

**6 August 1861 – New York Times**

**The Battle of Bull Run**

**The Seventy-First New York Regiment**

**Interesting Statement of Edward P. Doherty, Company A, Seventy-First Regiment, Who was Captured at Bull Run, Sunday, July 21, and Escaped from the Enemy on Friday Night Following, July 26<sup>th</sup>.**

The Regiment left the Navy –yard Tuesday, July 16, at 10 o'clock, and marched up the Avenue over the Long Bridge, to their camping grounds, within five miles of Fairfax, where, at 9 P. M. they stacked and bivouacked for the night in the open field, together with Co. Burnside's Brigade, consisting of the First and Second Rhode Island Infantry, Second Rhode Island Battery, and Second New Hampshire Volunteers. At 5 A. M., July 17, (Wednesday,) the brigade formed a line of march, and proceeded to Fairfax Court-house, where they arrived at 10 A. M., and found the breastworks of the enemy deserted, as well as the town, of all secession troops. Halted in the town before the Court-house; the flag was hoisted upon the Court –house by the Rhode Island Regiments, the band saluting it with the National airs.

The march was then resumed; the whole Brigade proceeded half a mile beyond Fairfax, and bivouacked on the old camp-ground of the rebels, which they had abandoned that morning between 6 and 9 o'clock. Large quantity of blankets were found burning, having been destroyed by them in this manner in their hasty retreat; also, a store-room of military clothing was found by them, as well as a dozen of their tents which were immediately put to good use, and a bullock just dressed, which furnished rations for the Seventy-first, as far as it went.

In this encampment the Brigade remained till 7 A. M. Thursday, July 18, the Brigade again marched four miles, and halted by command of Gen. McDowell, where the Brigade remained till 3 P. M., on an old camp-ground of the enemy, when the march was again taken up, under a scorching sun, till within a mile and a half of Centreville, where we bivouacked once more, the men making pleasant huts of the boughs of trees.

During the night the regiment was called to arms, in consequence of the firing of pickets on our left. Friday and Saturday was passed in this place, very pleasantly, the regiments of the brigade having a regimental drill each day, and also being served with good rations of fresh meat and plenty of coffee and sugar.

On Saturday, orders were issued to prepare to march at 1 A. M., Sunday, each man to take two days rations of good salt beef, salt pork and crackers in haversack, with positive instructions to fill his canteen with water, and not to use it on the route, as water was scarce. This was done, and the regiment marched with the brigade Sunday morning at 2 A. M. for the battle-field, passing through Centreville just before sunrise.

After proceeding a mile and a half beyond Centreville we were ordered to halt and cap our pieces. We then crossed a bridge, mounted a hill in the vicinity, and to the right of Gen. McDowell's head quarters, and then turned to the right into a field, at a double quick, which was kept up about a quarter of an hour, passing through a wood and halting in a field, where we remained about twenty minutes. Gen. McDowell and his Staff came into the field. This was between 6 and 7 o'clock. The march was then resumed by a circuitous route through the woods, passing several dry brooks, until we reached Bull Run, which we waded in great confusion, every one being anxious to get water. Company lines were immediately formed on the other side, and an advance was made up the road at quick step, firing being heard upon our left.

After a mile's marching at quick step, we were put upon double quick up the hill, wheeling to the left, into an old stubble-field, where we halted, and our arrival was announced by a shot from a rifle cannon whistling over our heads. The halt did not last two minutes, when Col. Burnside led the different regiments into their positions on the field. The Second Rhode Island entered the field first, to the extreme right, then the Rhode Island Battery, six pieces, and the two howitzers of the Seventy-first, and then to the left the Seventy-first, and after it, on its left the First Rhode Island, and then the Second New Hampshire, all formed in line of battle on the top of the hill. This movement was done at double quick. We were immediately ordered to fall back and lie down, as the discharge from the enemy's battery was very severe.

The First and Second Rhode Island Regiments, the Rhode Island Battery, and the two howitzers, opened fire on the enemy. One of the Rhode Island guns was immediately disabled by a shot from the enemy, and was carried off the field. The Seventy-first lay there as ordered, when an Aid from Col. Burnside rode up and asked for the field officers. Col. Martin then ordered us forward.

Prior to this some of the Seventy-first had gone over to the First Rhode Island, and were fighting in their ranks. Burroughs, Commissary of the Seventy-first rode up in front of us, dismounted from his horse and told the boys to go in and fight on their own account, which they did with a will. Just prior to this Capt. Ha\_\_ of Company A, had been wounded and carried from the field; also Capt. Ellis of Company F. Then Lieut. Oakley came on. Going forward to the brow of the hill he received a shot in the leg of his pantaloons from one of his own men.

