front of Morell's division on the northern slope of the hill, in a wheat-field, broken by a ravine, in front of the Crew house. Soon after noon, the Confederate columns approached, and their skirmishers began to fire from the edge of the woods in front.

² Died of his wound—W. F. Dawson.

³ Died of wounds—B. W. Jordan and James A. Read.

The artillery of both sides, including the heavy guns of the Union gun-boats, fired over the heads of the sharpshooters, making their position one of much danger. At three o'clock the enemy advanced a heavy skirmish line, which was driven back with serious loss by the sharpshooters. The opposing line was reinforced and again advanced both on front and flank. Ripley then withdrew his command far enough to escape the flanking fire, and held the enemy in check by the accuracy and rapidity of the fire of the breech-loaders. Soon the Confederate commander advanced a battery, which burst suddenly from the woods, the great gray horses whirling the guns behind them like child's toys. As the pieces went into battery, the sharpshooters' rifles began to crack and men and horses began to fall. Soon there were no longer horses to haul the guns, and the gunners sought to put their pieces into battery by hand; but nothing could stand those unerring rifles, and the few surviving cannoneers, leaving the guns in the open field, took shelter in the woods. Not a gun was afterwards placed or fired from that quarter during the day.⁴

In the repulse of the successive charges of Magruder's corps, the sharpshooters took active part, till their ammunition was exhausted and they were withdrawn. Four Vermont sharpshooters were wounded in this battle, among the number being Lieut. Colonel Ripley and Lieutenant Seaton. Ripley's wound was a very serious one. He had remained after his command had retired, to assist in disposing the troops which beat back Magruder's last desperate charge. While he was stationing a regiment under the direction of

⁴ This battery was McCarthy's Richmond Howitzers, attached to Barksdale's brigade, and was composed of the flower of the young men of that city; it was their first fight, and to many their last. A member of the battery said to Lieut. Colonel Ripley, after the close of the war: "We went in a battery and came out a wreck. We staid ten minutes by the watch and came out with one gun, ten men and two horses, and without firing a shot."

General Martindale a musket-ball struck him in the right leg, shattering the bone. His orderly tied a handkerchief around the leg, and he started for the rear; but soon fainted and fell from his horse.⁵ He was then placed in an ambulance and taken to Haxall's Landing, where his wound was dressed and he was laid under a tree. He was left there that night when the army moved on to Harrison's Landing; but was saved from capture by some of his men, who, learning that he had been left behind, went back for him, found him just before daylight, and carried him on a stretcher to Harrison's Landing. It was three months before the bullet was extracted, and Ripley narrowly escaped amputation. He was discharged a month after, for promotion to the colonelcy of the Tenth Vermont regiment; but his wound, which did not heal for two years, did not permit him to return to the service. In his departure the sharpshooters lost the man who had hitherto been their fighting commander, and one who had the highest confidence and regard of the entire command. The loss was especially felt by the men of company F. August 2d, 1862, Captain Weston resigned, and Lieutenant Seaton, a brave and faithful officer, became captain of company F, Lieutenant Bronson first lieutenant, and Sergeant E. W. Hindes second lieutenant.

The company, reduced by death, wounds, sickness and discharges to less than forty effective men, marched down the peninsula to Fortress Monroe, with the Fifth Corps, and departing thence by way of Acquia Creek and Falmouth, marched to the north with the corps, to join the army under General Pope, arriving at Bristoe's on the 28th. In the second Bull Run the regiment was advanced as skirmishers in front of Barnes's and Butterfield's brigades, against Jackson's troops posted behind the embankment of the unfinished

⁵ The noble animal had received three balls, but staggered along under his master's weight till Colonel Ripley fell from the saddle, when he too lay down and died within ten minutes.

railroad leading from Sudley Springs. The main attack failed; but the sharpshooters gained the shelter of a sunken road forty yards from the enemy's lines and held it till crowded out by superior numbers of Longstreet's men. Three men of company F were wounded, Corporal H. J. Peck receiving a wound which occasioned his discharge. The regiment was not again seriously engaged in Pope's campaign.

September 1st the regiment went into camp near Fort Corcoran, in the defenses of Washington, and on the 12th marched with the Fifth Corps into Maryland. During the battle of Antietam, September 17th, the corps was held in reserve, and for once the men of Company F were merely spectators of the fighting. On the 18th, Lieutenant Bronson arrived with 50 recruits, and on the 19th the sharpshooters led the column of the corps in the pursuit of Lee, overtaking his rear guard at Shepherdstown Ford.⁶ The enemy's riflemen held the opposite bank but the sharpshooters crossed, fording the stream under fire, and, supported by the Fourth Michigan, drove them away. Moving on a short distance, a party of sharpshooters, under Corporal Cassius Peck, discovered a small body of the enemy guarding two guns which had been left by the retreating column. The enemy were driven away with the loss of one prisoner, and the guns were captured and brought off. The sharpshooters were withdrawn to the north bank at night and the enemy re-occupied the south bank. That night Lee sent back a heavy force to the ford, and next day, the 20th, a severe engagement took place, in a renewed attempt of Barnes's brigade to force a crossing. In this, the One hundred and Eighteenth Pennsylvania, a new regiment, in its first battle, crossed the stream under the cover of the fire of the sharpshooters and took shelter under the bank. When subsequently ordered back the Pennsylvanians could not be

⁶ Also called Blackford's and Boteler's Ford. This action is erroneously entitled "Blackburn's Ford" in the official list.

induced either to advance or retreat, though the sharpshooters did their best to encourage them, but finally got back with a loss of 269 men, killed, wounded and missing.

The regiment was next engaged at Fredericksburg, December 14th, when it crossed the river with the Fifth Corps, and was stationed in the village of Fredericksburg. It was on picket in front of the heights the night of the 15th, during which Burnside withdrew his shattered columns. The sharpshooters were not recalled till just before daylight; but by propping up some dead bodies to represent men they got away, protected by a picket line of corpses. December 30th the company accompanied a reconnaissance to Richards' Ford,⁷ and did some shooting in a skirmish next day with the enemy's cavalry.

Early in January, 1863, the Second regiment of sharpshooters joined the First at Falmouth and the two regiments constituted an independent brigade, Colonel Berdan being attached for a time to the general staff, as Chief of Sharpshooters. Company F remained near army headquarters. In February, in the reorganization under Hooker, the brigade was attached to the Third division (Whipple, Amiel W.), of the Third Corps, under Sickles. February 21st Lieutenant Bronson resigned, and was succeeded by Lieutenant E. W. Hindes, and Sergeant C. D. Merriman was promoted to be second lieutenant.

The sharpshooters distinguished themselves in the Chancellorsville campaign. They covered the crossing of Sedgwick's corps, at Franklin's Crossing, April 28th. May 1st they crossed at United States Ford, joined the Third Corps near the Chancellor house, and assisted in repulsing a body of the enemy which felt of the Union line at that point. On the 2d the regiment was detached and reported to General Birney, whose division filled a gap between the Eleventh and Twelfth Corps, south of the Chancellor clearing, and was sent by him with other troops to attack the column

⁷ Called "Elles' Ford" in Adjutant General Washburn's list.

of Stonewall Jackson, who was making his detour to the north and west of the Union position. General Rodes, of Jackson's corps, had stationed the Twenty-third Georgia, Colonel Best, in and about the Iron Furnace, to guard his flank while marching through the clearing south of the furnace. Best deployed a line of skirmishers in the woods, where they were found by the sharpshooters, including company F of the First regiment and E of the Second, and were driven back to their picket reserve, posted in and about the furnace buildings. Here they were hemmed in by the sharpshooters, under the deadly fire of whose rifles not a man of the enemy could leave his shelter unharmed. The few who endeavored to escape across Lewis Creek to the main body, were shot down, one of them falling by the hand of Chaplain Barber of the First regiment, who was in the ranks with his rifle. The rest soon surrendered. Advancing thence the sharpshooters flanked and captured the remainder of the regiment in the railroad cut near by, Colonel Best and twenty men alone escaping. The sharpshooters thus took twenty officers, including the major of the Georgia regiment, and 300 men. This exploit has prominent mention in all the reports, and was almost the only redeeming feature of that disastrous day. After sundown the sharpshooters were withdrawn from the skirmish line, and bivouacked in the rear of Birney's division, and a portion of them fell into line to resist an attack; but they were not called into the action. In the affair at the furnace, company F had two men wounded.

