

**THE CAPTURE OF MURFREESBORO.**

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Full and Correct Statement of the Affair.

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**MISAPPREHENSIONS AND MISSTATEMENTS SET RIGHT.**

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**The Detachment of the Michigan Ninth Lose One-half their Men in the Fight.**

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**STRANGE CONDUCT OF THE MINNESOTA THIRD**

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**OFFICIAL REPORT OF COLONEL DUFFIELD**

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**Further Account of the Affair**

Special Correspondence of The Detroit Free Press.

MURFREESBORO, Tenn., July 26

Knowing how desirous both you and the people of Michigan are for the particulars of the fight between the detachment of the Ninth Michigan Infantry at this place, and the large Confederate force which was launched upon them on the morning of the 13<sup>th</sup> inst., I have endeavored carefully to gather the principal facts attending the whole transaction, and here offer them to your readers, forbearing, for brevity's sake, many comments which otherwise I should be glad to make upon the conduct of the parties involved, and especially of the men of Michigan.

Murfreesboro, formerly the capital of the State, is a beautiful town, (incorporated as a city, however,) in the exact geographical centre of Tennessee, with a population, in 1861, of three thousand people. Nine splendid turnpikes, or stone roads, stretched out from it in different directions through the State, and prior to the present troubles it was the centre of trade for a wide extent of country, especially that lying toward the south. Money was made rapidly and easily, beautiful houses were springing up on the most beautiful grounds overshadowed by noble trees, grand in their age and proportions, and a future rapidly opening to its people, which was sure to pour into their laps a steady stream of prosperity and wealth. To-day all this appears trampled into fragments by the iron foot of war, which has here stamped all this bright future into present disastrous ruin. The stores, once crowded with business, are universally closed, as upon the Sabbath; the dwellings are in many instances deserted, and even the Sabbath bells on half-a-dozen different churches cease to call their worshipers to the alters of God. Large numbers of her males citizens have committed themselves to the cause of the Confederacy, by enlistment in her army, two thousand out of 2,800 men in this county (Rutherford) alone, having lifted the musket and marched to the support of this dread rebellion, thus almost emasculating the place of its pride and strength. To-day, ten thousand Federal troops are gathered around, and lie encamped within her beautiful precincts, while her remaining people stand mute observers and suffers under the wild wave of war, in its terrible flux and reflux over their border.

But to my narrative. On the morning of the 13<sup>th</sup> of July ist., the entire Federal force at Murfreesboro was but eight hundred and fourteen men, composed as follows:

Six companies – A, B, C, G, H and K – of the Ninth Michigan Volunteers, Lieutenant Colonel Parkhurst commanding, *two hundred strong*, and Captain Wilkinson acting as Major, the remainder of the

regiment being stationed at Tullahoma, thirty miles south, under the command of Major D.M. Fox. Five of these companies were located on the northeast corner of the town, in a splendid grove, long used by the whigs of Tennessee for barbecues, and being the extension of Major Lewis Manny's lawn, and directly in front of his spacious residence. The remaining company, (B) forty-two strong, occupied the court-house as Provost Guards, under the command of Lieutenant Wright. The first squadron Fourth Kentucky Cavalry, Captain Chilson, eighty-one strong, had been camped three quarters of a mile east of the town, on the Liberty Pike, but on the 12<sup>th</sup> inst. had been ordered to Lebanon, and were not in town at the time of the engagement.

The remaining force was composed of nine companies of the Third Minnesota Volunteers, Col. Lester commanding four and fifty strong (one company being detached as train guard), and two sections of Hewitt's Kentucky Battery, seventy-two strong, which with the Minnesota troops, occupied the east bank of Stone's River at a distance of more than three miles from the encampment of the Ninth Michigan Volunteers; thus making the entire effective force at that post, including pickets, eight hundred and fourteen men. It seems that Brigadier General Thomas L. Crittenden had assumed command of all the forces at this post, and after surveying the scattered condition of the troops, had resolved on the following day to bring them again together and to reduce the brigade to its former discipline and efficiency. Unhappily there was not time for this to be done before the attack was made. Had they been thus concentrated, although the force of the enemy was more than three times their own, there is little doubt but what the enemy would have been successfully if not permanently routed. In addition to the misfortune of this scattered position, which had occurred subsequently to Col. Duffield's departure from the command for Kentucky, feuds had sprung up between certain officers of the different regiments, and a lack of good feeling and unanimity was found to characterize them all; and it was the restoration of the former good feeling and the concentration of the force that the newly arrived officers had set themselves at once to accomplish.

