

**Interesting Letter from Ensign Gilbert,  
of Company B.**

FORT BENNETT, July 26, 1861.

DEAR P—: I am here on the Potomac, again. We have been through the fight. We left our camp at Centreville at 2 a. m., Sunday morning, and marched on until we met a masked battery, when we halted, and our battery was put in position, and commenced firing. The enemy would not respond. Our artillery then fired across the field into the enemy in the field. Company A, Capt. PUTNAM, and Company F, Capt. SMITH, went forward as skirmishers, and exchanged shots with the enemy. One poor fellow shouted across the hill, "Come on, you damned abolitionists! We'll attend to you!" We soon heard that Col. Hunter was coming up on our right. The enemy were in full retreat in that direction. Hunter met them, and put them to flight. The fighting was severe. We lay in the woods waiting. Soon orders came for us to reinforce Col. Hunter. The 69th took the lead—the 13th followed; then came the 79th. We soon came to Bull's Run. It was quite deep, and the bank some four feet high. We jumped from the bank into the stream, shouting at the top of our voices. The enemy on the hill fled. As we came up, we fired across the field at them. I came across a negro, fleeing with a gun. He said he lived nearby. I made him deliver his gun. I found it loaded. We went on a half mile or more, the enemy fleeing, when we were drawn up in line of battle. Major General McDowell rode along saying that the day was ours. We cheered him heartily.

At this moment, two batteries opened upon us. Our regiment marched down in front of them.—The balls flew in among us, cutting down several of our men. We halted under the hill awhile, and while here, I was struck by a shell, and thrown to the ground, but not injured. JAMES L. WADSWORTH rode along our line, saying that the enemy were flying. Our artillery were playing upon them. The balls from the enemy's batteries flew across the hills, making sad work among the U. S. troops. I could see some four or five thousand of our troops engaged, now driving the enemy, now being driven back. Horses were running riderless over the field, and dead and wounded strewed the ground.

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Soon the order came for us to advance. We went forward at double quick, across the brook, and up the hill towards the battery. At the right of the battery was a house. Gen. McDowell came along and said: "The 13th will go up near the house, to support the left wing; the house is in possession of our troops." We went forward to within two hundred feet of the house, and halted. We were soon fired into from the house. We lay down on our faces. I went forward, towards the house. As I stepped forward, I saw a secessionist flag over in a valley, or gully, at the right. I drew up my rifle, and fired at the color-bearer, and struck one of the color-guard. Waiting to see whether he was killed or not, I received a shot from another secessionist. The ball went through a sleeve of my arm, making two holes in my coat, and two in my shirt, and just grazing my arm. The boys then fired without waiting for orders, killing this fellow, and many others.

A man soon came running down from the house, and gave up his sword and pistol to Lieut. McNutt. Then the firing continued, and we soon found that there were some 1500 rebel troops behind the house. We looked around and saw that all had fled. We then withdrew. Some thirty men remained with me by the fence, and checked the approach of the rebels. Men of all companies were with me. One of our men, John King, shot the color-bearer. We fought for a long time, then withdrew to our colors, formed, and came from the field. I stopped to get water, and lost the regiment. I then went on alone. At night I overtook Lieut. Fuller and the lieutenant prisoner. We stopped together near Centerville, about one mile on the other side, in our morning camps. There we remained until morning, when we came on our way. We soon found that the whole army had gone to Washington the same night. I came the next day. The road was strewed for miles with baggage of all kinds, and straggling soldiers. At Centerville I tried to form a company of the straggling soldiers, but could not do it. Our regiment is in a distracted condition—the men are worn, sick and weary. They fought well, and distinguished themselves. Their coats have ball holes through them.

We received an order yesterday to go home. We supposed it was because all the three months' men were to be discharged. To-day we don't know what is to be done. Our time will expire in a little more than two weeks, and then you may expect to see us. About fifty killed, wounded and missing is our regiment. We have charge of Fort Burnett, near Fort Corcoran. We have 1

five large guns in it. We can hold it. Good  
bye till I hear from you. Truly, E. S. G.

**From Company E, Thirteenth Regiment--  
About Those Colors.**

We extract from a private letter written by a member of Co. E, Capt. SCHEFFEL, to a friend in this city, he says: It is useless for me to attempt a description of the battle. It is enough to say that we disputed every inch of ground with them, although the rebels were in the proportion of three to one. I did not expect that we should stand it as we did. I wish you could have seen the 13th sail in. The colors given to us by the ladies of Rochester were borne through the fight and safely back to camp by the color-bearers, not however without receiving a few bullet holes in them. We rallied around them three times for their defence, and it was plain to see that, sooner than let those colors go, they would die.

When we retreated it was done in good style, with colors flying. I understand that our regiment has been turned over by Gov. MORGAN to the President for our remaining two years of service. We were expecting orders to be mustered out of the service in a few days, and plenty of long faces are to be seen in the camp to-day. Well, it is probably for the best, for what would half of the regiment do if they should come home. Why, lay around useless and idle.

Our boys feel indignant at those New York City Reporters, for giving other regiments the credit of a large share of the work done by the Bloody Thirteenth, but I suppose they mistook us for rebels in our "Shoddy Grey" uniforms, which now look shoddier than ever. Give my best respects to the Lone Star boys.