

WAR CORRESPONDENCE.

The Battle of Thursday.

ONTARIO, July 21, 1861

EDS. EVENING EXPRESS, Rochester:—Gents.:
Do me the favor to publish the enclosed letter
from my son in the 13th Regiment Volunteers
from Rochester. I am a reader of the Express,
although not a subscriber at the office, but will
be, for your paper is in the hearts of the soldiers
and the people.

Very respectfully yours,

G.

CENTREVILLE, July 20, 1861.

FATHER:—We left Camp Union on the 16th
at 2 o'clock, P. M., marching as far as Vienna,
which the rebels had left but a few hours before.
Early the next morning we took up our line of
march, driving the enemy before us but a short
distance. We stopped over night of the 17th at
Camp Mason from which rebels had left rather
hastily to all appearances. In the vicinity there
were between three or four thousand rebels. We
came the next day to Centreville reaching here
about noon, while here a part of the division
passed us, when they had gone two miles they
came upon a masked battery which al-
lowed them to approach within a few feet before
opening. The Michigan 1st and the New York
12th were the regiments engaged them first, dis-
covered the rebels commenced retreating and
cheering, and our troops advancing until within
a few feet of the battery, when they rose up out
of their entrenchments—such volleys of mus-
ketry were perfectly terrible—opening the bat-
tery at the same time cutting down about 40 of
our troops—they still advancing, and when with-
in nearly bayonet reach, were ordered to retreat.

At this time we were on the way to the scene
of action, meeting troops, some retreating, some
wounded and lying aside the road. We asked
them how they made out. Their reply was, "we
had to back up." About this time more artillery
reached the spot, and began to fire, the rebels
returning the fire promptly. We were flanked
off one side of the road in the woods: in the
din of battle, we being under cover of the woods

... moved forward, the shot from the enemy's rifled
cannon whistling over our heads rather lively.—
We were soon commanded to halt, as we ex-
pected they were advancing upon us. We all
dropped on our knees, and when a discharge was
heard, we listened for the messengers that could
soon be heard tearing through the timber, when
we would fall on our faces; one ball struck right
before us, and bounded over our heads, and
struck behind us, we could see; it being a spent
ball, one of the boys picked it up.

One poor fellow belonging to one of the regi-
ments engaged, who was lying back of us in the
woods, had the top part of his head blown com-
pletely off, a horrid sight. Our cannon ceased
firing, the enemy being under cover, and fell
back, waiting for mortars to come and shell them
out. Yesterday there was no movement at all.
Last night the guns came up, so to-day there
will be awful work. They are going to throw
out tar in shells, and burn them out. There are
now three batteries within three miles of us here.
This division under Gen. Tyler is about 40,000
strong.

We are but six miles from Manassas Junction,
after the battle we could hear the cars running
all night, bringing troops from Manassas, so
they must have a large force here. We shall
certainly have a fight to-day, and many a poor
fellow will never see the rising of to-morrow's
sun, but as the saying is, "We're all in the same
boat," and must stand it. I never expect to see
home again, but gloomy as the prospect is, I
am not at all disheartened. I shall stand to the
rack, fodder or no fodder. They say when our
troops fell back, leaving the wounded, they came
out of the entrenchments, and bayoneted the
wounded. If this be true, we can expect no
quarter, if we fall into their hands. This is the
most God forsaken country I ever saw; the land
is not worth a dollar per acre. Our pickets were
firing all night long last night. The mail is
about ready to leave, and I must close. My
kindest regards to all the folks, and tell them to
write. Direct to Washington, and it will come.

Respectfully yours,

BYRON.

From a Private in Captain Lewis' Company.

WASHINGTON, July 22.

