

Head Quarters, (Cavalry Division, Mills (Capt. U. S.
 Missionary Ridge, Near Chattanooga, Tenn. Oct. 18th 1863.
 Colonel,

I have the honor to report the operations of my Division in the Battle of Chickamauga, fought on Saturday and Sunday the 19th and 20th of September, 1863.

During the afternoon of Saturday, the 19th ultimo, I found my Division in a westerly direction across the Chickamauga River, at Seaford's Ford, and having received orders to report to Lieut. Genl. Polk, commanding the right wing of the Army, I did so, and was directed by him to form a second line in rear of the right of the line already in position. Accordingly, soon after sun-set, my Division was formed (partially) in echelon, about three hundred yards in rear of the right of the first line. My right rested in front of a steam saw-mill, known as Jay's Mill, situated on a small stream, running between the Chickamauga, and the road leading from Chattanooga to La Fayette. My line extended from the saw mill almost due South for nearly a mile, fronting to the west.

Polk's Brigade, with Cabell's Battery, (commanded by Lieut. Thomas D. Key) composed my right wing; Herd's Brigade, with Simple's Battery, my center; and Cosler's Brigade, with Louisa's Battery, my left wing.

I now received orders from Lieut. Genl. Will to advance - passing over the line, which had been expended, - and drive back the enemy's left wing.

In my front were open woods - with

the exception of a clearing (fence in) in front of my centre, the ground sloping upwards as we advanced. Ordering the Brigades to direct themselves by Woods (the centre) Brigade, and former Brigade - distance, I moved forward, passing over the first line, - and was in a few moments heavily engaged along my right and centre. The enemy, posted behind hastily-constructed breast works opened a heavy fire of both small arms and Artillery.

For half an hour the firing was the heaviest I had ever heard; it was dark, however, and accurate shooting, was impossible. Each party was aiming at the flashes of the other's guns, and few of the shot from either side went off.

Mr. Hestekiff (my chief of artillery) placed Polk's and Wood's Artillery in position in the cleared fire in front of my Centre, braving themselves of the noise and the darkness. Capt. Simple and Lieut. Key, ran their batteries forward within sixty yards of the enemy's line, and opened a rapid fire. Polk moved forward at the same moment on the right; when the enemy ceased firing, and quickly disappeared from my front.

There was some confusion at the time, necessarily inseparable, however, from a night attack. This, and the difficulty of moving my Artillery through the woods in the dark, considered a further advance imprudent for the night.

Consequently, Colfax, and after re-adjusting my lines, threw out skirmishers a quarter of a mile in advance, and bivouacked.

In this conflict the enemy was driven back about a mile and a half. We left in my hands

two or three pieces of artillery, several Captains, two or three hundred prisoners, and the Colours of the Seventy-Sixth Massachusetts, and those of the Seventy-Ninth Pennsylvania.

At about ten O'Clock next morning I received orders from Genl. Will to advance, and drop on the line of Gen. Buckenridge, who had been placed on my right. Accordingly, directing each Brigade to drop upon the right, and preserve its distance, I moved forward. Buckenridge's was already in motion. The effort to outtake, and drop upon him, caused hurry and some confusion in my line, which was necessarily a long one.

Before the effects of this could be rectified, Polk's Battery, and the right of Hood's encountered the heaviest Artillery-fire I have ever experienced.

I was now within short canister-range of a line of log breast-works, and a hurricane of shot and shell swept the woods from the unseen enemy in my front.

This deadly fire was direct, and came from that part of the enemy's breast-works, opposite to my right and right centre; the rest of my line - stretching off to the left - received an oblique fire from the line of breast-works, which at a point opposite my centre formed a retiring angle, running off towards the Chattanooga-Safayette road behind.

The accompanying Map, showing the shape of the enemy's line of works opposite my line, will explain our relative positions.

Upon reference to it, it will be seen, that opposite to my right and right-center, the enemy's works ran about a half-a-mile north and south, and nearly

parallel to the Chaltanmiza-La Fayette road, which was about three hundred yards behind: that at a point opposite my center his works formed, as before stated, a retiring angle, running in a westerly, and somewhat oblique direction, to the Chaltanmiza-La Fayette road, and that at a point nearly opposite my right his works formed another retiring angle running back also to the road.

