

BY D. W. CRAIG.

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Victory at South Mountain, Sept. 14.

Sept. 14, 1862.—Although the battle of today was of long duration, still it was not so sanguinary, considering the forces engaged, as a spectator would at first be inclined to suppose.

The rebel position was on the sides and the summit of the Blue Ridge Mountains on each side of the Gap, known as Frog Gap, through which the main road on the turnpike, from Middletown to Hagerstown, passes.

The nearer we approached the mountains the more successfully could the enemy bring his artillery to bear on our columns.

The first division to enter the field on our side was Cox's, of Reno's corps.

The battle commenced with artillery at seven a. m., Robertson's United States Battery of four light field pieces firing the first shot.

The center column was the last to come into action. The same success that marked the advance of the two wings also attended the center.

Cook's battery took a favorable position for shelling the woods in advance of the division, but had hardly got to work when the rebels fired a tremendous volley of musketry at the cannoniers.

Gen. Reno was killed on the field of battle. At the time of the calamity he was observing, by aid of a glass, the enemy's movements.

Our men fought the whole day with that desperate valor which in battle often proves that there is safety in temerity. They literally drove the enemy all the time, giving them no time to rally, no opportunity to recover, and thus kept them at a disadvantage.

MONDAY MORNING.—Sumner's corps came up from Frederick last night. During the night our forces slept on the mountain. Banks' and Porter's corps are on the turnpike between Frederick and the mountain.

GOOD WORD FOR WELLES.—A year or so ago it was quite fashionable for the Eastern press to denounce the Secretary of the Navy, Welles, as an "old fogey," a "Rip Van Winkle," etc.

For the succeeding two hours the infantry under the command of Reno ceased operations, and the artillery alone continued the duel. The firing for a while was exceedingly animated, but the 20-pounders proved too much for the rebels, and they were compelled in the course of half an hour to change the position of their guns.

At two p. m. the head of Gen. Hooker's column appeared coming up the turnpike to reinforce Reno. The column took the road branching off from the turnpike at the right, near Bolivar, and proceeded to the foot of the mountains.

At three p. m. the line of battle from right to left was formed, near the base of the mountains on the right, and at the edge of a piece of woods on the mountain slope at the left.

ing the fire of one to the right, and of the other to the left of the line. They were replied to by one of Simmons' 20 pounders on our left, and Cooper's Battery on our right.

The enemy's shells for the most part went over the Union troops, consequently they did not effect much damage.

The valor displayed on this occasion by the Pennsylvania Reserves, and the corps formerly under the command of McDowell, is deserving of the highest praise.

Every man was at his post in the line. They all seemed determined to force back the enemy and take possession of the mountains in spite of any opposition that might be placed in their way.

Reno's corps on the left did its part nobly. The men were called upon to do severe fighting, and they performed their duty with a will and heroism seldom before displayed.

The result of the battle secures to the Union troops a very important position, inasmuch as it commands the approaches on each side of the mountain, also a vast area of the surrounding country.

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At the expiration of the next half hour their guns were silenced.

The Great Battle of Antietam.

The N. Y. Tribune has the following dispatch, dated battle field of Sharpsburg, Wednesday evening, Sept. 17th:

Fierce and desperate battle between 200,000 men has raged since daylight, yet night closes on an uncertain field. It is the greatest fight since Waterloo; all over the field contested with an obstinacy equal even to Waterloo.

After the brilliant victory near Middletown, Gen. McClellan pushed forward his army rapidly, and reached Keedysville with three corps on Monday night.

McClellan was on the hill where Benjamin's battery was stationed, and found himself suddenly under a rather heavy fire. It was still uncertain whether the rebels were retreating or reinforcing; their batteries would remain in position in either case, and as they had withdrawn nearly all their troops from view there was only the doubtful indication of columns of dust to the rear.

On the evening of Tuesday, Hooker was ordered to cross the Antietam creek with his corps, and, feeling the left of the enemy, to be ready to attack next morning.

When Richardson advanced on Monday he found the enemy deployed and displayed in force on a crescent-shaped ridge, the outline of which followed, more or less exactly, the course of Antietam creek.

During that day they kept their troops exposed, and did not move them to avoid the artillery fire, which must have been occasionally annoying.