Next morning Colonel Berdan reported back to General Whipple with the sharpshooters, and the First regiment was posted on the north of the plank road, the Second regiment being held for a while as a reserve and afterwards posted to the right of the First.

In the defensive battle of that day, May 3d, the sharpshooters formed a moveable skirmish line. They were held in the open ground south of Fairview Cemetery and west of

the crest on the farm of Hazel Grove from which Jackson's artillery opened on the Third Corps. Four companies of the First regiment, advanced as skirmishers, were active in the repulse of A. P. Hill's corps, in the morning. They drove back a heavy skirmish line of the enemy at one point, killing many; captured many prisoners, who had pushed into a gap on their left; and advanced till they met the double main line of Hill's corps, when they retired, firing, to their supports.

When, late in the day, Hooker had taken up his new position in front of Fairview, General Whipple was asked by Sickles to send a brigade to occupy a wooded knoll in his front. Whipple thought a regiment sufficient for the purpose, and sent the First Sharpshooters. The enemy had already occupied the knoll and received the sharpshooters with a heavy volley from the edge of the woods. But the latter kept on and drove the enemy from the position. Company F took a leading part in this assault, in which the major and adjutant of the regiment, with other officers, were wounded. Company F had three men wounded. It was on picket that night, and next day with the regiment was deployed in front of Whipple's line, and assisted in repelling the assault of Jackson's (now Stuart's) corps, which was driven back after several hours of fighting, in the course of which General Whipple was killed. In this battle company F had seven men wounded.

May 15th, Captain Seaton, who had never entirely recovered from the effects of his wound received at Malvern Hill, resigned, and Lieutenant E. W. Hindes was commissioned as captain. Second Lieutenant C. D. Merriman was promoted to be first lieutenant and Sergeant H. E. Kinsman to be second lieutenant.

June 11th the company started for the north with the Third Corps, being attached to Ward's brigade (the Second) of Birney's division of the Third Corps. The march ended

at Gettysburg at sunset of July 1st. In the morning of the second day of the great battle the First regiment was posted on the left flank of the Third Corps, in front of Little Round Top. About ten o'clock Colonel Berdan was directed to make a reconnoissance out beyond the Emmittsburg road, to develop the position of the enemy, who was supposed to be extending his lines to the south. He took out a detachment of 100 men, of which company F, Captain Hindes, numbering about forty rifles, formed a part. Supported by the Third Maine, Colonel Lakeman, a small regiment of 200 men, the sharpshooters moved out to the Emmittsburg road, beyond the picket line of Birney's division. Then, turning south so as to be sure to be south of the enemy, they went as far in that direction as Sherfy's peach orchard, when, taking the cross road to the west, they advanced to the belt of woods extending for a mile and a half behind Seminary Ridge. On reaching the woods the sharpshooters were deployed as skirmishers, and had moved to the right—that is in a northerly direction—about 250 yards, when they struck a skirmish line of the enemy, which fell back as they advanced. This was the Tenth Alabama regiment, of Wilcox's brigade which received such rough handling from Veazey and the Sixteenth Vermont next day. It was the advance brigade of R. H. Anderson's division, which at this time was the extreme right of Lee's line and was taking position in front of the woods. A mounted officer, in command of the Confederate skirmish line, was killed by the fire of the sharpshooters at this point. Without halting for the Confederate skirmishers, the sharpshooters drove them rapidly back, making it so warm for the Alabamians that they broke and ran back into the hollow near Pitzer's Run. They rallied, however, in the woods, and supported by the Eleventh Alabama and a second line, advanced, and drove back the sharpshooters and the Maine regiment which had moved up into their line. This was not accomplished without some sharp

fighting,⁸ in which 18 sharpshooters and 48 of the Third Maine were killed, wounded or captured. The enemy's loss was still greater. Sergeant Cooper of company F was here killed, and W. H. Leach and George Woolly wounded, the latter losing an arm, and the former being shot through the body. The position of the enemy having been thus developed, Colonel Berdan withdrew the detachment to the Emmitsburg road, and thence to the Third Corps line. This was the first fighting of the second day and doubtless contributed essentially to the delay of the Confederate formation for offensive operations on their right, to which delay the Confederate generals attributed their failure to end the battle that day in their own favor. The official maps of the field show that on that day, as on the third, Vermont troops were farther to the front, upon the left center, than any other troops in the Army of the Potomac.

Company F returned to the position of the regiment and was under fire but not actively engaged in the fighting of the afternoon of the second day. That night it lay with the regiment back of the ridge north of Little Round Top. During the cannonade which heralded the great Confederate assault next day, a portion of the regiment, including company F, was sent to the right and front near the line of the Second Vermont brigade, and took part at long range in the reception given Pickett's division. It also assisted in the repulse of Wilcox's and Perry's brigades, commencing fire on them at long range, and continuing till their discomfiture was completed by the charge of the Sixteenth Vermont.

On the 4th the regiment was sent forward to the Emmitsburg road near Sherfy's buildings, where Lee was maintaining a front to cover his retreat. The enemy's pickets were posted behind the walls and fences in front of the woods and

⁸ General Wilcox calls it "a hard fight," and General Anderson, "a sharp skirmish."

suffered severely. The sharpshooters were able to take their time and pick their men, and did some effective shooting. Two men of the company were wounded here.

The regiment followed Lee into Virginia with the corps and the army. Marching on the east side of the Blue Ridge, July 22d they reached Manassas Gap, and next day the First regiment, supported by the Second and other troops, was pushed into the gap, to open a passage through which to strike Lee's column, the rear of which was passing on the west side of the mountain. The sharpshooters, deployed as skirmishers, met the enemy's pickets and drove them through the gap, expending sixty rounds of ammunition per man; but the advantage was not improved.

The regiment spent the first half of September resting in camp near White Sulphur Springs, and for the three weeks following was at Culpeper. In the retrograde march of Meade's army to Centreville, the sharpshooters were engaged at Cedar Run, where the enemy disputed the crossing. The sharpshooters here attacked in line of battle, with the other regiments of the brigade, and had a man severely wounded. On the 20th they were back at Cedar Run (having been meantime to Centreville with the army) and spent the next two weeks in camp at Catlett's. About this time they were transferred back to DeTrobriand's brigade. Captain Hindes was honorably discharged November 7th for disability. Lieutenant Merriman became captain; Lieutenant Kinsman was promoted one grade and Sergeant Lewis J. Allen was appointed second lieutenant. On the 7th the regiment took part with high credit in the action at Kelly's Ford, which was an adjunct of the battle of Rappahannock Station. It there led the attacking party through the stream and against the enemy posted in rifle pits on the opposite bank. Captain Merriman was one of the first to mount the breastworks, and 506 Confederates were captured in them, most of

whom surrendered to the sharpshooters. Company F had one man killed and three wounded.⁹

The regiment was eighteen days in camp at Brandy Station and was next engaged in the battle of Orange Grove, also called Locust Grove, in the Mine Run campaign, fought by the Third Corps, October 27th. In this battle the sharpshooters fought near the Tenth Vermont, and taking position behind a rail fence repulsed four heavy assaults of the enemy. The colors of a Confederate regiment in front of company F fell four times by the fall of as many color-bearers, who went down before the rifles of the Vermonters. The company lost one man killed and four wounded.¹⁰

With the exception of a single reconnaissance to the Rapidan, February 6th, 1864, the sharpshooters remained in winter quarters near Brandy Station till the opening of the Wilderness campaign. In the reorganization of the army in April preceding, the regiment was attached to the Second brigade (Alexander Hays's) of the Third (Birney's) division of the Second Corps, under Hancock. Company F took the field with 56 officers and men present for duty. It crossed the Rapidan at Ely's Ford, May 4th, and bivouacked near Chancellorsville, on the ground on which it fought twelve months before. In the battle of May 5th the sharpshooters were detached from the brigade and fought on the skirmish line a short distance to the left of the Orange Plank road and the First Vermont brigade, and did some admirable work. Company F lost five men killed and mortally wounded, five others wounded and two captured. Next day the company joined the brigade, which had lost its commander and half its men the day before, and again fought in the front line, advancing as the enemy was pressed back, and being crowded back in turn by Longstreet's masses to the breastworks on the Brock road. Driven from these for a