The force of the enemy was the Second Cavalry Brigade C.S.A., under Brigadier General N.B. Forrest, over three thousand strong, consisting of one regiment of Texan Rangers under Lieut. Colonel Walker, two Georgia regiments, First and Second, under Cols. Wharton and Hood; one Alabama regiment, under Col. Saunders, one Tennessee regiment, under Col. Lawton. The Georgia regiments were both conscripts, and although the entire force was called cavalry, they were in fact a species of mounted infantry, into which a large portion the Confederate army is now resolving itself for the purpose of this species of guerrilla warfare. Gen. Forrest, I understand, said when here that the present number of this sort of troops attached to the southern portion of the army is 32,000. They are furnished with good horses, carry double-barreled shot guns firing from them large sized buckshot and balls, each cartridge containing one ball and at least three or four buckshot. Some of them carry muskets, other short-barreled rifles. They likewise carried navy revolvers, or some sort of pistols, but generally no sabres, while each one of the Texan Rangers bore upon the left hip an immense bowie-knife, the blade of which was not less than twelve inches long by two inches wide. Others were yet additionally armed with weapons according as their caprice prompted, or as accident furnished their supply. Indeed when some of the Rangers seated themselves in a chair so heavily were they hung about with different weapons, that they found no little difficulty in reaching again a perpendicular position.

There is but little doubt that Gen. Forrest had been fully advised by citizens of Murfreesboro, some of whom were in his ranks, of the scattered and weak condition of the Federal forces at the time of his attack, as well as of absence of superior command over the brigade.

His troops started about one o'clock P.M., on Saturday the 12<sup>th</sup> inst., from a point about four or five miles east of McMinnville (which is forty miles east of Murfreesboro), and so timed their approach as to strike the town at that hour of the morning when the soldier's sleep is the heaviest, and consequently the most favorable time for a surprise. Their object, of course, was to take advantage of the scattered condition

of the troops, prevent, if possible, any coalition, and cut them up in detail by overpowering numbers. The Ninth Michigan detachment, which its 200 men, being the weakest and most exposed, would necessarily be the first assailed. Their object, as will be seen hereafter, was to throw such a force upon their encampment as completely to surround and compel an immediate surrender, or accomplish their entire annihilation. Their approach was made from an easterly direction over the Woodbury turnpike, and as they neared the camp, the sound of their horses' twelve thousand hoofs upon the hard stone-road, coming at the double-quick, resembled that of rumbling thunder or the roar of an approaching railroad train.

One of my informants (Commissary Sergeant Chas. O. Thomas) says the first he heard was an alarm in camp between four and five o'clock in the morning, with the cry, "*Turn out, turn out, the rebels are upon us.*" He heard the din of their approach, and joined the rest of the men in securing their arms and position in time to receive them. Suddenly, as they left the stone-road for the sod, the noise began to diminish, but in a very few minutes the enemy appeared on the right and left of the camp, dashing through the cavalry camp, shooting down the convalescents left by the scouting squadron, and striving to throw themselves around the Michigan men as rapidly as possible – the Texan Rangers coming on with yells and screams like the war-whoop of the Indian warriors, and in full gallop. Col. Duffield on the first alarm came out, and, assuming command, assisted by his Adjutant, H.M. Duffield, formed his men without delay into a hollow square at "charge bayonets," in the centre of his camp.

