

Letter From Col. Walrath.

ARLINGTON HEIGHTS, }
July 23, 1861. }

FRIEND HALSTED:—I have waited until this time to write you in relation to the battle at Bull's Run on the 18th Inst. Myself and regiment have been grossly abused by the papers, and I am sorry to say that a certain few in Syracuse are ready and willing to believe the first accounts of the battle as far as relates to my "running from the scene of action and hiding behind a pile of rocks."

I staid with my regiment all the time, in my place. I did not order a retreat, neither was I mounted, as has been charged. That I was seen "galloping across the field to a safe retreat," is also false. Lieut. Col. Graham (now Quarter Master) was mounted on a gray horse like my own and was in the rear most of the time, near the reporters and strangers who were looking at the fight from the Hill, about one half a mile from the battle ground. He is still called Colonel, and was taken for me by all that were not personally acquainted with me. A rifle cannon ball struck under his horse, and he left in double quick time across the field.

As to throwing away our Blankets &c., in the retreat of the Regiments, it is untrue. We went into the fight without Blankets. I ordered every man to lay aside all superfluous clothing in piles on the grass, near the woods, knowing that we could do better service without them than with them. The day after I sent for them and they were all brought into the woods where we lay encamped.—I have demanded a Court of Enquiry, which will show up the facts of the case. What I have done I would do again to-morrow. I feel conscious of having done my duty, and I have only one regret and that is when *I ordered the men to rally they would not in spite of all my exhortations.* The men were completely exhausted and cried for water continually. My Regiment will probably be mustered out on the 13th, Proximo, as will all Regiments mustered in for only three months. Our Regiment had the old muskets and were in miserable condition; about three in five were in condition for firing. Our cartridges were of different sizes. Some would almost drop in the barrel, while others would require the utmost extion to get the ball home. The men had no confidence in their pieces, which was one of the reasons why they would not rally. They said give us rifles, and we will rally.

While I was at work trying to get those men who retreated to form, those who remained, soon came from their position in good order. I hope soon to have the Court of Enquiry, which will bring forth facts that I dare not at this time mention, as it would impeach the ability and judgement of some of the superior officers in command of the army. I shall try to find time to-morrow to draw a sketch of the Battle Ground, also to send a statement of the whole affair from beginning to end, and I guarantee the officers and men will endorse the whole of it.

Give my regards to all my friends and say to them they have no cause to censure your humble servant, until they can bring proof to substantiate the foul charges that have been made against me and the Regiment.

Yours truly, E. L. WALRATH.

Colonel 12th N. Y. Volunteers.