

Letter from Capt. Hall.
New Mexico, July 29, 1861.

Dear Mother I received your letter several days since, but time was too late to reply to it. It was the day after the great battle and truly it was a great battle. Those of us who were about Yankins and fighting them have witnessed that battle. Many of their regiments stood until we had literally cut them to pieces. They never gave back until we put the bayonet to them, then they could do no more reasoning as any man you ever saw. Our men gave the boys next to us every careful attention. Those regiments fought until their regiments were destroyed by the Louisiana Tigers, who charged upon them with Bowie knives. The Zouaves were established and stood still until the Tigers' bayoneted them, then each cutting, hacking, jabbing and screaming never was enacted like this usual battle. As the Tigers closed with them they shouted, 'Look out, Zouaves,' which caution the latter would have done well to have heeded.

Wash. Williams was the only man of my Company in the fight. He became separated from the regiment in our retreat from Fort Cross Roads, fell in with the 4th South Carolina Regiment, and fought from 8 o'clock until 4. He kept one gun fixed to the wheels of his horse very soon. He fired 17 rounds and then supplied himself with cartridges from a dead Yankee's belt.

Our regiment is under Gen. Ewell, who commands the army and left and therefore we were not in the fight. We were intended to flank the enemy's left and attack his rear. About 1 o'clock, we commenced the movement, marched 3 miles and reached a position entirely behind him, when we were ordered to hasten to the aid of Gen. Beauregard. From this you can see how closely our left wing was pressed. If we could have gone on we would have captured almost the entire army, as we would have been in the rear with about 1000 fresh troops. I think we could have caught Congressmen enough at Centerville—we being on the direct road for that place—to have broken up old Abe's Congress. All now bitterly regret the order that deprived us of such a glorious chance of hunting the Yankees with almost no danger to ourselves. We marched up the road to the scene of action, and reached there, after marching about 14 miles in 4 hours, only to find in one long line of dust made by the enemy on his rapid retreat. If we could have pursued him, we might still have done great execution; but we were too completely exhausted. No one thought of that to discontinue until the next day, in fact most of us prepared for a hard fight the day following. We knew they had heavy reinforcements at Centerville, and supposed the army would rally there. But they were so frightened that they never stopped running from our cavalry until they crossed the Potomac. We took almost every thing they had—viz. 100,000, some 500 wagons, hundreds of horses, thousands of muskets, and millions of cartridges, manure, calabashes, &c. The property we got could not be replaced short of from 5 to 6 millions. The field they left after the fight lay in a heap of heads, legs, arms, and dead bodies, wounded and lay in one confused mass for miles. Where the Tigers met the Southerners, the latter were piled five deep in many places. Many of the wounded Yankees lay two days in a cold and stinky ditch, before assistance could be rendered them. Their friends decorated them and we had to provide for them.

Your friend,
J. M. HALL.

5th AL Co. A



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