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Sketch of the 58th Regiment



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SKETCH  
OF THE  
**Fifty-Eighth**  
**Regiment**

(INFANTRY)

**North Carolina Troops**



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IN preparing the following sketch as a contribution to the History of North Carolina Troops, official records have been consulted where accessible. The dates and other memoranda in many cases were obtained from the writer's personal journal, in which daily entries were made during the war.

The part referring to the battle of Bentonsville was written and published in 1887, in the Raleigh "Observer" and other papers in North Carolina and Tennessee. It is much to be regretted that repeated efforts failed to secure the pictures of more of the rank and file, and particularly of those devoted men, officers and privates who laid down their lives for their home land on the field of battle.

The writer esteems it a privilege to bear witness to the courage, patience and endurance of his comrades, and he offers this imperfect sketch as an humble tribute to the high soldierly qualities which they uniformly displayed.

G. W. F. HARPER.

LENOIR, N. C., March 1, 1901.





FIFTY-EIGHTH REGIMENT.

- |                                       |                                     |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. John B. Palmer, Colonel.           | 4. Isaac H. Bailey, Captain, Co. B. |
| 2. Benjamin F. Baird, Captain, Co. D. | 5. F. A. Tobey, Captain, Co. A.     |
| 3. G. W. F. Harper, Major.            | 6. Drury D. Coffey, Sergeant-Major. |







FIFTY-EIGHTH REGIMENT.

- |                                    |                                      |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. S. M. Silver, Lieut.-Colonel.   | 4. E. L. Moore, Sergeant, Co. E.     |
| 2. L. W. Gilbert, Captain, Co. II. | 5. J. L. Craig, Private, Co. H.      |
| 3. E. H. Crump, Sergeant, Co. H.   | (Captured 1864, and died in prison.) |
| (Severely wounded at Chickamauga.) | 6. A. C. Craig, Sergeant, Co. II.    |



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# The Fifty-Eighth Regiment

(Infantry)

## North Carolina Troops



This Regiment was organized in Mitchell county, North Carolina, July 24, 1862, by the election of John B. Palmer, of Mitchell county, Colonel; Wm. W. Proffitt, of Yancey county, Lieut. Colonel (resigned 1863); John C. Keener, of Yancey county, Major (resigned 1863).

The Regiment was raised as a part of a Legion of the three arms of the service to be commanded by Col. Palmer.

The field, staff and company officers and their successors, as appears in the Roster of North Carolina Troops, Vol. III., pp. 633, and Vol. IV., pp. 439, are as follows, the reference last named, however, through error of copyist or compositor, designates the Regiment after the reorganization, March, 1865, as the 60th, whereas it should have been given as the 58th and 60th Regiments consolidated.

LIEUTENANT COLONELS—Edmund Kirby, of Virginia, killed at Chickamauga September 20, 1863; Thomas J. Dula (resigned August 29, 1864); S. M. Silver, promoted from Major September, 1864 (resigned March, 1865); Thaddeus Coleman, commissioned March, 1865.

MAJORS—T. J. Dula, wounded at Chickamauga, promoted to Lieut. Colonel August 14, 1864; A. T. Stewart,

killed at Jonesboro, Ga., August 31, 1864; S. M. Silver, promoted to Lieut. Colonel August 14, 1864; G. W. F. Harper, promoted November, 1864, from Captain Co. H.

ADJUTANTS—Edmund Kirby, of Virginia, promoted to Lieut. Colonel; Benj. L. Perry, Beaufort, N. C.; Orville Ewing, Nashville, Tenn.

SURGEONS—W. A. Collett (resigned 1863), W. H. Harris.

ASSISTANT SURGEONS—O. M. Lewis, T. J. Mitchell, Alonzo White.

QUARTERMASTER—M. J. Bearden.

SERGEANT MAJORS—H. Herndon; Jas. Inglis, killed at Dalton, Ga., February 24, 1864; D. D. Coffey.

QUARTERMASTER SERGEANT—John E. Medaris, Caldwell county.

ORDNANCE SERGEANT—John A. Hensley, Yancey county.

DRUM MAJORS—H. Estes, Caldwell county; J. Caldwell Blair, Caldwell county.

HOSPITAL STEWARD—James M. Riddle, Mitchell county.