—: I am a live and well. You have probably heard before this how the Thirteenth was cut up in the battle of Bull's Run, on Sunday. Of course you would think I was among the dead; but I think I was not born to be shot, after what I went through yesterday. I had my rifle shot out of my hand, and the ball grazed one of my fingers, just taking the skin off. The rebels were within fifty rods of me, and I had just fired two shots. When our troops began to retreat, I ran with three others into a gully. I was out of breath, and was sitting down, when one of the three who were with me stood up and said, "They are coming," and the others got over the fence before me. I was in the middle of the fence when all three of them were shot dead. The fence I was on was riddled with balls. When they shot my rifle out of my hands, I pulled off everything, and ran for dear life along the fence until I got into the woods, from which we had driven the rebels out a few hours before. It was full of dead and wounded rebels. I got one of their canteens full of cold water. It was the first I had since morning, and it had been a very hot day. I reached here at sunrise this morning, after walking all the way—about fifty miles—since two o'clock yesterday morning.

We commenced to retreat about five o'clock in the afternoon. I caught a horse and rode him about a mile, when he threw me, and I had to walk the rest of the way. I don't know how I stood it. It commenced to rain at two o'clock this morning, and has not stopped yet. * * *

* * * When I arrived here I laid down in a tent and went to sleep, and when I woke up I could not move, I was so stiff, but I will get over that soon. I will write again to-morrow morning.

W.

Letter from George Trimble of Smith's Rifles.

WASHINGTON, Tuesday, July 23, 1861.

DEAR PARENTS:—I still live to write to you once more, which is indeed a miracle. I received your last letter while we were marching to the field of battle, and was glad to get that letter, for I supposed it was lost. We marched into the enemy's country, and had a battle. It was life or death with us, and was the smartest game of ball I ever had. We shall all prove "Artful Dodgers" when we return to Rochester.

You will learn from the papers how our brave fellows fought; but the enemy was too many for us. We had them fairly whipped once, if they had not got reinforcements. Then our whole division retreated in all directions, and at last our ranks were broken. Not one regiment could be got together.

When we got about a mile from the enemy, their cavalry followed us up to attack the rear of our broken line, and our Colonel got part of the regiment in line to charge on them. Then they put back, but returned again with their battery, and when they got us out in an open field they fired on us with their cannon, but only killed a few that time.

Then we all made for the woods. I got lost in thick wood, and did not find the main body of our men for two hours. I thought I was a "goner" that time. We were forced to march sixty miles without stopping, and had nothing to eat or drink but muddy water. We left *lots of our wounded on the field, and all of our dead.*

We could not tell how many of the enemy we killed, for they kept in the woods and fired out on us. When we would silence one battery they would open another and cross-fire on us. Their masked batteries were as thick as toads in a puddle. They put me in mind of wasps' nests, also, for before you could tell where you were, you would find yourself literally at the cannon's mouth.

It would take me a week to tell you all. I saw three of ROBERT's men, and they said he was in the fight and fought bravely. EDWARD lost his drum, but he safe himself. I write this letter in the Capitol Garden. It will take a week to get our regiment together. I think that I will have *one more* hack at the rebels before I go home, but I hope not such a hot one as the last. The bullets seemed to fall like rain. I had a hole put through the stock of my gun by one of them.

Love to all
GEO. TRIMBLE.

From Capt. Wanzer's Company.

CAMP ANDERSON, }
WASHINGTON, July 23d. }

DEAR SIR:—You no doubt have heard of the great battle fought on Sunday Inst. Our regiment was brought into the hottest of the fray. I have a painful duty to perform. It is with a trembling hand I inform you of the death of

your son JOHN. He fell by my side mortally wounded in the right shoulder. He lived about two hours and a half. Myself and two others carried him to a stone building near by, used as a Hospital by our troops while in action. I made him as comfortable as possible. He seemed to take everything very easy and died nobly. Our troops had to retreat, and consequently could not bring the body off the field. We'll try however, and obtain it by a flag of truce if the rebels will respect it. JOHN was thought a great deal of in camp. He was quiet and took everything very cool. I am in hopes of getting a furlough for a week or two, until our regiment is made up again, it having been terribly cut to pieces, and then I will give you full account of his death.

WILLIAM CLAGUE.

J. B. EDSON.