As soon as the enemy found themselves thus met, and when at a distance of about forty feet, they delivered a heavy fire at our men from along the whole line, and immediately wheeled and retired, the Texans leaning over and firing under the necks of their horses. But the Michigan troops, having thus far reserved their fire, while the enemy were wheeling gave them two volleys from their Austrian rifled muskets which brought down and killed quite a number, but how many were actually killed by this fire it was impossible to tell, as these Rangers were attached or lassoed to their saddles by a belt or strap, which was passed round their waists and fastened in front upon the horn of the saddle, thus holding them, if wounded, in place, so that their horses would carry them from the field; and should the horse be brought down the bowie-knife would quickly sever the strap and release the ride for escape. The first volley of the enemy, numbering some twelve to one of the Ninth Michigan, did great damage, killing and wounding a large number. Col. Duffield received two wounds in this first charge, one an exceedingly painful one through the scrotum, inducing a blind and fainting sensation for a time, the other through the under part of the left thigh, both of which were attended with copious bleeding, especially the wound in the thigh. Having tied a handkerchief round his leg, to check the flow of blood somewhat, he was enabled to continue in command, and, after the enemy's first repulse, his orders were to deploy skirmishers right and left, so as to be ready for their second charge. These orders were promptly executed, and the enemy, having been by the first volley driven back by the Michigan men some 300 feet, rallied and descended upon them still more furiously in a second charge. They were received by another and yet another well-delivered volley, and after a close and almost hand-to-hand fight for fifteen or twenty minutes more, the enemy were again repulsed and driven some four hundred feet back. Col. Duffield then ordered company C (Capt. DeLand) to follow them up with skirmishers, which he did with great energy and effect, portions of other companies uniting with him in this particular duty, and driving them for the time from the field. So decidedly panic-stricken was a portion of the enemy by the fire of the Michigan men, that one squadron actually slipped away through a side gate and took to flight, with its officers. Had there been a squadron of cavalry at hand to hurl after them just then, this alarm might have been extended through their whole force.

Meanwhile, Col. Duffield, having been completely exhausted by loss of blood, was carried fainting from the field into the house of Major Manny, which was situated, as I have said, directly in the rear of the camp. As soon as the enemy were thus driven off, Col. Parkhurst, resuming command, proceeded at once to construct a breastwork, by placing bales of hay around a log cabin, on the southwest

corner of the ground, extending thence across Manny avenue, and planting the regimental wagons on the east side, while a garden fence, extending along the west side, gave the detachment comparatively good protection against any further charge on all three sides. The hope was entertained by the Michigan men that they might thus keep off the enemy until they could either succeed in effecting a junction with the Minnesota Third, or that they would, on their part, force their way through to the gallant band who had thus so nobly defended themselves against, and repulsed an overwhelming foe. Scouts were at once sent out by Col. Parkhurst to ascertain whether this could be accomplished, but it was found that they enemy had completely surrounded the Michigan men at a distance exceeding rifle shot, thus entirely cutting of their approach to the Minnesota Third, which, by this time, leaving their camp, had passed southerly a thousand yards towards the town, with pickets thrown out on the Nashville turnpike, at the junction of the summer or dirt road with the pike. Finding that this was their situation, and convinced that a junction might be successfully formed, Colonel Parkhurst sent a messenger to Colonel Lester, urging him to come at once to their relief. Having looked over the ground, it seems to me that this might have been easily accomplished, and in the following way: As was said above, the Minnesota regiment lay about a mile and a quarter only from the Michigan camp, and were accompanied by two sections of Hewitt's Battery, with ample ammunition. By throwing out skirmishers therefore, through the woods that lay between their respective camps, and by planting two cannon charged with grape in his advance and two in his rear, Colonel Lester ought to have been able in a few minutes to push his column directly through a lane running easterly up to the Ninth Michigan. The movement might possibly have been attended with some hard fighting, but the enemy had no cannon to oppose them, and Hewitt's Battery should, and did to a large extent, counterbalance their superiority in numbers, *and the thing in skillful hands could certainly have been done.* Had the junction been formed and the forces of the Michigan Ninth been united with the four hundred and fifty men of the Minnesota Regiment and four pieces of Hewitt's Battery, there is little doubt but that the enemy could have been either utterly routed or held in check until Federal reinforcements should reach the town. This splendid occasion for distinction, and for the rescue of a band of heroic soldiers, Col. Lester, for some reason or other, did not see fit to avail himself of, but halted his force at the point above stated and waited for the approach of the enemy now assailing him from the rear. Justice to Lieutenant Colonel Griggs, of the Minnesota Third, and to Captain Hewitt, requires from me a statement here, that they both urged and entreated Col. Lester for privilege of pushing forward in an effort to rescue the Michigan Ninth, now reduced to one hundred fighting men, but their request was not granted. Col. Lester having left his camp about half a mile in his rear, with but an ordinary camp guard of forty men, the rebels were soon in it, destroying his ammunition, camp equipage and officers' baggage, he having moved forward with only the ammunition in the men's cartridge boxes. The battery, however, had their full quota of ammunition in their caissons. The enemy, thus advancing on him from the rear, we received in their first and only charge by Capt. Hewitt, whose guns repelled them with grape and shell and quickly drove them beyond their range.