COMPANY A, FROM MITCHELL COUNTY—Captains: Martin Wiseman (resigned 1862), F. A. Tobey. Lieutenants: F. A. Tobey, W. H. Wiseman, killed at Chickamauga September 20, 1863; J. J. Wise, W. A. Vance.

COMPANY B, FROM MITCHELL COUNTY—Captains: Jacob W. Bowman (resigned 1862), Isaac H. Bailey, severely wounded and permanently disabled at Chickamauga

September 20, 1863. Lieutenants: J. C. Conley, J. W. Pitman, I. H. Bailey.

COMPANY C, FROM YANCEY COUNTY—Captain: S. W. Briggs. Lieutenants: M. P. Hampton, W. M. Austin, wounded at Chickamauga.

COMPANY D, FROM WATAUGA COUNTY—Captains: D. C. Harmon (resigned 1862), B. F. Baird. Lieutenants: B. F. Baird, W. P. Mast, D. F. Baird, A. F. Davis, W. M. Harrington.

COMPANY E, FROM CALDWELL COUNTY—Captains: A. T. Stewart, promoted to Major and killed August 31, 1864; Thos. J. Coffey. Lieutenants: J. B. Marler, T. J. Coffey; W. E. Coffey (dropped).

COMPANY F, FROM McDOWELL COUNTY—Captains: W. Conley, died November, 1862; C. O. Conley, killed June, 1864, at New Hope Church, Ga., H. C. Long. Lieutenants: C. O. Conley; J. D. Morrison, killed at Chickamauga September 20, 1863; J. A. Fox; T. P. Epps, R. H. Sisk, J. B. Morgan.

COMPANY G, FROM WATAUGA COUNTY—Captains: J. L. Phillips, wounded at Chickamauga and permanently disabled; Jno. R. Norris, promoted from Lieutenant September, 1863. Lieutenant: C. R. Byrd, wounded at Chickamauga.

COMPANY H, FROM CALDWELL COUNTY—This company was raised for Z. B. Vance's Legion, enlarged by transfers from Companies F and I of the 26th North Carolina Regiment, and went into camp of instruction at Kittrell, N. C., May, 1862.

The effort to raise and organize the Vance Legion being unsuccessful, this company was assigned to the

58th Regiment, which it joined at Johnson City, Tenn., August, 1862.

Captains: T. J. Dula, promoted to Major; G. W. F. Harper, wounded at Resaca, Ga., May 15, 1864; promoted to Major November, 1864. L. W. Gilbert. Lieutenants: W. W. Lenoir, promoted to Captain 37th Regiment July, 1862; G. W. F. Harper; E. M. Hedrick; A. D. Lingle; L. A. Page, killed at Dalton, Ga., February 20, 1864; L. W. Gilbert, promoted to Captain November, 1864.

COMPANY I, FROM WATAUGA COUNTY—Captains: — — Miller, Wm. R. Hodges, J. C. McGhee. Lieutenants: J. C. McGhee, W. S. Davis.

COMPANY K, FROM MITCHELL COUNTY—Captains: S. M. Silver, promoted to Major; D. R. Silver. Lieutenants: J. W. Duncan, L. D. Silver.

COMPANY L, FROM ASHE COUNTY—Captains; W. Gentry, Calvin Eller, L. Hurley. Lieutenants: L. Hurley, E. Hurley, P. Blevins.

COMPANY M, FROM WATAUGA AND ASHE COUNTIES—This Company consolidated with Company G in 1863. Lieutenants: Geo. W. Hopkins, Thos. Ray, J. R. Morris.

The Regiment was moved September, 1862, to Cumberland Gap and assigned to the Division of Gen. Stevenson, then investing that post.

On the retreat of the Federal garrison, Col. Palmer was placed in command at the "Gap" with his regiment, Caper's Georgia Battalion and a battery of artillery until the prisoners could be paroled and the captured stores secured, after which it moved into Kentucky, but unexpectedly met Bragg's Army on its retreat.

During the winter of 1862 and 1863 it was stationed at Big Creek Gap, near Jacksboro, Tenn., with the 55th Georgia, Thornton's Alabama Legion, Kolb's Alabama Battery and Baird's North Carolina Cavalry Battalion, the Brigade under the command of Col. Palmer. The winter was spent in outpost duty, picketing this and neighboring passes in the Cumberland Mountains, and making several expeditions into Kentucky. The details for guard duty in this service were excessive, and the command suffered greatly from privation and exposure. The loss by death from disease was appalling, camp fever and an epidemic of measles being extremely fatal, the natural result of inexperience and a deplorable lack of hospital accommodations and facilities.