⁹ Killed—Patrick Murray

¹⁰ Killed—E. S. Hosmer

time by the flames of the burning woods, they returned and joined in the final charge which drove the enemy back within their intrenchments, even beyond which the colors of the regiment were carried—the only Union flag so far advanced. A man of company F was killed. Next day, while the armies rested, the sharpshooters were sent out to feel of the enemy, and drove the Confederate skirmishers back to their works. In this skirmishing, which lasted four hours, two men were killed and Lieutenant Kinsman and three men were wounded, making a loss of 19 men, or over a third of their number, in the three days in the Wilderness.¹¹

After another night on the field, amid hundreds of unburied corpses, the stench from which filled the air, the sharpshooters were relieved on the morning of May 8th and brought up the rear of the Second Corps in the march to Todd's tavern, where the corps took position to guard the rear of Grant's army. In the skirmishing with the enemy's cavalry, which hung on their rear, company F had a man wounded and captured.¹² In the heavy skirmishing at Todd's tavern in the afternoon, company F was on the skirmish line west of the tavern. Next morning it repulsed the attack of a body of cavalry, killing and wounding a number of them, and capturing a wounded captain whose sabre was taken by Captain Merriman to replace his sword which had been shot from his side the day before. Marching toward Spottsylvania, they found at the Po the rest of the corps preparing to force the crossing. A Union battery was endeavoring in vain to drive the Confederate observers from a signal stations some 1,500 yards away. After watching the ineffectual firing for a while the men of company F con-

¹¹ Killed—Corporal David M. French, Edward Giddings, W. J. Domag, Joseph Hagan and E. E. Trask.
Died of Wounds—A. C. Cross and William Wilson.

¹² William Wells. He died a prisoner at Florence, S. C., four months later.

cluded to take a hand. Fitting sticks to the sights of their rifles to increase the elevation, they opened with 23 rifles upon the tree-top from which the tell-tale flags were waving, and the latter came down with great alacrity. General Hancock, who watched this episode, complimented the Vermonters for their ingenuity and skill; and that night General Birney directed the sharpshooters to report to his headquarters as an independent command.

In Hancock's famous assault on the salient at Spottsylvania on the 12th of May, the sharpshooters were deployed in front of Birney's front line, and took an active part in the assault, and in the subsequent fighting around the bloody angle. Twice during the day company F exhausted its ammunition, which was replenished by a supply brought by the stretcher bearers. Company F lost this day five good men, three killed and two wounded.¹³

On the 21st, in the march of the army toward Richmond, the sharpshooters dashed into the village of Bowling Green and liberated several hundred Negroes, who had been swept up by the enemy in their retreat and confined till they could be removed farther south. On the 23d they covered the crossing of the North Anna by Birney's division at Chesterfield Station, and next day had a long range skirmish with the Confederate sharpshooters near the Fox house; which lasted several hours.

At Totopotomoy Creek on the 30th, Captain Merriman narrowly escaped capture. He had been sent out before daylight to station a picket detail of 25 men. In the darkness he went forward till he struck the enemy's pickets, who opened fire on him, and only by very skillful management did he succeed in extricating himself and his men.

At Cold Harbor June 3d, the sharpshooters were in the second line of the division, and escaped with the loss of three

¹³ Killed, Henry Mattocks, Thomas Brown and John Bowen

men wounded, one of whom died.¹⁴ That afternoon the division picket line was held by a regiment for whose marksmanship the enemy displayed much contempt, exposing themselves freely with jeering shouts, and keeping up a continual and annoying fire. Company F lay in the rear of the pickets and somewhat exposed to the stray bullets which flew over the front line. Merriman became restive, and taking Sergeant Peck, went forward to give a little admonition to the Johnnies. A daring southerner who was conspicuously reloading his gun in full view of the Union pickets dropped at Peck's first shot. Several others received similar hints and the enemy's firing along the front soon ceased. During the 4th, company F and another company were engaged in keeping down the enemy's fire on Barlow's division, which had occupied an advanced position. Company F lost one man, Joseph Bickford, killed. From the 5th to the 12th inclusive, the sharpshooters lay near Barker's Mill, on ground on which they fought two years before at the battle of Gaines's Mill. They were engaged in almost daily picket skirmishing, and had a man wounded on the 12th.

Moving to the front of Petersburg with the corps, company F participated in the assault of June 16th and lost a man, Caspar B. Kent, killed. Next day company F held an advanced position close to the enemy's line; used up a hundred rounds of ammunition; and received a fresh supply, brought by Sergeant Cassius Peck, at great personal risk, in haversacks slung around his person. Corporal C. B. Mead was killed this day and Henry E. Barnum mortally wounded. On the 20th Corporal Edward Lyman, one of the best men in the company, was mortally wounded. For three days at this time the company was stationed in the Hare house, where, seated in the owner's mahogany chairs,

¹⁴ Died of Wounds—Alvin Babcock.

they aimed through the windows at his friends in the rifle pits in his garden.
¹⁵

In the movement of the Second Corps against the Weldon railroad June 22d, company F took part and lost two men killed and three wounded.
¹⁶ Only a dozen men were now left for duty, 35 having been killed or wounded and two captured since they crossed the Rapidan.

July 27th the sharpshooters crossed the James with Barlow's division at Deep Bottom, in Hancock's demonstration against Richmond, and helped carry a work on the east side of Bailey's Creek, in which four 20-pound Parrott guns and a number of prisoners were captured by the skirmishers. August 14th the regiment took part in the stronger demonstration against Richmond made by the Second and Tenth Corps under Hancock. On this the regiment, now reduced to less than 200 men, was at the request of General Birney, now commanding the Tenth Corps, attached to his command. They were taken to Deep Bottom by steamer, and on the 15th engaged and after an hour's fighting drove back an obstinate skirmish line of the enemy along a branch of Bailey's Creek known as Four Mile Run. Next day there was more fighting, in which the regiment suffered severely, though company F escaped serious loss. The division took four guns, but the movement was without result beyond the discovery that Richmond was as strongly defended as ever. On the 19th the corps returned to the lines of Petersburg. August 21st the little band left of company F, drove the enemy from a rifle-pit in their front, taking 40 prisoners, four times their own number. For three weeks following they were almost constantly on the picket line. September 10th

¹⁵ An Alabama rifleman, who was taken prisoner here, said of the shooting, that, on their side, it was only necessary for a man to hold up his hand to get a furlough, and he was lucky if he got to the rear without an extension.

¹⁶ Killed—Barney Leddy and Peter Lafflin.

the regiment occupied some hitherto neutral ground surrounding a well, capturing 85 of the enemy, who made repeated unsuccessful attempts to repossess the well, in resisting which company F had two men wounded.

September 13th their term of service expired. But 26 were now left of the original members. Of these, six had re-enlisted.¹⁷ The remainder turned in their trusty rifles, which they used in a sharp skirmish on the last day of their service; bade adieu to their comrades; and turned their faces toward home. Captain Merriman and Lieutenant Kinsman having been mustered out with the rest, the remnant of the company left was commanded by Sergeant Cunningham, and was engaged with the regiment and DeTrobriand's brigade in the battle of Hatcher's Run, or Burgess's Farm, on the 27th of October, and lost two killed and two wounded. On the 1st of November it lost another mortally wounded.¹⁸ December 23d, the First Sharpshooters, with the exception of the Michigan men, who were transferred to a Michigan regiment, were transferred to the Second Sharpshooters, and the 34 men remaining of company F were transferred to company E of that regiment. With it they participated in the affair at Hatcher's Run on the 15th of December, and at other points along the line. On the 25th of February, 1865, the battalion, now reduced to a skeleton, was broken up and its members transferred to other regiments, the Vermonters being assigned to company G, Fourth Vermont Volunteers, with which company they served with credit until the close of the war.

¹⁷ Re-enlisted—David Clark, James H. Guthrie, Samuel J. Williams, Stephen B. Flanders, John Kanaan and Lewis J. Allen.

¹⁸ Killed—Daniel E. Bessee and Charles Danforth. Died of Wounds—Friend Weeks.