Some time after this the firing ceased upon both sides. McDowell, with his staff, then rode through our lines, receiving a cheer from the Seventy-first, and passed down the hill to the left, within 600 feet of the enemy's

line. After that the brigade fell back into the woods and rested; taking care of the wounded, and removing them to the hospital; some straggling about over the fields without their muskets, looking on at the fight in other parts of the engagement, which they supposed was the end of the battle, thinking the day was ours.

At about 3 o'clock we formed in line again, on the brow of the hill. It was at this time that a shell fell over my left shoulder, and striking the ground behind me, rebounded upon the foot of private Wm. N. Smith, of Brooklyn, tearing it open. He threw his arms around my neck, and I assisted in carrying him to the hospital.

I returned from the hospital towards my regiment, and met other troops retreating, who informed me that my regiment had gone across the fields. I ran back past Sudley Church, then used as the hospital, up the hill, saw a regiment about half a mile ahead, which I supposed was the Seventy-first; took a short cut across the fields, when the cavalry galloped up and arrested me.

They took me back to the hospital, where, during the confusion I managed to conceal myself under a blanket, which was saturated with blood. Col. Barker, of the Virginia Cavalry, then galloped up and ordered all the unwounded prisoners to be driven to the Junction.

I should think there were about 50 prisoners in all at that point. They left me, supposing I was wounded. A guard was left to guard the hospital. I arose to go in quest of Dr. Peugnet, and found him engaged in amputating the arm of Harry Rockafellow, of 6 street, Philadelphia, of Company F. Seventy-first Regiment. Mr. Peugnet requested me to assist him, and he having completed his operation, then amputated the arm at the shoulder-joint of a Sergeant of a Maine or a New Hampshire Regiments, who had a brother, about 17 years of age, who had remained behind to take care of him. This man died under the operation. The next operation was that of my friend Wm. Smith, of Brooklyn, whom I had conveyed to the hospital. His foot was amputated.

During this time D. S. Foster, Swift and Winston, of the Eighth New York; Dr. DeGnat, Dr. Griswald, Dr. Buxton, and the doctor of the Fourth Maine; Dr. Stewart of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ of Rhode Island, and others whose names I did not learn, one of whom, I believe was \_\_\_\_\_ of the West Point Battery; were attending the wounded of their respective regiments. Private Tyler, of the West Point Battery; had his thigh wounded and died that night. \_\_\_\_\_ Col. Martin's servant, who was wounded while assisting the Colonel to dismount also died. Mullen, Second Rhode Island, and two of the Seventy-first, whose names I do not know were found dead next morning.

Gen. Beauregard and Col. Barker came up about 3 ½ with 150 prisoners of different regiments, most of whom were Fire Zouaves. He stopped and inquired how our wounded were getting along, while the prisoners were driven towards the Junction by the cavalry. During the night a number of prisoners were brought in, and on Monday morning 30 were sent on, their hands tied together in front with Manila rope; among them was the lad of 17, from Maine, who pleaded bitterly to be left to see his brother buried, but was refused.

During the fore night an order was issued by Gen. Johnston for everyone to be removed from Sudley Church to Richmond, via the Junction. All who were not wounded were taken under a tree and tied, as an attack was anticipated. Our doctors strongly remonstrated against this order, as the greater part of our wounded, 250 in number had not received any attention. Capt. Patrick, of Virginia Cavalry, stated these were his instructions, and he meant to carry them out. We were accordingly all seized, hands bound; except the doctors who were in ambulances. It was then raining in torrents, and some 80 of the wounded were laying in the vicinity of the church and blacksmith shop without any shelter excepting a blanket. The doctors were hurriedly taken away, we being told that our wounded would be cared for by themselves.

Here we waited till 12 o'clock at night in the rain, awaiting orders when I requested Capt. Patrick to allow me to go down to the hospital to see a relative that had been badly wounded, telling him it would be better to shoot our wounded at once than to allow them to die off by inches; they were all calling for water and no one there to give it to them. He then said "Well my man, choose another man with you and go down." I chose Smith, of Company M. Seventy-First Regiment. Capt. Patrick then inquired if there were any more men who had brothers or relatives among the wounded. A general rush took place among the prisoners – they all stepping forward. He then allowed Atwood Crosby, of Maine, to take care of his brother, who was wounded in the back, and five others: Tompkins, Company C., Seventy-First; John Hann (?) of Massachusetts; a young boy of the Second Rhode Island, about 17 years old; Dregan, of the Twenty-seventh, and another, an assistant to a Maine surgeon, and his servant, who cooked for the prisoners, under the direction of Tompkins. The rest were kept out in the rain all night, and the following morning were sent to Richmond.