Meanwhile a portion of the enemy's force rushed into the town, set fire to the railroad depot not far from the court-house, in which were located all the post Commissary stores of large value, destroying the entire lot, together with the building occupied by Lieut. Charles Irwin, Brigade Quartermaster. They also burned the St. Charles Hotel and two small dwelling houses adjacent. The Provost Guards above referred to, numbering some forty-two, (the balance of the company being in the City Hotel and on guard duty), under the command of Lieut. Wright, were attacked by a largely superior force (not less than 800 or 1,000 men), and who, retiring to the court-house, gallantly defended themselves for three hours or more from the second story windows which faced out on four sides of the public square. Not until the building was fired from below by the rebels did they finally surrender, about half-past seven o'clock, A.M. Lieut. Wiggins, of this company, took a musket and fought gallantly as a private through the whole of this engagement.

Gen. Crittenden was about the same time taken prisoner, in his boarding house opposite the courthouse, and was hurriedly carried off by a special escort of rebel cavalry towards McMinnville, the point from which the rebels had made their descent upon the town. The attack on the Provost Guards was cotemporaneous with the making in Camp Parkhurst, and after the surrender of the guards, they swept on around and into the camp of the Minnesota Third, as above stated. The skirmishers under Capt. DeLand were, during all this time, defending their position as best they could, and picking off stragglers whenever and wherever they appeared within range of their rifles. As an instance of the cool manner in which the Michigan boys followed up the rebels, I mention the following incident: One of them, Jos. N. Barber, Co. A, having been signaled by a negro girl that there were two rebels inside of a house, into which they had gone for the arrest of Capt. Bangs, who was sick, slipped down from camp, seized, mounted and rode off one of the rebels' horses with all his accoutrements, and carried him, from in front of the house, and almost from under the eye of his owner, into camp. On looking out of the window and discovering the loss of the rebel officers' horse, Capt. Bangs remarked to him that he rather thought one of the Michigan boys had "carried off his horse, and the next thing he would make his rider a prisoner." To this the officer very coolly replied, that he "would not care much if he did, as he had been forced as a Georgia conscript into the service, and did not care much about fighting, any how."

The rebels under Gen. Forrest, having been repulsed by Hewitt's Battery, hurriedly returned upon the Michigan Ninth, then the weakest point, driving in their skirmishers and forming a line of battle clear across the southern boundary of Camp Parkhurst, at a distance of about of 700 feet from the breastwork thrown up since the first attack

Before opening fire, General Forrest sent in a flag of truce to Colonel Parkhurst, *demanding of him an immediate surrender, or else he would put his whole remaining force to the sword, giving them no quarter.* Colonel Parkhurst, seeing his numbers now reduced to *one hundred fighting men*, and the dark cloud of mounted Rangers opposed to him, and all expectation of rescue or relief from the Minnesota Third having failed him, hard and bitter as was the experience, concluded that justice to his "boys," who had fought so nobly, required of him a surrender, as any further contest, under the circumstances, would only have resulted in their murder by detail. In this conclusion the officers, for the same reason, seem to have concurred, although the great majority of them felt the keenest disappointment at not being able, by a union with the Minnesota Third, to make one more vigorous effort for the repulse and rout of the enemy. The surrender was accordingly made within half an hour thereafter. General Forrest at once repaired to the room of Colonel Duffield, at Major Manny's residence, and, finding him in bed, asked him if he surrendered all the troops in his command, including the Minnesota Third. To this Col. Duffield replied that General Crittenden was in command of the post, and not himself. Gen. Forrest then said he had taken and sent off General Crittenden as a prisoner some hours previous. Colonel Duffield, in reply, said in that case the command devolved on him until he was carried wounded from the field, when it fell on Colonel Lester; that he (Colonel Duffield) surrendered no forces. General Forrest remarked that he supposed he had surrendered the detachment of Michigan Ninth' to which Colonel Duffield answered, "No! Colonel Parkhurst was in command, and he had surrendered the hundred men left of the Ninth, and he (General Forrest) must now deal directly with Colonel Lester himself." No more fighting, however, occurred. A flag of truce was dispatched to them, and Col. Lester, after a brief and discordant consultation with his officers, concluded, strangely enough as it seems to us, to surrender, and he did accordingly surrender about one o'clock in the afternoon, without any further effort for his own defense or that of the Michigan Ninth. Immediately after the surrender of the Michigan Ninth, and while the rebel forces were arraying themselves around the Third Minnesota, the boys very sensibly repaired to the Regimental Quartermaster's Department, and helped themselves generally to new suits of clothes, new haversacks, new canteens, and a new outfit from head to foot. Within half an hour thereafter, all that remained of regimental stores were destroyed by the rebels,

together with all their camp equipage and tents, one dead body being partially burned up by them in one of the tents.