THE BATTLES OF COMPANY F, FIRST REGIMENT U. S.
SHARPSHOOTERS

Big Bethel, - - - - -	March 28, 1862
Siege of Yorktown, - - - - -	April 5 to May 4, 1862
Hanover Court House, - - - - -	May 27, 1862
Mechanicsville, - - - - -	June 26, 1862
Gaines' Mill, - - - - -	June 27, 1862
Charles City Cross Roads, - - - - -	June 29, 1862
Malvern Hill, - - - - -	July 1, 1862
Gainesville, - - - - -	Aug. 29, 1862
Second Bull Run, - - - - -	Aug. 30, 1862
Antietam, - - - - -	Sept. 17, 1862
Blackford's Ford, - - - - -	Sept. 19 and 20, 1862
Fredericksburg, - - - - -	Dec. 13, 1862
Richard's Ford, - - - - -	Dec. 31, 1862
Chancellorsville, - - - - -	May 2 to 5, 1863
Gettysburg, - - - - -	July 1 to 3, 1863
Wapping's Heights, - - - - -	July 23, 1863
Cedar Run, - - - - -	Oct. 13, 1863
Kelly's Ford, - - - - -	Nov. 7, 1863
Orange Grove, - - - - -	Nov. 27, 1863
Mine Run, - - - - -	Nov. 30, 1863
Wilderness, - - - - -	May 5 to 7, 1864
Todd's Tavern, - - - - -	May 8, 1864
Po River, - - - - -	May 10 to 11, 1864
Spottsylvania, - - - - -	May 12 to 16, 1864
North Anna, - - - - -	May 23 and 24, 1864
Totopotomoy, - - - - -	May 30 and 31, 1864
Cold Harbor, - - - - -	June 3 to 5, 1864
Petersburg, - - - - -	June 16 to 20, 1864
Weldon Railroad, - - - - -	June 22, 1864
Deep Bottom, - - - - -	July 27 and 28, 1864
Four Mile Run, - - - - -	Aug. 15 and 16, 1864
Hatcher's Run, - - - - -	Oct. 27, 1864

The final statement of company F is as follows:

**FINAL STATEMENT OF FIRST COMPANY
SHARPSHOOTERS.**

Original members—com. officers, 3; enlisted men, 113; total.	116
Recruits-enlisted men.	74
Aggregate	190
Losses.	
Deaths—killed in action—enlisted men, 17; died of wounds received in action— enlisted men, 13; died of disease—enlisted men, 12; died in prison—enlisted men, 3; total	45
Honorably discharged—com. officers (resigned), 3; com. officers (for disability), 2; enlisted men, 62; enlisted men (for wounds received in action), 7; total	74
Transferred to Veterans Reserve Corps – enlisted men, 7; to U. S. A. and other regiments—enlisted men 35; total	42
Deserted:	6

Total Loss:	167
Mustered out – com. officers, 2; enlisted men, 21; total	23

Aggregate.	190
Total wounded.	43
Total re-enlisted	6

**COMPANIES E AND H, SECOND UNITED STATES
SHARPSHOOTERS.**

The Second Vermont Company of Sharpshooters was recruited at West Randolph by H. R. Stoughton. It organized with Homer R. Stoughton as captain; Frederick Spaulding of Brattleboro, first lieutenant; Henry M. Hall of Danby, second lieutenant; and Seymour F. Norton of Burlington, first sergeant; and was mustered into the United States service at West Randolph, November 9th, 1861, with 91 officers and men. November 23d it left the State for Washington, where it was assigned to the Second regiment of United States sharpshooters and became company E of that regiment. The regiment consisted of eight companies from the States of Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, New Hampshire,

Pennsylvania and Vermont, New Hampshire and Vermont each furnishing two companies.

The Third company of sharpshooters was recruited in November and December, 1861; rendezvoused at Brattleboro; organized December 24th, with Gilbert Hart of Dorset, as captain; Henry Herbert of Middlebury, first lieutenant; Albert Buxton of Londonderry, second lieutenant; and William Newell of Dorset, first sergeant. It was mustered in at Brattleboro, December 31st, and left the same day for Washington. It was the last company to arrive at the Camp of Instruction on Meridian Hill, at Washington, and became company H of the Second regiment.

The winter was spent in drill and target practice. March 19th, 1862, the regiment, commanded by Colonel H. A. V. Post, marched for the field, having been assigned to the First (Augur's) brigade, of the First (King's) division, of the First Army Corps, under General McDowell. After two weeks in camp near Cloud's Mills, it marched with the corps by way of Fairfax and Centreville, to Bristoe Station, where it remained nine days. Leaving there April 15th, the division marched to Catlett's, and on the 17th the regiment led the column in a rapid march to Falmouth. Before reaching this point company E and another company of the sharpshooters were sent forward with a party of cavalry to try to save the bridge across the Rappahannock. They reached Falmouth just after sunrise, to find that the enemy had crossed the river and burned the bridge. In this its first forced march, the regiment went thirty miles in twenty-two hours. On the Stafford Heights at Falmouth the regiment camped in shelter tents, and here spent most of the summer.

From the 1st to the 25th of May company H was detached to guard the depot of supplies, on the railroad to the left of the camp. On the latter date the regiment broke camp and was moving with McDowell's corps towards Rich-

mond when the corps was recalled in consequence of Banks's reverses in the valley. Starting back on the 29th the regiment moved back to Falmouth, and thence to Catlett's where they took cars, and were taken by way of Manassas Junction toward Front Royal, whither the division was hurrying in the hope—which was destined to be disappointed—of cutting off the retreat of Stonewall Jackson. In the night of May 31st, near Rectorstown Station, the train, while stopping, was run into by a train behind and one man of the regiment was killed and 40 wounded. Almost every man in the car occupied by the men of company E was hurt, some of them so severely that they were never able to return to duty, and Captain Stoughton could report only 31 men fit for duty next day. Company H being well forward in the train escaped unhurt. The movement to the Shenandoah Valley ended here for the regiment. June 2d the regiment was taken back to Haymarket. On the 6th the brigade moved to Warrenton Junction and the next day to Warrenton. On the 8th the return to Falmouth began, and after a halt of five days, five miles below Catlett's, the sharpshooters marched to Falmouth and reoccupied their old camp on the 15th. On the 16th the men received Sharpe's rifles, in place of the unpopular Colt's. The bayonets attached to the new arm were kept for a time; but having no occasion to use them and as the practice of stacking arms was dropped, since each man wished to keep his gun by his side, the bayonets passed away. As the days grew sultry and the nights wet, fevers began to prevail, and the men sickened till on the 1st of August, only 41 of company H reported for duty, with 29 on the sick list.

When the summer campaign opened under General Pope, General Augur had been given a division in Banks's corps and General John P. Hatch commanded the First brigade of King's division.

July 25th company E accompanied a reconnaissance

made by General Gibbon with three regiments of his brigade, from Fredericksburg to Orange Court House, which had been reported to be occupied by Confederate cavalry. The expedition went within three miles of the Court House, when, learning that the enemy were in heavy force near by, it returned to camp. General Gibbon says in his report that the sharpshooters were "conspicuous during the march for their well-filled ranks, losing very few men by straggling, though the weather was very warm and the marching on the way out rapid. "

August 5th the regiment accompanied an expedition sent under General Gibbon to cut the Virginia Central Railroad; but meeting Stuart's cavalry, which had started on a raid, after some skirmishing each retired. The sharpshooters spent two days in Spottsylvania Court House, and had a hot march back to camp August 9th. Next day they started with King's division which had been ordered up by General Pope after the battle of Cedar Mountain; forded the Rappahannock at Ellis's Ford; and, marching by way of Stevensburg, on the 29th recrossed the river on a pontoon bridge near Rappahannock Station and went into line of battle on the north bank between the railroad and Freeman's Ford. Here it was soon under fire in the artillery duel which on the 21st opened the fighting of Pope's campaign. Next morning the regiment supported a battery at Freeman's Ford, and suffered its first loss in action, from a shell which burst over the colors, and killed Corporal Warren Stevens of company H and a man (of another company) of the color-guard. Two men of company H were wounded by fragments of shells. Later in the day the sharpshooters were on the skirmish line along the river bank, and were attacked by a small force of the enemy's cavalry, which crossed the river and was soon driven back by the fire of the breech-loaders, with the loss of a captain and several men captured. Next morning the regiment was posted in a piece of pine timber and was

again under artillery fire. In Pope's withdrawal of his right wing, King's division moved to Warrenton by a moonlight march on the night of the 23d. The sharpshooters rested near Warrenton till the morning of the 26th, when, leaving behind their hair knapsacks, which they never recovered, they marched with the division nine miles to Sulphur Springs, through which place Early's division had passed two days before. The enemy occupied the opposite bank of the river and opened with shell from the bluff. The sharpshooters were deployed as skirmishers on the river bank and soon drove the enemy back a hundred yards to the shelter of a rail fence. Sharpshooting from the opposing lines followed, in the course of which Daniel Willis of company H was killed, shot through the head. After an hour of close firing, during which the loss of Willis was fully avenged, the enemy sent forward a flag of truce, and while their ambulances collected their wounded their line withdrew. The sharpshooters were withdrawn later, and the men of company H buried their dead comrade, and bivouacked in a grove near the blackened ruins of the hotel, which had been burned. Here Captain Hart of company H resigned on account of ill health, and Lieutenant Herbert, who was sick and resigned later, also left the company. Lieutenant Buxton succeeded to the command of company H and three months later was commissioned as captain.