During Monday night a man from Wisconsin died, calling for his mother. He had a daguerreotype of his wife and two children. He called me to give him some water, which I did very frequently. He called for his "Dear Mother" – these were his last words. He was a man about 5 feet 6 inches, with a light moustache, and was wounded in the groin. A boy about 18 years old, dressed in the uniform of the Eighth Regiment, about 5 feet 10 inches in height, sandy complexion, shot in the head, had \$21 in his pocket-book, and a white silk badge, marked "Parker

Guard," died Monday night. . Devers, of Ellsworth Zouaves, wounded in the arm. He laid down to rest, and in the morning, when I went to bandage his arm, I found him dead. Also, a man from Rockland, Me., named Fletcher.

On Tuesday, Allen, of Company C, Seventy-first, died. He was wounded in the abdomen. Butler of Company C., Seventy-First, Elizabethtown, N. J., also died; wounded in legs. Doctors were not there to amputate. George Sayne and John P. Morrissey, both of the Seventy-first, also died Wednesday morning, within one hour of each other, lying side by side. Mead, of Massachusetts, a wealthy shoe manufacturer, died while having his thigh amputated. Several others died, whose names I could not learn, numbering in all 32.

On Tuesday evening, six of the Doctors came back on parole – Ds. Peugnet, Swift, Winston, DeGraw, Huxton and Stewart – and immediately commenced attending to the wounded. Their exertions were unremitting; their time day and night was given to the wounded until all the wounds were properly dressed and all cared for.

On Wednesday morning, Dr. Peugnet put me in charge of the hospital, and allowed me to choose 20 from the prisoners and wounded, who were able to take care of the wounded, to assist me.

The same morning a lady of the neighborhood brought us a bottle of wine and two dozen eggs, and we bought at noon twelve dozen of eggs from a sutler. Thursday morning a number of secession doctors made their appearance, bringing with them some luxuries which they gave to our doctors. Sometime during the day Noble, of Company F, and Gillette, of the Engineer Corps, both of the Seventy-first, were brought in as prisoners, and were retained as assistants at the hospital. They were not wounded. This day a number of ladies and farmers of the surrounding country visited our hospitals, bringing with them milk, soup, and cakes.

On Friday, they commenced removing the prisoners and wounded, amongst them Capt. Gordon, of the Eleventh. Massachusetts; Lieut. Hamlin, Scott Life Guard, and all the Non-Commissioned Officers, leaving instructions with us to be prepared to follow the ambulances containing the wounded, who had undergone operations, on Saturday. In the meantime, Capt. Allen of the Eleventh Massachusetts, disguised as a private and wounded prisoner, a Wisconsin boy, named Worldorf, and myself, planned an escape which was successfully accomplished between 5 and 10 P. M. Friday night. We ran the guard, and crawled on our hands and feet out of hearing distance of the sentinels; proceeded in a northeast direction until 3 ½ A. M.; met two pickets of the enemy in a small tent on the main road, which we had to cross to accomplish our escape; the pickets cowed at our appearance, and hid behind a tree, and we backed some one hundred feet with sticks pointed in the direction of the pickets, and then turned and ran about two miles, keeping a little to the north.

At 2 P. M. not knowing where we were, we determined to approach a house and inquire. We met two women at the gate, and told them we belonged to the Fourth Alabama Regiment. They asked for Messrs. Gray of that regiment – if we knew them – and a number of others, all of whom we told them were shot at Bull Run. They asked where we came from, and where were our arms. These questions we evaded, and asked them to show us the way to Centreville, which they did. We took an opposite direction, and at 4 P. M. halted at another house, where an old man came out and asked if we were soldiers. We replied in the affirmative, and added that we belonged to the Fourth Alabama Regiment, and had been picking blackberries and strayed away from our camp. He then said, "Are you the regiment that is waiting for artillery?" I replied, the same. "Then, boys." Said he, "you are stationed at Ball's Mill, three miles from here, (jointing in the direction of Leesburgh, half way from here to Leesburgh," he then said, "Were you in the fight Sunday?" "Yes," "I am glad, boys, you escaped from the slaughter. These d-d Yankees, I would like to see every man of them strung up. I never could bear them. I will send Edward to show you the way to the main road." We thanked him and left.