In the summer of 1863 the Brigade was placed under the command of Gen. J. W. Frazer, and the troops were stationed at Clinton and various other points in East Tennessee, eventually joining the army of Tennessee, under Gen. Bragg, near Chattanooga, when the Regiment was assigned to Kelly's Brigade of Preston's Division in Buckner's Corps.

In the battles of Chickamauga, September 18th-20th, the Regiment bore a prominent part, and in the charge which captured the stronghold of the enemy on Snod-

grass Hill at the close of that eventful Sunday, the loss in killed and wounded was over one-half of those carried into action. The Lieutenant-Colonel, Edmund Kirby, of Virginia, was killed, and Colonel Palmer and Major Dula wounded; Captains Bailey and Phillips severely wounded, Lieutenants Wiseman and Morrison killed, and Lieutenants Austin, Byrd and others wounded. In the capture of the prisoners, eight Colt's army rifles were taken, of which, by the order of Gen. Preston, four were turned over to the color guard of the 58th North Carolina, and two each to the 5th Kentucky and 63d Virginia Regiments, also of Kelly's Brigade.

The report of Col. Palmer, made on the succeeding day, gives the names of the killed and wounded, and makes the loss in his regiment: killed, 46; wounded, 114; missing, 1; total, 161; over 50 per cent. of the number carried into action.

It will be seen by referring to the official reports that the casualties in the regiment exceeded the combined loss of the other regiments of the Brigade. A steel tablet erected by the Chickamauga National Park Commission marks the position on the crest reached by the regiment at sunset, when the prisoners were captured and the battle ended, and bears the following inscription, to wit:

“KELLY'S BRIGADE.

“PRESTON'S DIVISION—BUCKNER'S CORPS.

“COL. JOHN H. KELLY.

“SEPTEMBER 20, 1863, 7 P.M. LAST POSITION.

“65TH GEORGIA—COL. R. H. MOORE.

“5TH KENTUCKY—COL. HIRAM HAWKINS.

“58TH NORTH CAROLINA—COL. JOHN B. PALMER.

“63D VIRGINIA—MAJ. JAMES M. FRENCH.



“The Brigade, the 65th Georgia being detached to  
“support a battery, re-enforced about 6 P.M. by a regiment  
“from Anderson’s Brigade of Hindman’s Division, after an  
“hour’s severe fighting on the slope in front of the knoll  
“next left of this position, participated there at dusk, with  
“Trigg’s Brigade, in the capture of the Union troops  
“occupying that knoll. Of these 251 were captured by  
“Kelly’s Brigade.

“This was accomplished by Kelly’s Brigade charg-  
“ing their front, while Trigg’s Brigade swung across to  
“the ridge further to the left and closed up the Union line  
“from the rear. While the Union troops were surrender-  
“ing, the right of Kelly’s Brigade received a volley from  
“the front of Van Derveer’s Brigade of Brannan’s Division.  
“This was about 7 P.M., and was the last firing in the  
“battle.

“Strength in action 876. Casualties: killed, 62;  
“wounded, 238; missing, 29; total, 329. Percentage  
“of loss, 37.55.”

Shortly after the battle Col. Palmer was detached from the Regiment and placed in command of the Department of Western North Carolina, with headquarters at Asheville, where he remained until the close of the war, the Regiment thereafter being under the command of a Lieutenant-Colonel or Major. Gen. Kelly was transferred to the cavalry, and Gen. A. W. Reynolds (“Old Gauley”), of Virginia, placed in command of the Brigade, now consisting of the 58th and 60th North Carolina, the 55th and 63d Virginia and the 5th Kentucky Regiments, in Bushrod Johnson’s Division of Longstreet’s Corps, with which it began its march to Knoxville. Before proceeding far, however, the Brigade was recalled, November 22d, to take part in the battles then opening around Chattanooga, and deployed in a thin line, was placed in the trenches at foot of Missionary Ridge. Here it was annoyed by

the premature explosion of the shells from our batteries on the Ridge in rear, firing upon the enemy in front. A veteran of Company H, with a grim sense of humor, suggested to his captain that the command occupy the other side of the breastwork—a brisk musketry fire then coming from the enemy. The suggestion was not adopted.