On the 27th the Second sharpshooters marched with the brigade and division toward Gainesville, in the movements preliminary to the Second Bull Run. On the 28th King's division moved toward Manassas Junction, but after several hours' march was ordered back to the Warrenton turnpike, north of which Jackson now lay. King reached the pike and, at five o'clock P. M., was following it toward Centreville, when he was attacked, near Groveton, by the two divisions of Ewell and Taliaferro. In the bloody battle which followed, the brigades of Gibbon and Doubleday sustained and repulsed Ewell's attack, while Hatch's brigade, to which the

sharpshooters were attached, guarded their right flank. The Second sharpshooters had passed the point of the main attack before the battle opened, and though under artillery fire, the Vermont companies sustained no loss.

Starting next morning before light King fell back to Manassas Junction, where, being seriously ill, he relinquished the command of the division to General Hatch, and Colonel Sullivan took temporary command of the brigade. This day General Porter, who was on his way to Centreville, was ordered about noon to take King's division in addition to his own corps and move to Gainesville, near which point Reynolds and Sigel were fighting Jackson. The execution of this order took the sharpshooters back, in the rear of Porter's column, over the sun-scorched plains of Manassas, to the ground which they had left in the early morning. When they arrived on the field, about 6 P. M., Longstreet and Jackson, having united, were re-adjusting their lines of battle under the personal direction of General Lee, after the hard and inconclusive fighting of the day. Under the supposition that the enemy was retreating, Hatch's division was hurried along the pike in pursuit, when it encountered Hood's division advancing to meet it, and had a severe contest, lasting nearly an hour. In this, the sharpshooters, who had made the last mile of the advance at double-quick, were halted with the brigade, and placed in line in the pike, on the slope of a slight hollow, beyond the opposite ridge of which was the enemy's line. While the rest of the brigade was forming on their left, four companies of the sharpshooters were sent to the right of the pike, while the other four, among which were the Vermont companies, advanced to the top of the hill to hold the road, which the enemy threatened from the right. Taking position behind a rail fence which bordered the road, they saw a line of the enemy advancing across the field and opened upon it, at short range, a deliberate and effective fire which quickly scattered it. Soon bullets began to come from another direction, and they saw in the gathering twilight

a compact line of men formed across the pike, with a standard in the centre. The sharpshooters now divided their attention between this body and the force still lurking beyond the fence. The flag of the regiment on the pike went down under their fire, was then raised, and again disappeared as the line over which it floated crumbled and fell back. Meantime the rest of the brigade had fallen back and the sharpshooters must go too or be surrounded. The word was accordingly passed from man to man and they went back through the hollow to some high ground beyond. Half an hour's desultory firing followed from the opposing lines, and then the fighting ceased in the darkness and the brigade held the second ridge. Company E lost this day Charles A. Keith killed and a man wounded. Company H had two men, James B. Clark and Curtis Abbott, wounded, and Allen P. Miller captured. The brigade suffered heavily.

Next morning the Second sharpshooters found near them the First regiment, which had moved up with Morrell's division of Porter's corps during the night, and greetings were exchanged between the Vermonters in the two regiments, for the first time since leaving the Camp of Instruction. In the battle of the 30th, they took an effective part in the repulse of the counter-charge with which Lee answered Porter's advance, in the latter part of the day. That night the regiment retired, with the brigade and army, beyond Bull Run. General McDowell in his report of this battle, says of the Second sharpshooters: "This valuable regiment was much exposed and rendered most excellent service. "

In the reorganization of the army under McClellan's restored command, Hatch's division, to which the Second sharpshooters was still attached, became part of the First Corps, under Hooker. Being the first regiment of the First brigade of the First division of the First Corps, the regiment would have had the right of the entire line, if the army had been aligned in order of numbers. The strength of the regi-

ment had become greatly reduced by death, sickness and discharge. Of company E, twenty men had been discharged for disability and as many more were on the sick list. Company H was without a commissioned officer, Lieutenants Herbert and Buxton being sick, and had less than 20 effective men present for duty. But the non-commissioned officers were equal to the command; the men were of the kind that could fight without officers; and with stout hearts they marched into the Maryland campaign. September 13th the regiment crossed the Monocacy with the brigade, now commanded by Colonel Walter Phelps, and next day marched with the corps to force the passage of the South Mountain at Turner's Gap.

In the battle of South Mountain, that afternoon, the sharpshooters, deployed as skirmishers, led the way up the heights for Hatch's division, which carried the ground on the right of the pass. By nightfall Hill and Longstreet had been forced from the crest of the gap, which they abandoned that night, with a loss of 3,000 men. In this movement the Twenty-first New York, which had been sent up a ravine leading to the crest, having taken a wrong direction and gone astray, the Second Sharpshooters was sent forward in its place. While the First Vermont brigade was storming Crampton's Gap, six miles south of them that afternoon, the Vermont sharpshooters were scaling height after height and driving the enemy's skirmishers from covert to covert of the other pass, whose rocky and wooded sides reminded them of their own Green Mountains. General Hatch says that the regiment "came early into action and rendered very important service during the day. " It bivouacked on the summit of the Gap, and next morning with the division passed down its west side to the valley, too late to relieve Harper's Ferry; but in time, if McClellan had acted promptly, to assist in crushing Lee at Sharpsburg. On the 15th the sharpshooters passed through Boonesboro to the Antietam.

In the afternoon of the 16th they led the column of Hooker's corps, in the detour and attack upon Lee's left, which was the first offensive movement of the battle. Coming under fire as they forded the Antietam, the regiment was deployed as skirmishers in advance of the brigade, and shortly before dark drove Hood's pickets back upon his main line, northeast of the Dunkers' Church. The men lay on their arms that night, during which Jackson's division was substituted for Hood's in their front, and the battle began in earnest at dawn. In the fighting on the right, Phelps's little brigade, numbering less than 500 men, supported Gibbon's advance through the cornfields, and when Gibbon was flanked, the Second Sharpshooters was sent by Colonel Phelps around the right of the Seventh Wisconsin to drive the enemy back. This it did and pursued them across the Hagerstown pike and through a cornfield beyond. Jackson then advanced a fresh line. The sharpshooters received this with a deadly fire. The standard-bearer of a Confederate regiment in front of them fell and a rush for the fallen colors followed, in which Lieutenant Parmelee, the tall and gallant adjutant of the regiment, was killed. Borne back by superior numbers, the regiment retired, the sharpshooters carrying with them their dead and wounded. Company E lost one man, Byron McClallen, killed, and seven wounded. Company H had five men wounded, one of whom, William H. Benson, died of his wound. The regiment lost 54 killed and wounded—Colonel Post being among the latter—being nearly half of the men it had in line.

In October the thinned ranks of the sharpshooters were partially filled by the return of convalescents and by accessions of recruits, of which company E received 35 and company H 13. When, at last, the army moved again toward Richmond, the Second Sharpshooters marched October 30th from their camp north of Sharpsburg, with the division, and passing through Crampton's Gap, crossed the Potomac at

Berlin, moved to Warrenton, lay near there till the army under Burnside started for Fredericksburg, and reaching Falmouth October 18th, went into camp near Brooks's Station.