My right and right-center, consisting of Polk's Brigade, and Lowry's Regiment of Woods' Brigade, were checked within one hundred and seventy-five yards of the advance part of this portion of the enemy's works, and the rest of the line were halted in compliance with the order previously given to drop upon the right.

Pushing towards the left at this time, I found that the line of advance of my Division, which was the left of the Right Wing of the Army, converged with the line of advance of the Left Wing of the Army; the flanks of the two wings had already come into collision - part of Woods' Brigade had passed over Bates' Brigade of Stuart's Division, which was the right of the Left Wing; and Beecher's Brigade, which formed my left, had been thrown out entirely, and was in rear of the Left ^{Wing} of the Army. I ordered them to move forward the remainder of his Brigade, pushing at the same time in the direction of the enemy's fire with Ewing's Battery.

That part of Woods' Brigade to the left of Lowry's Regiment, and to the left of this Southern angle of the breast works, in its advance at this time, entered an old field bordering the road (Chaltanmiza-La Fayette), and attempted to crop it in the face

of a heavy fire from works in its front: it had almost reached the road, its left being at Po's house (known as the Burning House), when it was driven back by a heavy oblique fire of small arms and artillery ^{which} was opened upon both its flanks; The fire from the right coming from the South face of the breast-works, which was hid from view by the thick growth of scrub-oak bordering the field. Five hundred men were killed and wounded by this fire in a few minutes. Upon this repulse Leroy's Regiment having also in the same time been forced to retire, I ordered the Brigade still further back to reform. Semple's Battery, which had no position, I also ordered back.

I now moved Lech's Brigade by the right flank, with the intention of connecting it with Polk's left, so filling the gap left in my Centre by the withdrawal of Wood. This connection, however, I could not establish, as Polk's left had in its turn been also driven back. Finding it a useless sacrifice of life for Polk to retain his position, I ordered him to fall back with the rest of his line, and with his and Herd's Brigades I took up a strong defensive position, some three or four hundred yards in rear of the point from which they had been repulsed. Lech's Brigade had moved forward towards the right of the enemy's advanced works, but could not go beyond the crest of a low ridge, from which Leroy had been repulsed. I therefore ordered him to cover himself behind the ridge, and hold his position as long as possible. His Brigade was now in retention about four hundred yards in front of the left of the rest of the Division;

which has lasted for some hours.

In effecting
his last disposition of his Command, ^{Genl.} ~~Genl.~~
Deschler fell — a shell passing fair through
his chest. It was the first battle in which
this gentleman had the honor of commanding
as a General Officer. He was a brave and
efficient officer. He brought always to the discharge
of his duty a warm zeal, and a high consci-
entiousness. The Army and the Country will
long remember him.

At about half-past-three
O'Clock P.M. I received orders from Lieut. Genl.
Polt to move forward on a line with my
left (Deschler), connecting my right with
Jackson's Brigade, and when I had formed
my line, to remain, and hold the position.
Accordingly, advanced with my centre and
right wing, drove in the enemy's skirmishes,
and found his line behind the works from which
he had repulsed us in the morning.

The Left Wing of the Army had been driv-
ing the enemy: the Right Wing now attacked,
Lieut. Gen. Polt ordering me to advance my
Heavy Batteries, and open on the enemy.
Capt. Sample, my Acting Chief of Artillery,
(Maj. Ketchikiss, my Chief of Artillery, being disabled
by a wound received the day before) selected posi-
tions in front of the line, and placed his own
and Douglass's Batteries within two hundred yards
of the enemy's breast-works, and opened a
rapid and most effective fire, silencing immedi-
ately a Battery, which had been playing upon my
line. About the same time Brigadier-Genl. Polt

Charged, and soon carried the north-western angle of the enemy's works, taking in succession three lines of breast works. In this brilliant operation he was materially aided by Key's Battery, and towards its close by Douglas's Battery, which had again been moved by my orders to my extreme right, where it was run into position by hand.

A large number of Prisoners (Regulars) was here captured; the enemy abandoned his works, and retired precipitately. Brigadier Genl. Poth pursued to the Chattanooga-Lafayette road, where he captured another piece of Artillery.

I have received directions from Lieut. Genl. Hill to halt my Command until further orders.

I cannot close this report without an acknowledgment of distinguished services rendered by various Officers and men, which would, otherwise, pass unnoticed.