After three days in this position, with the larger part of the troops on duty day and night, the Regiment (one company at a time deployed in a skirmish line) was recalled to the top of the Ridge, the charge of the enemy being made as the last company moved out. The Confederate line on the Ridge, a very thin one, with no reserve line, was broken—it seemed almost without a fight—at a gap in the Ridge some distance north of the position occupied by the 58th, and the troops on this part of the line moved by orders to the rear and formed a line of battle across the road near the base of the Ridge. Here occurred the only stubborn fight the Regiment was engaged in during this battle. The opposing force, led by Gen. Sheridan in several charges was handsomely repulsed, the battle continuing under the light of a full moon until long after dark. Gen. Jno. C. Breckinridge, in command at this point, when the troops were withdrawn about midnight enquired for the Regiment then filing into the road, and being told, raised his hat and complimented the “tar heels” very highly on their part in the fight.

The army went into winter quarters at Dalton, Ga., under the command of Gen. Joseph E. Johnston, in whom the army reposed unlimited confidence.

On the 25th of February, 1864, Sherman pushed forward a portion of his army to the front of Dalton, and

several partial engagements ensued before he retired. A number of casualties occurred in the 58th. Among the killed was James Inglis, Sergeant-Major, a Scotchman by birth, whose death was deeply regretted by his comrades.

On the 7th of May, Sherman again appeared before Dalton, and after several ineffectual assaults on Johnston's line moved by his right flank, threatening Resaca, to which place the Army of Tennessee was withdrawn. On the 14th and 15th, in the general engagements at Resaca, the Regiment bore its full part and sustained serious loss in killed and wounded. The writer being here wounded, and disabled for service until the latter part of the summer, cannot give details of the Atlanta Campaign, in all the battles of which the Regiment in Reynold's Brigade, Stevenson's Division of Hood's Corps, participated. The loss in the numerous battles was considerable, and the published records are very incomplete.

After the fall of Atlanta, the Brigade was consolidated with Brown's Tennessee Brigade, under Gen. Jos. B. Palmer, of Murfreesboro, Tenn., a gallant officer, under whom the Regiment in his Brigade served until the close of the war.\*

In the march to Nashville the garrison at Dalton was captured, and the railroad north of Atlanta destroyed in many places. The army crossed the Tennessee River at Florence, Ala., November 2d, but unfortunately for the

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\* The careful reader will not confound the name of this officer with that of Col. John B. Palmer, who raised the 58th Regiment and was its first commander.

It is a singular coincidence that two officers bearing the same name and initials, and from different states, commanded the same Brigade. They were both most gallant and efficient officers, without fear and without reproach.

success of the expedition, was there held inactive until the 20th waiting for supplies.

At Columbia, Tenn., the Regiment led the advance of S. D. Lee's Corps on the Mount Pleasant pike, pushing vigorously the retiring enemy, and on entering the town, was ordered to seize the fort overlooking it, the block house enclosed being on fire, and the small arms ammunition therein keeping up a rattling explosion. The men, without orders and with the indifference to danger that so often characterized them, carried out the boxes of ammunition, some of them blazing, and the fire was soon subdued.

The town had been in the possession of the enemy for nearly two years, and the ladies were overjoyed to see the Southern Army, to which they were so loyal, and in which served so many of their relatives and friends. Our Tennessee brigadier rode at the head of the column, and the writer seeing him dismounted and affectionately embraced by females of all ages, congratulated him on meeting so many "kinfolks." He said it was his misfortune not to be acquainted with any of them. The scattering shots of the skirmishers did not check the ovation.

The Regiment under Lieutenant-Colonel Silver, with the prisoners it had captured and others sent to it (altogether about 1,700), was left as a garrison for the fort and town, and thus missed the bloody battles at Franklin and Nashville, and later on Hood's disastrous retreat, by being ordered December 14th to Corinth, Miss., with the prisoners.

At Corinth, relieved of the prisoners, it was sent December 26th to Okalona to drive off a cavalry raid which had cut the railroad near that point.