November 18th Colonel Post resigned, and Major Homer R. Stoughton, who had been recently promoted to be major, vice Jones transferred to staff duty, succeeded to the command of the regiment. Lieutenant F. D. Sweetser was promoted to be captain of company E; First Lieutenant Spaulding was discharged for disability; Second Lieutenant Henry M. Hall resigned; First Sergeant S. F. Norton was promoted to be first lieutenant, and was appointed adjutant of the regiment; and Sergeant John F. Law was commissioned as second lieutenant. Lieutenant Herbert of company H returned from sick leave; but resigned on account of ill health November 24th, and died soon after at his home in Philadelphia. Lieutenant Buxton was thereupon promoted to be captain of company H; Quartermaster Sergeant William P. Shreve, of Salem, Mass., was appointed first lieutenant of company H,¹⁹ and Sergeant William Newell was appointed second lieutenant.

In December, 1862, the First Corps received a new commander in the person of General John F. Reynolds, and General Doubleday commanded the First division.

In the first Fredericksburg the Second Sharpshooters crossed the river December 12th, and on the morning of the 13th were thrown forward as skirmishers in front of the extreme left of Franklin's grand division. In the duty of protecting the left while Meade and Gibbon attacked in front, Doubleday advanced his line to the east. "The Seventh Wisconsin and Twenty-fourth Michigan," says General Doubleday in his report, "led the advance, preceded by the Second United States Sharpshooters, and carried the woods in gallant style, taking a number of prisoners and

¹⁹ Lieutenant Shreve was soon detailed as aid on the staff of General Berdan, and did not thereafter serve with the company.

horses. " All or most of these prisoners, who were of Stuart's cavalry, surrendered to the men of company H. Driving the enemy's skirmishers toward Massaponax Creek, the sharpshooters occupied a redoubt armed with a heavy gun, and cleared the way for the division. Severe artillery firing followed, but Doubleday held his position till after the failure of the main assaults on the heights. At nightfall the sharpshooters were withdrawn from the skirmish line, and in marching to and fro on the plain, came under the fire of the enemy's artillery, which was active till after dark.

On the 15th the regiment was again on the skirmish line, along the Bowling Green road. Its opponents this day, of Stonewall Jackson's division, were skilled marksmen, and the shooting was close till noon, when it was ended by a truce for burying the dead. Several Vermonters were wounded. At dark Burnside began to withdraw his army, weakened by the loss of 12,000 men, and after midnight the sharpshooters fell quietly back from the skirmish line, and crossed the river.

On the 28th of December, the regiment was attached for a short time to General Meade's division of the Fifth Corps. But on the 14th of January, by order of General Burnside, the two regiments of sharpshooters were detached and constituted a distinct arm of the service, reporting directly to army headquarters. The Second regiment of sharpshooters accordingly bade farewell to Phelps's brigade, which was paraded in its honor, and pitched its camp by the First regiment near Stoneman's Switch. On the 18th the regiment marched back to the vicinity of the headquarters of the Left Grand Division. On the 20th and 21st it took part in the famous mud march, and at the close of it returned to camp near Franklin's headquarters, where it remained till the 2d of February, when it marched back to Stoneman's Switch and went into winter quarters, in log cabins roofed with canvas, beside the First regiment of sharpshooters.

The Second Sharpshooters was during this period under the efficient medical care of Assistant Surgeon Horace F. Hanks of the Thirtieth New York, a native Vermonter. With light duty and improved commissariat the health of the men improved and at the opening of the Chancellorsville campaign not a man of company H was on the sick list. The part taken by the Vermont sharpshooters in the battle of Chancellorsville was been already mainly related.

On Sunday morning, May 3d, the Second regiment held an exposed position in front of Whipple's division between the left of the Third and right of the First Corps. Monday forenoon, it relieved the First regiment on the skirmish line in front of the Fifth Corps, to the right of the Bullock house. When it came upon the line, the enemy had driven in the pickets, and his sharpshooters had killed General Whipple and were picking off the Union gunners from across the bottom in front; but they were soon driven back by the Sharpe's rifles to a line of rifle-pits and for some distance into the woods beyond, where the sharpshooters held them during the day. Toward night sharp musketry firing rolled around from the right and the pickets began to fire. Construing this to mean an advance of the enemy, the batteries back of the sharpshooters opened without waiting for the skirmish line to be withdrawn, and began to rake the woods in which the sharpshooters were posted. To escape this fire the sharpshooters fell back to the rifle-pits. The Eleventh New Jersey which had been posted in their rear as a picket reserve, followed the example of the batteries and began firing on the sharpshooters, who sought shelter as best they might in the rifle-pits. Shouts and gestures proving of no avail, several men tried to creep back to the Union lines to tell them to stop firing on their own skirmishers; but they were taken for crawling rebels and driven back to the pits. At last, after five of the sharpshooters had been wounded the Jersey-men fell back; the batteries discovered their

error; the firing ceased; and the sharpshooters returned to their position in the woods, to find that the opposing skirmish line had disappeared. At ten P. M. they were recalled and allowed to rest in the rear. Company H lost three men wounded this day, two of them by the Union fire.

Colonel Berdan, in his report, claims for the sharpshooters the capture of 683 prisoners, and says: "Both officers and men behaved splendidly. I would make special mention of Major Stoughton, commanding my Second regiment. * * * Lieutenant Norton, the adjutant of the regiment, also deserves great praise. " General Birney, in a special order, also complimented the sharpshooters, praising especially their capture of the Georgia regiment on the 2d of May.

The regiment remained at Falmouth till the opening of the Gettysburg campaign. June 24th Major Stoughton was promoted to be lieutenant colonel of the Second sharpshooters, vice Peteler, assigned to staff duty.

The regiment marched to the north with the Third Corps, in June, making on the 26th perhaps the hardest march of its history, of thirty-two miles, from Gum Springs, Va., to Point of Rocks, Md. In the evening of July 1st it bivouacked with the First regiment back of Little Round Top, at Gettysburg.

GETTYSBURG.

In the early morning of the second day the regiment, numbering 200 rifles, was placed at the extreme left of the line of the Third Corps. A little later Major Stoughton was ordered to report to General Ward, commanding the Second brigade of Birney's division, who directed him to cover the ravine of the Devil's Den. For that purpose he posted company H for a time on the slope of Little Round Top, and stationed company E with three other companies along the cross-road leading to the Emmittsburg pike. They remained here until two

P. M., when in the advance of Sickles's corps and the swinging out of Birney's division, the regiment moved to the southwest to the cross-road leading past the Snyder house, and were deployed as skirmishers from the base of Round Top, athwart the southern opening of the gorge of the Devil's Den. Company H was posted near the Snyder house, behind a low stone wall topped with rails, which bordered the south side of the road, and company E was a short distance to its right. Scouts were called for and Sergeant Scribner of company H and Corporal H. C. Congdon of company E and 15 picked men were sent out to reconnoitre. Adjutant Norton accompanied them and they went out to the Emmittsburg road, scouted down it for a short distance without discovering any enemy, and returning reported the fact to Captain Cooley of General Sickles's staff, who rode out to meet them. Soon after General Sickles advanced his line to take up his new position. Longstreet's lines were then deploying in the woods back of the Emmittsburg road, and in their advance soon after, Corporal Congdon and Ira Carr, two of the scouting party who had remained too long on the pike, were cut off and captured.

Deployed along the cross-road, supported by a company of infantry in the gorge and three pieces of Smith's (Fourth New York) battery on the hill above, the sharpshooters met the advance of Law's brigade of Hood's division. As its lines emerged from the fringe of trees along the crest of the continuation of Seminary Ridge across the Emmittsburg road, the sharpshooters opened fire. The front line was checked and thrown into disorder by their accurate shooting as it descended the slope. It rallied and again advanced, its men falling fast under the fire of the Sharpe's rifles, which grew more and more deadly as the butternut lines drew near. Colonel Stoughton sent his horse back, and on foot directed the action of his command. He says, in his report, of this resistance to the enemy's advance: "The Second regiment

did splendid execution, killing and wounding a great many. One [Confederate] regiment broke and rallied three times before it would advance. " Meantime, the sound of the artillery and musketry to the right, where Hood and McLaws were breaking in Sickles's exposed angle and driving back Birney and Humphreys, was swelling to a constant roar. The sharpshooters held their position till Law's line was within 100 yards, when the order to fall back firing was given and the sharpshooters retired, a few of the bull-dogs of the regiment lingering to fire one more shot, till they were fairly crowded in before the advancing bayonets. The regiment fell back in detached parties, some through the Devil's Den, others—including most of company H—along the east side of the gorge, others over Round Top. The enemy occupied the mouth of the gorge, and pushing up the rocky hill-side soon captured Smith's pieces; not without loss, however, for the sharpshooters, within easy range on the slope of Round Top, sprinkled the guns with the blood of the men who crowded around them.

