

## Military Correspondence.

[Extracts from a letter from Capt. S. M. Fuller.]

BUSH HILL, Va., July 29th, 1861.

Lieutenant Carter with some men have gone this afternoon to build a bridge, as we are to have artillery and cavalry attached to our Brigade. It probably will be some time before we make another push for the enemy. I hope so at any rate; and also hope that the Tribune and other papers will let Gen. Scott have his own way, and not try to crowd the troops into war, until everything is prepared. The rebels are well fortified with masked entrenchments and forts.

At the battle we had, the rebels rushed on, with thirty thousand fresh troops against our two thousand, and our troops on the retreat too, when our brigade arrived.

If they had followed us up they could have shot or taken us all, as our troops were thoroughly used up. A few minutes after we left the hill, there was a perfect line on it, who discharged their guns, but without much effect.

It is said the picket guard of the enemy are very near us now. One of my men says he was out about three miles, and saw four men; one of them beckoned to him; he proved to be an Alabama Lt. with whom he was acquainted when in California. He talked about an hour with him; then they ordered him to come as their prisoner. He went with them a few steps, until he saw four more on horses, and he also saw a good chance to run, which he did for the thick wood, they firing some thirty times at him, and chasing him with horses. He thinks that when he fired he wounded the Lieut. When he returned he had a ball hole through his canteen, and his fingers hurt a little.

We have some five or six regiments camped about us. The third Maine regt. buried a man to-day, who died of diphtheria.

Wm. Gardner is at Georgetown hospital yet; he is sick with a fever, but is getting better. I have about ten sick to-day, but none dangerously. They will probably be well in a day or two. The rest are all well.

I have heard nothing of Walker. Mr. Bisbee was promoted to-day to Sergeant Major.

[Letter from private Hersey, of Co. J, to a friend, —interesting because the writer only tells what he saw.]

BUSH HILL, ALEXANDRIA, July 27th '61.

Dear Frank: Your letter came to hand day before yesterday at which time I was too much exhausted to reply. I will try now and give you an account of the battle, that is, what I saw of it. Our Brigade not arriving on the field until about three o'clock, I don't of course know much about the first of it.

We were marched three or four days before hand to a field about one mile from Centreville, and there encamped. Saturday we were ordered to have three day's rations in our haversacks, and be ready to march at 5 o'clock; this order was afterwards changed to 3 o'clock Sunday morning.

At 3, then, we formed in the road and took up the line of march. We were detained just this side of Centreville for two or three hours from some cause unknown to me, but at last we started at quick time and kept it up for about four miles. Then we were detained again waiting for the cavalry two or three hours more; all this time we could hear firing away off on our front and left. When the forward next began, the order came "Right shoulder shift arms"—"Double quick," and the double quick was kept up until we reached the battle field; they would halt us a few seconds to breathe, and then came the dog trot again. When we got there the day was decided, but our officers were determined to have a hack at them. We marched up the road and formed the line at the foot of a long hill or ridge, and then went up the hill in line. When we reached the top our lines were broken by the retreat of our own cavalry, who went through us pell mell. One said, "For God's sake don't go up there for they have got a rifle battery posted so as to sweep the hill." But we did go up, and from the top I got the first view I had of the enemy.

They were drawn up on our front and right in a body of woods; directly in front at about half a mile from us they had a battery of 6 pounders, while on the left of our front they had a large body of sharpshooters thrown out along a fence and lying behind it. Their fire was terrible, and for nearly an hour our Brigade alone and unsupported held them good play. Men fell at times like apples from a wind shaken tree.

Three times were we beaten back by the storm of iron and lead, and three times we charged back again. The general retreat began when we were beaten back the first time, but we did not notice that. In the last rally a little fellow in front of me was shot through the chest, another near me through the arm, still another in the hand; at the same volley a slug passed through my trousers without touching me.

Our colors have five holes in them, and the standard bearer was shot through the hand. Our Brigade now joined in the retreat. I lingered behind, helping a wounded man, and that was the last I saw of the Brigade until the following Tuesday.

There never was anything so disorderly and disgraceful as our retreat. Had the enemy followed us with any force we should all have been cut off. I came across half a dozen of our boys carrying our 6th sergeant, who was shot through the body, and stopped with them; we got him on a cavalry horse but he could not stand the rough motion, and at last we got him on a large white horse along with a fellow from Minn., who was shot through the neck. The enemy's cavalry coming down the road we had to take to the woods.

At last our artillery formed at Centreville and drove them back. All our fellows kept dropping off, and at last I was left with the wounded man and a Minnesotian, who would not leave his chum. To make the story short, I got him to the hospital—had the ball extracted, and the next day started from Centreville, and walked to Alexandria through the worst rain storm I have seen here yet, a distance of twenty miles.

That we were whipped, I do not wonder, for we had but 20 regiments in the fight, while detachments of men were coming to the enemies assistance about all the time; at any rate they numbered 90,000 men at the last of the action.

The Fire Zouaves fought like demons, I am told by witnesses. Once when the cavalry charged them they met them half way and drove them. They are splendid fellows, and fear is a word to them unknown. I tell you, Frank, there will be drafting in the State of Maine yet, and a good deal of it too. In my opinion this war will last a good while. The South is up as well as the North, and can make resistance, and will; our way will be contested inch by inch.

Yours truly,

SAM.

[Extracts from other letters of young Hersey, private in company J]

Aug 1. "I couldn't help laughing at the lady's account, who said our regiment were trampled to death. Never believe that kind of talk again. Cavalry are not half as dangerous as they look, and they can't do a thing in woods, or on broken ground, or where fences are plenty. A body of cavalry, [Black Horse Cavalry,] charged on the Ellsworth Zouaves. The Zouaves opened their ranks and "took 'em in." Some went out alive. There cannot be anything imagined half so full of fight as a Zouave. They charged again and again, and piled up the rebels in heaps." "Our regiment [the 4th] has now got its battery of six rifled can-

non, and any kind of horses, so that we can lick blazes out of the rebels the next time." "All the Grays got safely back, save sergeant Walker, who is wounded and prisoner. I see the Journal has got it that Bill Gardner is wounded, but that is a mistake. He was not in the fight, but was sick, and is in the hospital in Georgetown. He is doing well." "The rebels take as good care of our wounded as of their own, and as they captured a lot of our surgeons, they have doctors enough." "If ever the 4th is in action in another fight, don't believe every cock and bull story, for they will exaggerate." "I found that old deed, [which we spoke of last week.] in a chest among a lot of old papers, evidently the accumulation of a century. Some of the documents were on parchment. I took only an old book on Masonry and the deed. The house must have been owned by some rich old chap, by the look of things. It is on the same street with the Marshall House, where Ellsworth was killed." "We are now in the best of quarters." "One of their rifle balls passed through my trowsers leg just below the knee, but did not touch the hide."