

Letter from Sergeant Ward.

PROVIDENCE, July 27, 1861.

MR. WEBSTER—I am requested to send you a piece of the secession flag which was captured by our troops at Fairfax Court House. Also, the following extracts from a letter received last evening.

C. A. W.

CAMP CLARKE, WASHINGTON, {
July 24th, 1861. }

I write to inform you that I am in the best of health. I will endeavor to give you a slight history of our march from the time we left Fairfax until our return to this place, which, I assure you, no one in the regiment regretted.

We left Fairfax at about 5 a. m., and marched about four miles, when we halted in a piece of woods, and stopped four or five hours. We again started and marched about six miles farther, where we encamped for the night, which made us, as near as I can find out, about thirty-two miles from Washington. We stopped about two and a half nights, leaving Sunday at two o'clock a. m., and starting for Manassas Junction, marching in a round-about course, twenty or twenty-five miles, when we came upon the enemy at a place called Bull's Run, some miles beyond Manassas from where we started. The reason we went *beyond* was, we expected they would be attacked in front, and in case they retreated, we were to cut them off. It was rather a bad "cut off" for us.

Company E was a flanking company, and we were extended out on one side of the road, to a distance of about half a mile in some places. We could not tell exactly, as we were in a dense piece of woods. As we emerged from it, we came into an open cornfield, in which were hidden about three hundred secessionists, who fired upon us as soon as they saw us. We were all alone, no other company being nearer than a quarter of a mile. Our company received the first fire, and returned it three times before we were reinforced. We have had the praise of doing bravely, and *we* think the Second Regiment ought to have the praise, as we did the most of the fighting.

As we were advancing at one time, with Col. Slocum at our head, he was struck with a piece of a shell in the head, which was the cause of his death. How long he lived afterwards, I know not, but should not think more than twenty minutes. By losing Col. Slocum, we lost a great deal.—Some of us think that Gen. McDowell was but a tool in the hands of the enemy to lead us into a well set trap, to be cut all to pieces. He was seen to hold up his hand on the battle-field. and soon

well set trap, to be cut all to pieces. He was seen to hold up his hand on the battle-field, and soon after was wounded and carried off the field. What is more singular, he was only wounded in the hand.

It was a sad sight to see men fall on every side, pierced with the fatal ball. One poor fellow I saw was shot under the right arm. There was a hole made large enough to put your finger in, and every time he tried to breathe, as he was dying, the blood would ooze out. It was the only case that moved me. I felt as cool as though I were performing an every day duty.

Company E has lost four killed, certain, and two are missing, besides our Second Lieutenant, Isaac M. Church, who was either taken prisoner or killed. Among the killed is one corporal and three privates, and one corporal missing. They are Corporal Stephen Holland, Privates W. H. Nichols, J. C. Rodman, Henry L. Jaques, killed, and Corporal E. B. Smith, missing. The balls fell around us like a perfect shower of hail.

When we arrived back at Washington, we were the *hardest* looking lot of men you ever saw, having in our retreat, which was done in the greatest confusion, marched over forty miles without halting more than an hour or two, and had nothing to eat, being glad to get rid of our haversacks on the battle-field. I consider I am *good* for *one more* battle.

We have not done much duty for the last two days, and hope not to have any to do for several days more, as we are all tired out.

I send you a piece of the secession flag which was hauled down at Fairfax Court House by our troops. It consisted of three stripes and seven stars. I could get only one color.

Yours truly,

JAMES A. WARD.