On the return of the remnant of Hood's army to Tupelo, Miss., the Regiment rejoined the Brigade, now very small, and with it moved by rail to Branchville, S. C., and February 4th again confronted Sherman. Numerous skirmishes occurred at the various crossings of North and South Edisto, in all cases the enemy being repulsed, only to find unoccupied or undefended points above or below at which they crossed. The Brigade reached the vicinity of Columbia on the 14th of February, '65, and was greatly disappointed in finding there no important reinforcements. The Regiment had the post of honor as rear guard, and held the south bank of the Congaree until the morning of the 16th, when it was withdrawn and the bridge burned. On the 16th the Brigade picketed the river bank, with its reserves in the nearest streets, receiving the fire of the enemy's skirmishers, which it was not permitted to return. The enemy, nevertheless, threw shells into the town, several of them striking the capitol, where their marks may still be seen. The following night the Brigade moved to near the forks of the Broad and Saluda to prevent the crossing of the enemy until trains could be taken out of the city, and on the 17th began its march. Leaving the railroad at Blackstocks and fording the Catawba at Landsford, the Brigade reached Charlotte on the 23d of February, from which point a week later it moved by rail to Smithfield Station (now Selma), where Gen. Joseph E. Johnston, reinstated in command, was endeavoring to concentrate his small army.

The men thinly clad, carrying each a single blanket, without tents, and most of the time with scant rations, passed the severe winter of 1864-65 in active field service. In the prime of life, active, cheerful and full of

fun, living in the open air the year round, a great part of the time on the march, the men became inured to hardships and the winter's cold, and complaints of suffering from exposure to the weather were rarely heard. The question of rations gave them more concern. All of this applies also to the field and company officers, who were equally exposed with the private soldiers.

A portion of the Army of Tennessee in detached commands arrived, and on the 18th of March, 1865, Gen. Johnston made a forced march to Bentonsville, where a concentration was effected with Hardee's Corps from Charleston, Hoke's Division and other troops from Eastern North Carolina. The presence of Gen. Johnston again in command of veteran troops inspired the fullest confidence in the small army, which engaged in the battles of the succeeding day in fine spirits. The 58th, in this, its last battle, numbered about 300 effectives. The Brigade (Palmer's) was selected as the directing column for the Army of Tennessee in the assault on the enemy's line. The charge was made with great spirit and dash, and the enemy entrenched and with a high fence built in their front, gave way before inflicting great loss on their assailants. In the pursuit which followed, two pieces of artillery, limbering with all haste to the rear, were captured and driven back into our lines with their teams complete. In running down and taking the guns some of the artillerymen were shot while on the chests, and the old pine field was strewn with blankets, provisions and plunder of all sorts thrown away by the flying foe.

The rapid pursuit over fences and a deep ravine so scattered the attacking column that a halt was made to reform—this a half a mile or more beyond the entrenchments charged, and there was not an enemy in sight nor

a gun nearby being fired. Before the line was completely adjusted the reserves came up in splendid order. Pettus' Brigade before in support of Palmer now took the advance, and in a short time struck the enemy reinforced in a new position. Our lines having become too short for the circle so extended by pushing back the enemy, most of the Regiments of Palmer's Brigade were promptly moved up to fill the gaps in the front line, which was now in the thick pine woods.

The 58th North Carolina on the left of the Brigade, under the direction of a staff officer, was moved up in support of and close to the front line, here facing south, and at the time hotly engaged. Firing was also going on on the right, extending partly to the rear, but not so near, and a battery of artillery kept up a most aggravating enfilade fire over the Regiment, which would have made the position extremely uncomfortable if the gunners had slightly depressed their pieces. As it was, very little could be seen for the smoke which filled the woods, and the ground gently rising toward the battery, their shells for an hour flew almost harmlessly through the timber some ten feet or more overhead, and most of them burst in rear. The incident following will give some idea of the situation. The brigadier, very shortly after the Regiment had reached the spot, rode up and asked, "Which is the right of your Regiment?" A strange question from such a source at such a time the writer thought, but surprise was turned into amazement when the reply was quickly followed by the command: "Major, countermarch your Regiment." It seemed just a little unnecessary to remind him that the Regiment was already facing the enemy, who was close at hand, and being heard to that effect in a most convincing sort of way.