I have already incidentally called attention to the gallant conduct of Brig. Gen. Poth, but it is due to him and to the Country, which wishes to appreciate its faithful servants, to say that to the intrepidity and stern determination of purpose of himself and men, I was principally indebted for the success of the Charge on Sunday evening, which drove the enemy from his breast works, and gave us the battle.

Capt. Mills, also, is entitled to be remembered. Leading his regiment through this battle until the fall of his Brigade - the lamented Leshler, he was then called by seniority to Command the Brigade, which he did with gallantry and intelligence.

To my Staff, Major Calhoun Benham,

U.S.G. (who received a contusion on the right shoulder from a grape-shot or fragment of shell), Capt Irving, A. Ruck, U.S.G. (whose horse was shot under him), Maj Joseph. R. Dixon, Assistant Inspector General, Capt R. F. Phillips, Assistant Inspector General, Lieut. J. H. Estlin Aide de Camp & ^{acting} Assistant Inspector General; Maj. J. R. Hotchkiss, Chief of Artillery (who received a wound from a Minie ball in the foot on Saturday, which deprived me of his valuable services afterwards), Capt Candy C. Sample, who replaced Maj. Hotchkiss as Chief of Artillery, when disabled; Capt C. J. Vandewater, Chief of Ordnance; Lieut. S. M. Mangum, Aide de Camp, and Lieut. S. P. Kearby, Aide de Camp, (who received a contusion from a grape-shot); I am indebted, for the faithful and indefatigable manner, in which they performed their vital though perhaps not showy duties, throughout these operations.

Maj. J. R. Hotchkiss, Chief of Artillery, Capt. Sample with his Battery, and Lieut. Thomas R. Key, commanding Battery's Battery, rendered invaluable service, and exhibited the highest gallantry, on Saturday night, in running their pieces up, as they did, within sixty yards of the enemy; In this they were ably sustained by Lieut. Richard Goldschwaite of Sample's Battery. Here Maj. Hotchkiss received his wound.

Capt Sample also displayed skill and judgment, as acting Chief of Artillery; particularly in the selection of a position for his own and Douglass's Batteries on Sunday evening, which

gave an oblique fire upon the enemy in his works, contributing to the success of the final charge by Pott's Brigade.

Capt C. S. Palmer A. A. Gen. of Hood's Brigade was conspicuous for his coolness and attention to duty on the field, and has my thanks.

I am much indebted also to Dr D. M. Lenthicum, Chief Surgeon of my Division. The completeness of his arrangements, his careful supervision of Subordinates, both on the field, under fire and elsewhere, and in the Hospital, secured our gallant wounded prompt attention, and all the comfort, and alleviations of pain, attainable in the exigencies of battle.

Surgeon A. P. Carstane, then acting (now actual) Medical Inspector of my Division, rendered most efficient service. Assistant Surgeon Alfred B. De Loach particularly distinguished himself by his unselfish devotion - going repeatedly far forward under fire, and amongst the slain, to attend the wounded.

Jamies P. Brady, and Melvin, S. Overstreet, Privates in the Buckner Guards, (my Escort) specially detailed to attend me through the battle, went with me wherever my duty called me. Brady was wounded in the hand - Overstreet had his horse shot.

To Capt E. F. Vanderford My Chief of Ordnance, my thanks are especially due. His trains were always in the best order, and in the most acceptable position, and to his

case in this respect, I am indebted for a prompt supply of Ammunition in every critical emergency which arose.

I carried into action on Saturday (the 19th) five thousand one hundred & fifteen (5115) Officers and men - four thousand eight hundred and twenty five (4825) Bayonets. On Sunday (the 20th) I carried in four thousand six hundred and twenty one (4621) - Officers and men - four thousand and four hundred and thirty seven (4437) Bayonets. In the two days my Casualties were two hundred and four (204) killed, fifteen hundred and thirty nine (1539) wounded, Six (6) missing. making in all one thousand seven hundred and forty nine (1749).

Respy

Wm. A. R. R.

Major General

To

Lt Col Archer Anderson
A. A. R.

Hill's Corp.

Heard 2. Volume: Ten
Michigan, Notes in
Oct 18th
1863

P.R. Collins
May 20th

Report of Battle
of
Chickamauga

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