At 5 P. M., came to a railroad. I saw a little boy and girl, and asked them what road it was. They replied they did not know, but if we would go to the house, Jeff. would tell us. After some further inquiries, without getting any information, we crossed the track and took to the woods, and continued our march until 6 P. M., when we saw a house standing alone in the bushes. We determined to go there, and get something to eat. Arriving at the gate, we inquired if they had something to sell us. They said they had, and we lost no time in investing in 50 cents worth of hoe-cake and milk.

While we were devouring these (to us) luxuries, a horseman galloped up to the door, and the lady of the house called the man with whom we were conversing, 'Cousin George,' (his name Edwards.) We suspected something wrong, and took a precipitate leave down the hill, and continued our march. Half an hour after leaving this house, we crossed the main road, and crossed the field, in order to reach a wood which we supposed was a forest, but which turned out to be nothing but a small thicket. Soon after crossing the thicket, we spied eight mounted troopers at full speed, passing along the road, some fifteen yards ahead, not supposing they were in search of us, we continued on our way, when, upon looking round, we found they had halted at the foot of the hill, and were looking in all directions; at last they saw us, and commanded us to halt and come back. This we had no desire to do, and knowing the fence along the road to be impassible on horseback, we thought our chances of escape were

good. We accordingly ran, and they fired, one or two of them dismounting simultaneously with the discharge of the others guns, to let the rails of the fence down in order that they might pursue us into the woods.

In the meantime we had gained the wood and found another fence surrounding it. This fence was equally as wide as the first one. They galloped off to the edge of the woods where we should have to pass to make our escape, and surround the woods. Here they dismounted, took down the rails and entered the bushes, and commenced their search. In the meantime we had run back to where we entered the bush and hid under two large elm trees. Capt. Allen clipping the branches in order that we might pull them down over us with more facility; It was perhaps five minutes before they reached this portion of the thicket, and these trees being so much exposed, they concluded no person was there, and went away to the other end of the woods, but soon returned, and on passing one of these trees, one of the horses ridden by one of our pursuers grazed my right leg with his hoof, and so close were they upon us that we overheard all their conversation.

During this time some twelve or fifteen of the inhabitants of Milford turned out with their guns and pistols to assist the troopers to find the Yankees; and an order was given, by an old man in citizen's dress, with orders to the men who had come together to look in all the bushes and to turn over all the old logs, and leave nothing undone which they might suppose would tend to our capture. Here one of them reckoned the Yankee ----- had got away; another said that if they were in those woods, they would give us alright warning, and they commenced discharging their guns in the bushes in every direction, but happily, did not aim in the direction of our tree.

In about an hour the old man returned, and ordered a boy about 18 years of age to remain beside us on a log, with instructions to fire at us the moment he saw us \_\_\_\_ "Even," said he, "If you do miss them." It was now 9 P.M., and the long prayed for darkness came to our rescue, and helped to cover our retreat. For nearly another hour the old wretch kept prowling about the woods, and finally went away. At about 11 o'clock we were so exhausted that we fell asleep, and rested until 12, when Allen crawled over to me and said, "They haven't got us yet."

I had dreamt, during my short slumber that I was a captive, and he had some difficulty in persuading me to the contrary. Being reassured, I arose from my retreat, and, as we emerged from beneath the branches which had just saved our lives, we beheld the youth who, two hours before, had been placed to watch for us; he was in a deep slumber, and had his gun grasped between his folded arms in a horizontal position. I drew my knife to dispatch him but Capt. Allen prevented me.

We then retraced our steps for nearly a mile and a half, and struck over for the Potomac, which we reached at 4 ½ o'clock Sunday morning, having kept up a quick and double-quick step all along the road.

Having reached the Potomac, we sat down to rest; but we were hardly seated before we saw a man on horseback approaching us by the road. He walked his horse past us as though he was unaware of our presence, until he reached the corner of a fence surrounding a corn-field, when he put spurs to his horse and went up the hill at full speed. We suspected something in this movement, and looking for shallow water, but finding none, we immediately plunged into the stream and swam the river. When within twenty feet of the opposite shore we heard firing and cries of "Come back," and on arriving ground we saw ten or fifteen men, in their shirt sleeves, ordering us back, and firing several shots at us. Of course we did not obey this command, but started off at a good pace into what we supposed was Maryland. We had not gone far before we came to another stream, which we waded.

We afterwards ascertained that we had crossed Edward's Island about 17 miles from Washington. Before losing sight of our pursuers, Capt. Allen showed his pistol, and shook it in defiance of them.