That Law's advance upon Round Top was so slow was in large part due to the sharpshooters, who fell back slowly from rock to rock, while the enemy to his surprise found his numbers diminishing steadily before an almost invisible skirmish line. But in time the riflemen were forced back to the northerly border of the defile, and were barely holding their own, when a Union regiment appeared on the eastern slope of the ridge and drove back the foremost of the intruders. Another regiment followed and then other regiments to defend Little Round Top, and after a severe struggle the enemy drew off to the southeastern base of Round Top. In the contest for the Round Tops, the critical importance of which is recognized by all historians of the battle, the sharpshooters took an important part. Many of the enemy fell by their rifles, and in the course of the fighting at the base of Round Top a party of sharpshooters,

under Adjutant Norton, captured and sent to the rear Lieut. Colonel Bulger of the Forty-seventh Alabama, with 22 men of his regiment.²⁰

After dark, and after the safety of the Union left was secured, the regiment gathered near the Taneytown road, behind Round Top.

On the third day the regiment lay back of the front lines on the left centre during the great artillery contest, and moved to the right and front in the general rush of troops to resist Pickett's charge; but that had failed and the prisoners were filing in when they reached the stone wall. Here they were joined by a portion of the First regiment of sharpshooters. Volunteers from the sharpshooters were soon called for by Captain Nash of the First regiment to go out and silence a couple of guns which from a position back of Codori's house were keeping up a troublesome fire on Doubleday's division. A dozen Vermonters went out with the party, under Adjutant Norton, and accomplished the object with the loss of one man killed and one wounded, driving back the obnoxious pieces with serious loss of cannoneers. The party returned through the line of the Second Vermont brigade and were praised by General Stannard for their achievement.

²⁰ In an article on "The Battle on the Right" by Colonel W. C. Oates of Alabama (Southern Historical Society Papers, Vol. VI.), he reports a colloquy between Colonel Bulger and the captain who summoned him to surrender, in which Bulger is represented as refusing to yield his sword except to an officer of rank equal to his own, and as replying, when threatened with instant death: "You may kill me, sir. Bring your colonel to me and I will surrender to him; but never to you!" "Where upon," adds Colonel Oates, "the captain, struck by the old rebel's high notion of military etiquette, sent for his colonel (Rice, of New York) to whom the sword was gracefully surrendered." Nothing like this took place. Captain Norton informs the historian that he found Bulger sitting propped against a tree, severely wounded by a ball through the breast, and that the latter was glad to surrender and be taken where he could receive surgical attention, and did so without making any objection. His sword is still in the possession of Captain Norton, though somewhat changed from having passed through the great Chicago fire in 1871.

On the 4th the two companies participated in the skirmishing in front of the Peach Orchard, in which Lieutenant Law of company E and one or two men were wounded. Including the casualties in this skirmish company E had four or five men wounded and four captured, and company H had four wounded and two captured at Gettysburg. The service rendered by them was as important as it was dangerous, and was performed with the utmost coolness and spirit.

Later in July Colonel Berdan bade good-bye to the sharpshooters and did not return to the command; and the two regiments separated—the Second remaining in Ward's brigade, while the First was transferred to DeTrobriand's. But brief space remains for the subsequent record of these companies. They were engaged at Wapping's Heights in Manassas Gap, July 22d, 1863. They accompanied the movements of the Third Corps and the army, during the summer and fall. September 14th Lieutenant S. F. Norton was promoted captain of company E, vice Sweetser discharged for disability, and Second Lieutenant Law of the same company was advanced one grade. October 13th they were on the left flank of the corps and aided in repelling an attack of the enemy's cavalry, at Auburn, in the march of the army to Centreville. At Kelly's Ford, November 6th, with the regiment, they supported the First regiment, and took a number of prisoners, and next day were sent forward near Brandy Station and drove the rear-guard of the retreating enemy for some distance, and that night picketed the front along Mountain Run. In the battle of Orange (or Locust) Grove November 27th, in the Mine Run campaign, the Second sharpshooters supported a battery, and company H had four men injured by the falling upon them of a pine tree which was cut down by a shell. The Vermont companies had their share of skirmishing by day, in which one or two Vermonters were wounded, and did picket duty on three successive

cold and inclement nights of this arduous and unsuccessful campaign.

The regiment spent the winter at Brandy Station. December 21st the original members of the Vermont companies re-enlisted, almost to a man. Of company E 21 and of company H 19 thus re-enlisted, and received veteran furloughs in January. January 1st, 1864, Sergeant Thomas T. Tarbell was appointed second lieutenant of company E. Lieut. Colonel Stoughton was commissioned as colonel January 19th, but the regiment did not have the requisite number of men to permit him to be mustered as such. In February 87 recruits, divided between the companies, filled their ranks. In the reorganization of the army in March, the Second sharpshooters, with Ward's brigade, became part of the Third (Birney's) division of the Second Corps.

In the first day of the battle of the Wilderness the regiment was on the Brock road. On the second day it fought in line of battle—though the men could have done better service with less loss as skirmishers and sharpshooters—on the left of the Orange Plank road, where Captain Buxton of company H fell and a number of good men of both companies were killed and wounded. Later in the day it took part in the grapple over the burning breastworks at the Brock road. On the 7th it went out as skirmishers over the field and was under heavy fire. In this battle company E lost three killed and 18 wounded, three of them mortally, and company H had four killed, 19 wounded, of whom four died, and two missing.²¹ Half of the loss of the regiment in the battle of the Wilderness occurred in these two companies.

Captain Buxton, a brave and valuable officer, had a leg

²¹ Company E—Killed—Samuel Maxham, William J. Davis and W. E. Robinson. Died of Wounds—Daniel T. Davis, James N. Leach and Alvin L. Walker.

Company H—Killed—George A. Carrier, George M. Jones, James L. Maynard and Myron T. Sheldon. Died of Wounds—Captain A. Buxton, Samuel L. Bigelow, Lewis Pike and George T. Brown.

shattered, and died an hour later, under the shock of amputation, in the field hospital.

The Vermont companies skirmished with the enemy's cavalry at Todd's Tavern on the 8th, and were again engaged, with Birney's division, on the 10th at the crossing of the Po at Spottsylvania. In this action General Ward, commanding the brigade, and Lieut. Colonel Homer R. Stoughton, commanding the regiment, were wounded. On the 12th the Vermont companies took prominent part with the regiment in Hancock's attack on the salient at Spottsylvania, fighting in front and taking many prisoners and having several men wounded. On the 13th, Sergeant Scribner of company H and three other Vermonters were wounded on the skirmish line, and on the 14th, 15th, 17th and 18th the sharpshooters were again in action as skirmishers. On the 18th Lieutenant William Newell was appointed captain of company H, vice Buxton killed. They were again engaged at the North Anna May 23d, and led the brigade (now commanded by Colonel Egan) in the charge which carried the Telegraph road bridge. In this, company H had three men wounded, one of whom died of his wounds, and company E had a man killed and two mortally wounded.²² On the 31st the regiment made a dash on the opposing rifle-pits at Totopotomoy Creek, and took 85 prisoners.

