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Detroit, Mich

Four Miles S of Strasburg
March 26, 1862

Well, we have met "Stone Wall" Jackson and after a sharply contested action have driven him towards Dixie.

On the afternoon of the 22 inst. at about 4 o'clock our regiment was called into line with nothing beside belt, gun and canteen, and double-quickened into Winchester, where being so ordered we loaded. We then were sent on the Romney Road and in passing Brodheads Headquarters I had a shake hands with Bill. Our companies were distributed for a mile and a half on the road, to act as a strong corps of observation to prevent a flank movement during the night from Jackson's force, or rather to give warning of any attempt at such a movement. A very cold wind swept the road and we suffered a good deal for want of blankets. In the morning, soon after daylight, we were glad to see our wagons come with our haversacks and coffee. What would the poor soldier do without his periodical hot coffee. Well, we left the road after breakfast, and passing through town took our position in the rear of Daum's and Clarks (Regular) batteries as support. From daylight we had heard more or less canonading (sic) from the direction of the Strasburg pike, at about eight o'clock on the 23rd Sunday, these batteries moved forward and took position in the center of our line of defense about half a mile or perhaps more from both the right and left wings of the Division. We were on a hill some hundreds of yards to the right of the pike. While reaching this position the enemy batteries had sent the shell in large numbers over our heads. The boys stood it well and without a show of flinching. Having assumed position the batteries having been joined by our Ohio battery opened a slow and irregular fire, replied to in the same manner. At about ten o'clock Dawn moved from the hill and advanced to an open field about 700 yards from the position occupied by our opponents guns and along side of the pike, supported as usual by us, the enemy's guns in the meantime playing a lively tune in the air above our heads. Dawn had no sooner gotten into battery, than he was overwhelmed by a terrific shower of shell (we of course coming in for our share) from quarters hitherto thought to be innocent of harboring our enemies. Ten minutes after assuming position he limbered up, coolly to be sure, but hastily and took the pike with his "back to the foe". In the

meantime we had been dodging the shells in a very lively way, having, notwithstanding a few hurt among us. As Dawn retreated, we fell in, in tolerably good order, and marched in his rear. But through the fields and along the fences, skulked some cowardly wretches (for wretches) from among us and most of them never stopped short of the camp. But we have them marked. Our ranks were well rid of them. Returning to our old position, the three batteries opened a heavy and continuous fire upon the rebel artillery. Between Dawns' and the Regular battery our regiment lay to a right face, and the enemies fire enfiladed us and raked us from one end to the other. But most of their shot and shell whizzed harmlessly over our heads. For although we lay six hours in this imposed condition not one of us was here killed, and not more than four or five of us hurt. About the beginning of the afternoon four or five regts of the rebel infantry came from the woods at their center, and marching by platoons in a admirable order, wheeled across valley below our position within four hundred yards of our guns. A perfect shower of grape, shell and cannister was thrown among them but they closed up their ranks like veterans, and carrying their wounded and some of their dead along with them continued on their way. I know not what their purpose was. It may have been originally to out flank our guns but if so this was not carried out for they presently turned their head of their column to the left and disappeared in the woods. I think now that their commanders wished to tempt us to throw against their column our infantry, and thus neutralize and render useless our superior force of artillery. If this was their purpose, they were foiled. Well, at about four o'clock P.M. the enemy had much strengthened their left wing and had gained a much better and long sought position for their batteries. At that hour two sections of our Ohio Battery took position in front of our right, lay in a woods, and under this cover, which drew the fire of the rebel guns, the whole right wing advanced and engaged the infantry of the enemy at short musket range, the latter of course having chosen a very advantageous position. Simultaneously with this movement the Ohio Battery withdrew from rear range and orders came to our regiment to go forwards. The whole battalion moved out of the cover of the batteries and had just gotten under the sweep of the rebel guns at short range, when a runner dashed up to the Major and our five left companies were ordered back to support the cannon.

The remaining five companies went in and engaged the enemy. Two thirds of the enemy's right and about the same number of our left moved respectively to the support of their friends, engaged in a furious fight for the possession of the flanking position. From four o'clock till dark the battle raged without intermission, our sturdy sons of the West never allowing themselves to be more than fifty yards from the ranks of the enemy. Step by step the rebels disputed the advance, and many a poor soldier and honest man clad in the livery of the Republic died with his face to its enemies. Our five right companies were in the lead from the beginning to the end, and we are told, suffered comparatively more than anybody, of troops engaged on our side. The Indiana troops behaved with equal gallantry. Five men were shot alternately under our new colors and the colors themselves literally riddled with balls, the staff of the national colors being broken in three places by (balls). Oh how proud we are now of our standards. The Captain of the color company (Whitcom) was killed. When it had become evident that the enemy was beaten and hence no more need of battery support, we were ordered forward and arrived just in time to see the rebels disappear into the woods under cover of the night.

Shortly after dark our regt was got together and being deployed as skirmishes was thrown some distance in the direction of the enemy, and acted as picket till morning. During the night the wagons came, and having tasted no food for over 12 hours, you may be sure the (sic) we did justice to the grub they brought. Early in the morning, we went out to the burnt bridge 3 miles N. of Strasburg. As before there had been some artillery skirmishing across the creek, resulting in the precipitated retiring of the enemy leaving one dead and carrying away some wounded. On the morning of the 25 we crossed and marching thus far S. we camped, our tents having overtaken us. Our regt is the second in advance, the 13th Ind being some hundreds of yards before us. We occasionally have an alarm. I have no time to write more. At any rate you can learn more from the papers than I can I can (sic) tell you.

Love to Mother and all

(signed) Walter Elliott