The major, however, did presume to say as much, only to hear, "Yes, I know, but I want you to look after these fellows over here," pointing over his shoulder to our rear and right. The Regiment was accordingly countermarched, halted on the spot and fronted—this time facing north, or opposite to the direction we had just before faced—dressed on a line of guides a little oblique to the original line and the men ordered to lie down for shelter; Gen. Palmer the meanwhile quietly seated on his horse apparently unconscious that anything unusual was going on, although musket balls were flying pretty thick, and some of the enemy's shells must have passed near his head. After witnessing this singular manœuvre, and leaving the 58th Regiment "to look after these fellows" as ordered, the general leisurely rode off to some other part of his Brigade on the front line, where the business in hand was not so dull and uninteresting. He did not have far to go.

The slender line without earthworks that so nearly encircled our position, held its ground against repeated assaults of the enemy in heavy force until eight o'clock at night, when the firing ceased, and at midnight the army resumed the position of the morning.

A more remarkable experience befell a detachment of Tennesseans of the Brigade. In filling a gap in the front line as stated, Colonel Searcey in command, found a flank of the enemy which he proceeded at once to turn and attack in reverse. Before the movement, which was being successfully accomplished, had proceeded very far, however, a Federal reserve appeared, closed the gap and cut off the return of the colonel with a part of his command. The detachment thus cut off made its way successfully through Sherman's lines and near his trains,



capturing as they went an officer and forty men, to whom they were in the act of surrendering, but, discovering the small opposing force, the Tennesseans seized the guns which had been thrown down and compelled the surrender of their would-be captors. The detachment marched with their prisoners through the woods and over obscure roads to Raleigh, and rejoined the Brigade near Smithfield ten days after the battle, greatly to the surprise and delight of their friends, who were ready to give them up as lost.

The restoration of Gen. Joseph E. Johnston to the command gave great confidence to the Army of Tennessee, and the forward movement, as was generally the case, put the men in fine spirits and willing to attempt any duty that he would require of them. In illustration of the faith of the men in their chief: two days after the principal battle, when Sherman's cavalry came so near seizing the bridge in the rear, the firing attracted attention, and some one asking "what that fire in rear of the army meant," the reply came promptly from the ranks of the 58th in the most unconcerned manner, "Don't be uneasy, my son. Old Joe has a wagon train back there somewhere, and there is no danger where HIT is." The general had well earned in the Atlanta Campaign a reputation for taking care of his trains; but for the opportune arrival here of Henderson's little brigade of Stevenson's Division, en route for the army, his prestige in that particular, and perhaps in some others, might have been lost, together with our "spider wagons" and ordnance trains.

In the list of the killed was the name of a young recruit, Augustin Green, from Watauga county, who came from his home to the Regiment the day before the battle.

In the ranks near this unfortunate man marched a veteran of the Mexican War and of the great Civil War. The one was taken and the other left. The old veteran came out of both wars unscathed, and, still living (1900), draws a pension for service in Mexico.

On the 22d of March the army was withdrawn to the railroad near Smithfield. While encamped here the Army of Tennessee was reorganized, and companies, regiments and brigades, all now very small, were consolidated. The 58th and 60th Regiments were designated as the 58th and 60th North Carolina Battalion, with Lieut.-Col. Thaddeus M. Coleman and Maj. G. W. F. Harper as field officers.

The army under Gen. Johnston marched April 10th from Smithfield via Raleigh, and on the 16th encamped at Greensboro. Here the Regiment was selected as a guard for the large accumulation of North Carolina quartermaster's stores, a duty that was faithfully discharged, the men being practically exempt from the demoralization which the pending surrender so generally developed. Gen. Johnston's General Order No. 18, announcing the surrender of the army, was received on the 27th of April. The paroles were received May 2d and distributed to the Regiment, which immediately, as an organized body, marched to Statesville, where it disbanded—some marching to their homes in Ashe and Watauga counties, the greater number taking the cars for Hickory and Icard Station, the latter then the terminus of the railroad.

In the march from Greensboro one-third or more of the men, by order, retained their arms and forty rounds in the cartridge boxes. A small wagon carried a chest of reserve ammunition, a few rations, and after caring for any who might be sick, the blankets of the men. No

excesses or depredations were committed, and the men cheerfully responded to the orders of their officers, to whom, as all knew, respect and obedience could no longer be enforced. The conduct of the rank and file of the Regiment in the closing days of the war was in keeping with the fine soldierly qualities uniformly displayed by them throughout the long struggle, and reflects on all high credit and honor. On returning to their wasted homes, with rare exceptions, they proved themselves to be model citizens.