After the arrival of the corps in front of Petersburg the sharpshooters were employed in almost constant skirmishing in the attempts to carry the place by direct assault. June 16th Company H had four men wounded, and on the 17th it had two men killed and others wounded. On the 18th Lieutenant John F. Law of company E received a wound of which he died, a month later, and company E had several men

²² Killed—Calvin Hinkson of company E. Died of wounds—George A. Brown and John Law, Jr., company E, and Joseph C. Barton, company H.

wounded, two of them mortally. Company H had one man killed and one captured on the 18th.²³

In the movement against the Weldon Railroad June 21st, the Second sharpshooters reported to General Barlow, and, leading the advance of his division, a portion of the regiment pushed through the enemy's line and had some difficulty in getting back. Lieut. Colonel Stoughton was here captured; but company H offset his loss by bringing in a Confederate colonel and a lieutenant as prisoners. Sergeant Howard of company H received a mortal wound in this affair and Lieutenant Newell received a wound which occasioned his discharge four months later.

The command of company H then devolved on Sergeant Walter W. Smith. Next day the sharpshooters were summoned to surrender by the force which flanked and captured a portion of Barlow's division; but most of them got away. Company H had two men captured.

The Vermont companies, under General DeTrobian as brigade commander, took part in the actions on Bailey's Creek near Deep Bottom, July 27th and 28th. They had almost constant picket and skirmish duty during the summer. September 10th the Second sharpshooters, with two other regiments of the brigade, by a night attack, carried a portion of the enemy's rifle-pits, known as "The Chimneys" on the Jerusalem Plank road, in front of Fort Sedgwick. General Walker, the historian of the Second Corps, calls this "one of the most creditable operations of the siege." The regiment did its share in the dangerous and unwholesome service in the trenches in the fall of 1864.

October 11th, by the choice of the company, Sergeant

²³ Killed — Leavitt F. Burroughs, Amos B. Chase and Edward W. Demary of company H. Died of wounds—Henry J. Eldred, Asa J. Sanborn and Silas F. Whitcomb of company E. Missing—G. R. Tower of company E. After six escapes and as many recaptures, and after many exciting and painful experiences, Tower finally escaped from Augusta and made his way to the Union lines at Savannah in February, 1865.

William H. Churchill was appointed captain and Corporal Edgar A. Beach second lieutenant of company H; but under the exigencies of the service neither was mustered as such.

In November, Sergeant William H. Humphrey was commissioned as first lieutenant and Sergeant William F. Tilson as second lieutenant of company E.

October 1st the Vermont companies marched with the regiment in the movement of the division (now commanded by General Mott) to the Peebles Farm, and October 27th they took part in the unsuccessful movement against the South Side railroad and in the battle known by the titles of the Boynton Plank Road, Burgess's Mill and Hatcher's Run. In this, company H suffered severe loss. While advancing on the skirmish line, early in the action, Captain Churchill fell mortally wounded and Lieutenant Beach received a severe wound. Later the regiment assisted in the recapture of two Union guns and in the capture of many prisoners during the repulse of Heth's division. Churchill died November 11th in the enemy's hands, and Beach was a prisoner for several months. Five other men of company H were wounded.

Sergeant Walter W. Smith was appointed captain of company H, November 11th. December 8th the regiment took part with the Fifth Corps in the raid upon and destruction of the Weldon railroad at Jarrett's Station, returning to their quarters on the 12th.²⁴

In January, 1865, the aggregate of company E was increased to 95 by transfers of men from company F of the First regiment and accessions of recruits. January 31st, 54 men were reported for duty and 40 on the sick list. Company H also received a dozen men from company F, First regiment, and a few recruits, and January 31st it had 38 men for duty and 37 sick. Colonel Stoughton, having been

²⁴ This affair appears in Adjutant General Washburn's official list under the erroneous date and title of "Hatcher's Run, December 5th."

exchanged, was mustered out January 23d, his three years' term having expired three months before. January 22d First Sergeant Curtis Abbott was promoted to be first lieutenant and Sergeant Willis F. Keeler to be second lieutenant of company H.

February 5th to the 7th the Vermont companies participated with the regiment and division in the movement and extension of the Union lines to the left, and were engaged at the Vaughan Road crossing of Hatcher's Run on the 5th, driving the enemy from their works across the stream. A man of company H was wounded.

On the 25th of February the sharpshooters were disbanded, much to the disgust of officers and men, and the second and third Vermont companies were transferred to companies G and H of the Fourth Vermont, retaining their officers.²⁵ They were cordially received by their brother Vermonters and served with high credit in the Fourth during its term of service, participating in the capture of the picket line in front of Fort Fisher, March 25th; in the storming of the lines of Petersburg, April 2d, in which Lieutenants Humphrey and Tilson each lost a leg and Lieutenant Keeler was wounded; and in the pursuit of Lee.

The Battles of Companies E and H, Second Regiment U. S. Sharpshooters.

Rappahannock Station,	-	-	-	-	Aug. 21 to 24, 1862
Sulphur Springs,	-	-	-	-	Aug. 26, 1862
Groveton,	-	-	-	-	Aug. 28, 1862
Second Bull Run,	-	-	-	-	Aug. 29 and 30, 1862
South Mountain,	-	-	-	-	Sept. 14, 1862
Antietam,	-	-	-	-	Sept. 16 and 17, 1862
Fredericksburg,	-	-	-	-	Dec. 12 to 16, 1862
Chancellorsville,	-	-	-	-	May 2 to 4, 1863
Gettysburg,	-	-	-	-	July 2 to 4, 1863
Wapping's Heights,	-	-	-	-	July 22, 1863

²⁵ General DeTrobriand issued a justly complimentary order on the occasion of their departure from his command, acknowledging their long and efficient service, and alluding to the glorious record they had made on many battle-fields.

Auburn, -	-	-	-	-	Oct. 13, 1863
Kelly's Ford, -	-	-	-	-	Nov. 6, 1863
Brandy Station, -	-	-	-	-	Nov. 7, 1863
Orange Grove, -	-	-	-	-	Nov. 27, 1863
Mine Run, -	-	-	-	-	Nov. 28 to 30, 1863
Wilderness, -	-	-	-	-	May 5 to 8, 1864
Po River, -	-	-	-	-	May 10, 1864
Spottsylvania, -	-	-	-	-	May 10 to 12, 1864
North Anna, -	-	-	-	-	May 23 and 24, 1864
Totopotomoy, -	-	-	-	-	May 31, 1864
Cold Harbor, -	-	-	-	-	June 11, 1864
Petersburg, -	-	-	-	-	June 16 to 23, 1864
Deep Bottom, -	-	-	-	-	July 27 and 28, 1864
Petersburg, -	-	-	-	-	Sept. 10, 1864
Boydton Plank Road, -	-	-	-	-	Oct. 27, 1864
Weldon Railroad, -	-	-	-	-	Dec. 7 to 10, 1864
Hatcher's Run, -	-	-	-	-	Feb. 5 to 7, 1865

The final statements of the Second and Third companies of sharpshooters are as follows:

FINAL STATEMENT OF COMPANY E.

Original members-com. officers, 3; enlisted men, 88; total	91
Transfers from other regiments—enlisted men, 32; recruits—com. officers, 1; enlisted men, 115; total	148
Aggregate.	239
Losses.	
Killed in action—enlisted men, 9 died from wounds—com. officers, 2; enlisted men, 11; died of disease—enlisted men, 13; died (unwounded) in Confederate prison—enlisted men, 1; total	36
Honorably discharged—com. officers (resigned), 1; (disability), 2; enlisted men (disability), 61; (for wounds), 6; total	70
Promoted to U. S. A—com. officers, 1; transferred to Veteran Reserve Corps, etc., 117; total	118
Deserted:	8
Total Losses:	232
Mustered Out—enlisted men	7
Aggregate.	239
Total Wounded	50
Total re-enlisted	19

FINAL STATEMENT OF COMPANY H.

Original members—com. officers, 8; enlisted men, 97; total	100
Gains.	
Transferred from other regiments and recruits—enlisted men	91
Aggregate	191
Losses.	
Killed in action—com. officers, 1; enlisted men, 11; total	12
Died of wounds—com. officers, 1; enlisted men, 5; total	6
Died of disease—enlisted men	18
Honorably discharged—com. officers (resigned), 2; enlisted men (disability), 47; com. officers (for wounds), 2; enlisted men (for wounds), 1; total	52
Transferred to Veteran Reserve Corps, etc. —com. officers, 4; enlisted men, 82; total	86
Deserted:	4
Total Losses:	178
Mustered Out—com. officers, 1; enlisted men, 12; total	13
Aggregate	191
Total Wounded	40
Total re-enlisted	20