As soon as the surrender of the Minnesota Third had been brought about, great anxiety was manifested by Gen. Forrest to get through with his work and be off. All the wounded officers and men, amounting to some seventy-eight men, were at once paroled and the officers and men not paroled were carried off as prisoners of war. All who could get horses were allowed to ride, and all who could not were compelled to walk. After reaching McMinnville, some forty miles off, all enlisted men were paroled, and the officers carried off to Chattanooga. Some of the dead were that night carried to the hospital, and on the following morning all the Michigan dead, including Lieutenant Chase, were buried on the battle-field in a beautiful grove-like spot, selected by Major Maney, the proprietor of the ground. This gentleman, in connection with other citizens, superintended this sad service, procuring coffins for every corpse, and personally seeing that everything was done in a manner worthy of the occasion, and of the brave men who filled the mount. I stood by the long heap of fresh earth last evening, as the sun went down behind the distant hills. The great trees spread their arms, as it were, in blessing over the heroes who slept beside the field on which they had fallen for their country's flag, and the wild mocking birds were chaunting sweet tributes to their praise. But through that same camp and over that same ground where Michigan blood had poured so freely, the tents and wagons and heavy artillery of other regiments and batteries were already gathered, and occasionally a group of soldiers passing out toward a neighboring spring with their canteens, halted and did reverence to the honored dust that slept below. The regiment will probably ere long rear some appropriate shaft in this lonely spot to their lost comrades in battle, thus perpetuating their names as among those who bravely fell in defense of the constitution and the laws of our beloved country.

"How sleep the brave who sunk to rest

By all their country's wishes blest."

The citizens, their wives and daughters, though generally in sympathy with the Confederacy, were very attentive to our wounded, as well as to those of the rebels, furnishing all necessary food and delicacies, and rendering liberal and tender attentions to those who were sinking under mortal wounds. On the arrival of Federal reinforcements, which came in towards the close of the week, they abandoned our wounded to their doctors, and carried off the rebel prisoners to their own houses. Several Union ladies, I am happy to record, paid great respect to our boys both night and day, among whom were Miss Helen McIlvaine, Mrs. Elliot and her daughters and Mrs. Jourdon. Major Lew Maney and his estimable lady threw open their doors, and the wounded men, to the number of thirty or forty, were carried over the lawn, and laid upon the beds, the floors, the piazzas, the shaded grass, and all other available positions for their reception and care. Carpets were soaked and the cedar floors stained with the blood of the poor fellows who staggered in for sympathy and relief, and all received it, some of the wounded and sick still experiencing the kindest attention under the roof of this accomplished gentleman.

Aside from the commendations poured upon the Michigan men by the soldiers of other regiments, who, recently arriving, having learned the exact history of their fight, the citizens, nearly all of whom are highly charged with secession sympathies, poured lavish praise upon them for their valorous defense. One of the secession ladies remarked to a wounded soldier in the hospital, while she dressed his wounds, "Although you don't agree with us, yet you all fought so bravely this morning as richly to deserve all the attention we can give you."

The medical report of the Michigan Ninth shows how well they fought and how bravely they fell; the number of killed being thirteen and of wounded seventy-eight, making ninety-one of killed and wounded, which would give about one in every two of the men actually engaged as either killed or

wounded. There are few battles in our history which record so large a loss in proportion to the number of men involved. Accompanying this letter I send you a copy of this report, which the names of the killed and wounded in the several companies. Their number is as follow:

*Field and Staff* – Col. Wm. W. Duffield, two wounds, left thigh and right testicle.

*Non-Commissioned Regimental Staff* – Chas. O. Thomas, Commissary Sergeant, one wound through right arm.

Company A, three killed and twenty-five wounded, among whom Lieutenant Barrows, flesh wound in left should.