A small fraction only of those who went forth in the sixties in response to the call of their country now (1900) survive—the others have joined the mighty and daily increasing host beyond the dark river, and there answer to the general roll call of the just and the unjust.

Truth will rise in triumph, and impartial history will surely tell to an admiring world the story of the heroic struggle and “how ye fell.”

“Rest on embalmed and sainted dead.”

\* \* \* \* \*

“Nor shall your glory be forgot  
While fame her record keeps,  
Or honor points the hallowed spot  
Where valor proudly sleeps.”

As a sequel to the sketch of the 58th North Carolina Regiment we copy below the General Order of Maj. Gen. Stevenson and letters of Gen. J. E. Johnston and Gen. Jos. B. Palmer relating to the part taken by the Regiment in the Battle of Bentonville.

Gen. Pettus and Gen. Hampton survive, the former being a Senator in Congress from Alabama. Gen. Palmer and Gen. Johnston both died several years since.

HEADQUARTERS STEVENSON'S DIVISION. }  
IN THE FIELD MARCH 23, 1865. }

General Orders No. (—).

The Major General commanding desires to extend his warmest congratulations and thanks to the officers and men of his command for their conduct during the recent operations of the army.

Never was more dash and gallantry displayed than was exhibited by Palmer's Brigade in their successful assaults upon the breastworks of the enemy, and never were the high qualities of perfect coolness under fire and unwavering steadiness under numerous attacks of the enemy more nobly exemplified than by Pettus's Brigade.

Cumming's Brigade, commanded by Col. Henderson, in the affair of 21st, achieved by his gallantry a success almost without parallel, and which has entitled it to the admiration of the army.

Fellow Soldiers: Let us continue this campaign as we have begun it and the armies of the Confederacy will be unable to produce a Division that can show a prouder record than yours.

By command of Maj. Gen. Stevenson.

JOHN J. REEVES, A. A. G.

WASHINGTON, D. C., January 11, 1888.

*Major G. W. F. Harper.*

DEAR SIR :—The newspaper slip containing your article on Palmer's Brigade at Bentonsville and the letter accompanying it were duly received, but at a time when press of business compelled me to postpone compliance with your request.

I do not think, as you do, that the part taken by Cumming's Brigade, then commanded by Col. Henderson, was a matter of luck. That Brigade was a part of at least 1,000 men that joined us from Charlotte that morning, and was made one of four little reserves, and was the nearest one to the point of attack on the Federal Division, in which part of Hampton's and all of Wheeler's cavalry joined—defeating that Division in a few minutes—before Taliaferro's Division and the three other reserves had a chance to join in the action. They were on the way to the place when it occurred. They and all of our cavalry made the wagons you mention quite safe, for they were fully able to dispose of one Federal Division.

Thanking you cordially for your polite kindness in sending me your article, I am,

Yours very truly,

J. E. JOHNSTON.

MURFREESBORO, TENN., January 10, 1888.

*Major G. W. F. Harper.*

MY DEAR MAJOR :—I have read with unusual satisfaction and pleasure your communication to the Raleigh "News and Observer" in relation to the battle of Bentonsville, N. C., and especially as to the part taken by your Regiment, the 58th North Carolina, in that memorable fight. Well do I remember the incidents you mention.

\* \* \* \* \*

The orders published by me at the time will show that it now gives me great pleasure to repeat that the 58th and 60th North Carolina Regiments in this engagement behaved with distinguished gallantry, and won for themselves a merited fame, which will last as long as the historic fields of Bentonsville, will appear on the pages and in the annals still to be written of this grand old State, on whose soil her native sons have achieved such splendid distinction.

\* \* \* \* \*

Nearly twenty-three years have elapsed since the events occurred of which I am writing. Brief indeed as these years have really been, how much more so do they now appear in the retrospect ; before another like period will have passed over our heads, you and I, as well as most of the men of whom I write, will have "Paid the debt to time and nature and mortal custom ;" but I trust the good we have done or attempted will follow us.

It gives me great pleasure to hear from you. Our army association is still warmly cherished and remembered. Our North Carolina comrades are very pleasantly remembered by the Tennessee part of the Brigade, many of whom are still living in this community.

With great respect and best wishes for genuine prosperity, I am, Major,

Your friend truly,

JOS. B. PALMER.









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