Under the name of these hills runs the deep stream called Antietam creek, fordable only at distant points. Three bridges cross it—one on the Hagerstown road, one on the Sharpsburg pike, and one to the left, in a deep crevice of sleepy falling hills.

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will. Two-thirds of them were the same men who, under McDowell, had broken at Manassas.

The half hour passed, the rebels began to give way a little, only a little, but at the first indication of a receding fire, Forward, was the word, and on went the line with a cheer and a rush.

Meade and his Pennsylvanians followed hard and fast—followed till they came within easy range of the woods, among which they saw their beaten enemy disappearing—followed still, with another cheer, and flung themselves against the cover.

But out of those gloomy woods came, suddenly and heavily, terrible volleys—volleys which smote, and bent, and broke, in a moment, that eager front, and hurled them swiftly back for half the distance they had won.

The best brigade came down the hill to the right on the run, went through the timber in front through a storm of shot and bursting shell and crashing limbs, over the open field beyond, and straight into the cornfield, passing as they went the fragments of three brigades, shattered by the rebel fire, and streaming to the rear.

There for half an hour they held the ridge, unyielding in purpose, exhaustless in courage. They began to go down the hill and into the corn; they did not stop to think that their ammunition was nearly gone; they were there to win that field, and they won it.

The crisis of the fight at this point had arrived. Ricketts' division vainly endeavoring to advance, and exhausted by the effort had fallen back.

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trusted to him, how keen was his insight into the battle; how every opportunity was seized, and every reverse was checked and turned into another success.

Sumner arrived just as Hooker was leaving, and assumed command. As I rode over toward the left I met Sumner at the head of his column advancing rapidly through the timber, opposite where Crawford was fighting.

Sedgwick's division was in advance, moving forward to support Crawford and Gordon. Rebel reinforcements were approaching also, and the struggle for the roads was again to be renewed.

To extend his own front as far as possible, he ordered the Twenty-fourth New York to move by the left flank.

Gen. Dana was wounded. Gen. Howard, who took command of the division after Gen. Sedgwick was disabled, exerted himself to restore order, but it could not be done there.

French sent word he could hold his ground. Richardson, while gallantly leading a regiment under a heavy fire, was severely wounded in the shoulder.

At one o'clock affairs on the right had a gloomy look. Hooker's troops were greatly exhausted, and their General away from the field.

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strength, distributed his loss over a greater period of time, but yet lost none the less in the end.

Finally, at four o'clock, McClellan sent simultaneously orders to Burnside and Franklin; to the former to advance and carry the batteries in his front at all hazards and any cost; to the latter to carry the woods next in front of him to the left, which the rebels still held.

Franklin, thereupon, was directed to run no risk of losing his present position, and instead of sending his infantry into the woods, contented himself with advancing his batteries over the breadth of the fields in front, supporting them with heavy columns of infantry, and attacking with energy the rebel batteries immediately opposed to him.

How extraordinary the situation was may be judged from a moment's consideration of the facts. It is understood that from the onset Burnside's attack was expected to be decisive, as it certainly must have been if things went well elsewhere, and if he succeeded in establishing himself on the Sharpsburg road in the rebel rear.

Attacking first with one regiment, then with two, and delaying both for artillery, Burnside was not over the bridge before two o'clock—perhaps not till three. He advanced slowly up the slopes in his front, his batteries in rear covering, to some extent, the movements of the infantry.

Getting his troops well in hand, and sending a portion of his artillery to the front, he advanced them, with rapidity and the most determined vigor, straight up the hill in front, on top of which the rebels had maintained their most dangerous battery.

There are two hills on the left of the road, the farthest and lowest. The rebels have batteries on both. Burnside is ordered to carry the nearest to him, which is the farthest from the road.

The next moment, the road in which the rebel battery was planted was canopied with clouds of dust swiftly descending into the valley.

The hill was carried, but could it be held? The rebel columns, before seen moving to the left, increased their pace.

There is a halt; the rebel left gives way and scatters over the field; the rest stand fast and fire. More infantry comes up. Burnside is outnumbered, flanked, compelled to yield the hill he took so bravely.

White spaces show where men are falling, but they close up instantly, and still the line advances. The brigades of Burnside are in heavy column; they will not give way before a bayonet charge in line.

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