Company B, three wounded.

Company C, one killed and sixteen wounded.

Company G, three killed and eleven wounded.

Company H, two killed and nine wounded

Company K, four killed and twelve wounded.

Too much praise cannot be bestowed on Dr. Cyrus Smith, Assistant Surgeon, and who should no longer be compelled to write his name as Assistant; for, as I learn from various sources, he has been in fact principal Surgeon almost ever since the regiment was organized. Dr. Ennis Church, for some reason or other, left the next day after the fight for Nashville, while this crowd of wounded and dying men were all on the Assistant's hands. Yet unabashed by the extraordinary labors he was called upon to perform, he assumed and skillfully earning for himself a name and reputation both as a man physician, that the most successful of his brethren might well envy. I trust he may receive attention and a due reward at the hands of Governor Blair, who never made a better medical appointment than this. He should be made Surgeon of the regiment at once.

The physicians of the town, Dr. Basket, Dr. Wendell and his brother, and all others who could, were busily employed in looking after the wounded of both armies. The first named gentlemen remarked to me this morning, that the wounds of the Confederates were much worse in point of severity than those of the Federal prisoners, all being wrought by the destructive Minie balls, discharged from rifles carrying a distance of nine hundred yards. The number of the Confederate killed and wounded was also much larger, reaching as high as two hundred and fifty, and these figures would scarcely cover all, as many of them were at once picked up and carried off out of town in their wagons, which stood waiting to receive and transport them to some friendly shelter in the interior. One of the Tennessee Confederate soldiers found as cook in the camp of the Ninth Michigan a negro servant of his own, and, riding up to him, drew his knife and stabbed him dead on the spot. This poor fellow did not appear in the list of killed and wounded.

In marked contrast with the killed and wounded of the Michigan mean appear those of the Third Minnesota. I give them as taken from the medical report:

KILLED

Private Woodham, company C.

Corporal Green, company L.

WOUNDED

Private Green, company A.

Private Johnson, company D.

Private Foggleson, company E.

Private W.W. Doyle, company E.

Private James Mitchell, company E.

Private W.G. Barnard, company G.

Private David Hooper, company I.

Private C.H. Turnley, company K.

Thus showing an aggregate of only two killed, and eight wounded. Of these, however, only one was killed in line, and two wounded; the remainder were killed and wounded in camp while acting as guard.

It would be difficult for me to attempt a particular statement of all the officers and men of the Ninth Michigan who distinguished themselves for their gallant bearing and heroic defense under the avalanche of foes that was rolled so suddenly upon their limited numbers on that quiet Sabbath morning. With the exception of one Captain, who so far forgot himself as to desert his command and flee from the field, all behaved bravely, and breasted like veterans the line of fire that encircled them. Their work and their list of killed and wounded speak for them in a strain higher and sterner than any words that either pen or tongue can employ. And had the regiment only been together in its entire force, or had Col. Lester seen fit so to handle the Minnesota Third as to effect a junction with the survivors of the early attack, there is but little doubt that the enemy would have been altogether repulsed, and then the gallant members of the Ninth would have been recorded as among the foremost heroes of the war. *This they are as it is*, and the facts above recorded will give them place as such in the heart of their entire State, while at the same time they will refute a base calumny which has found its way into some of the papers, charging the entire Michigan regiment with a discreditable surrender, and exalting the Minnesota Third for some great fighting which never was done, but which now appears *ought* to have been done, both for its own credit and that of the Federal army.

No word has yet been received from the captives beyond what is herein recorded, but doubtless they will ere long find some way of communicating with their friends through the rebel lines, and it may not be long before an exchange will restore them again to their friends and to the State.

Col. Duffield is still confined to his bed, suffering somewhat from fever but no much. He hopes in the course of a week, by the aid of crutches and good care, to float himself up to Cincinnati and thence home by rail, reaching Detroit somewhere about the 10<sup>th</sup> of August.

Knowing that you were anxious to procure reliable accounts of this affair, I have been very careful in making my inquiries, and, wherever information was to be had, secured it, whether more or less, and then threw it into a consecutive narrative as briefly and clearly as could well be done. You may rest assured that there is nothing here incautiously stated, so that he who reads this account can confidently say that he has possessed himself of the principal facts of the fight at Murfreesboro.

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MICHIGAN

**Col. Duffield's Official Report.**

MURFREESBORO, Tenn., July 23, 1862,

COLONEL – Although I had not yet formally assumed command of the Twenty-third Brigade, yet, as Brigadier General Thomas L. Crittenden and the other officers of his command have been captured and forwarded to Chattanooga, permit me to submit the following report of such portion of the attack on this post, made on the 13<sup>th</sup> inst., as came under my own personal observation.

I arrived here, after an absence of two months, on the afternoon of the 11<sup>th</sup> inst., coming down on the same train with Brigadier General Thomas L. Crittenden, the newly-appointed commander of the post, and found that several material changes had been made in the location and encampment of the Twenty-third Brigade since my departure. Instead of camping together, as it had been done, it was separated into two portions several miles apart. The brigade had never been drilled as such, nor a brigade guard mounted. Each regiment furnished its quota of officers and men and watched certain roads, and worse than all, the commanding officers of the respective regiments were on ill terms with each other and the feeling upon one occasion had broken out into an open personal quarrel. The result was a great lack of discipline between the two regiments, manifesting itself in the personal encounters of the men when they met upon the street. There was no order and no harmony. The parts of the machine did not fit well and the commanding officer seems either not to have possessed the will or the ability to adjust them. General Crittenden and myself, immediately after our arrival, visited the several camps, discussed the impropriety of a divided command, and decided upon concentration, but as neither of us had assumed command, we deferred it until the morrow. But on the morrow, the blow fell, and the danger we anticipated became a reality. Gen. Crittenden made his headquarters in town, while I preferred camping with my own men, and therefore pitched my tent with the five companies of the Ninth Michigan Volunteers.

The force then at Murfreesboro was as follows: Five companies Ninth Michigan Volunteers; Lieutenant Colonel Parkhurst, two hundred strong, together with the First Squadron, Fourth Kentucky Cavalry, Captain Chilson, eighty-one strong, were camped three-fourths of a mile east of the town upon the Liberty Turnpike. One company, B, Ninth Michigan Volunteers, Captain Rounds, forty-two strong, occupied the court house, the other four companies having been ordered to Tullahoma a month since, while nine companies of the Third Minnesota Volunteers, Col. Lester, (one company being on detached duty as train guard) four hundred and fifty strong and Hewitt's Battery, First Regiment Artillery (two sections) seventy-two occupied the east bank of Stone's River at a distance of more than – miles from the encampment of the detachment of the Ninth Michigan Volunteers. Orders were received from Nashville the evening of the 12<sup>th</sup> inst., directing the First Squadron Fourth Kentucky Cavalry to proceed at once to Lebanon. The total effective strength of the command at Murfreesboro on the morning of the 13<sup>th</sup> inst., did not, therefore, exceed eight hundred and fourteen men, including pickets.

The attack was made at daybreak on the morning of the 13<sup>th</sup> inst., by the Second Cavalry Brigade, C.S.A., Brigadier General N.B. Forrest, over three thousand strong, consisting of one Texas regiment, Lieutenant Colonel Walker, the First and Second Georgia Regiments, Colonels Wharton and Hood, one Alabama regiment, Colonel Saunders, and one Tennessee, Colonel Lawton. The noise of so many hoots upon the macadamized roads at full speed was so great, that the alarm was given before the head of their column reached our pickets, about a mile distant, so that our men were formed and ready to receive them, although they came in at full speed. The Texans, and a battalion of the Georgia regiment, in all over eight hundred strong, attacked the detachment of the Ninth Michigan Volunteers. So fierce and impetuous was their attack, that our men were forced nearly to the centre of their camp. But they fell back steadily and in order with their faces to the foe. But upon reaching the centre of our camp their line was brought to a halt, and after twenty minutes of nearly hand-to-hand fighting, the enemy broke and fled in the wildest confusion, followed in close pursuit by one company as skirmishers. A squadron of cavalry launched at their heels at this time would utterly routed and annihilated them. Indeed, so great was their panic that their officers were unable to check the fugitives for a space of seven miles, and Colonel Lawton, commanding the Georgia regiment, was subsequently arrested by Gen. Forrest for misconduct under the fire of the enemy. During the attack both officers and men, with one single exception, behaved very handsomely. There was no excitement – no hurry – no confusion – everything was done calmly, quickly and in obedience to orders. But it is with the deepest shame and mortification I am compelled to report that one officer of Michigan has been guilty of gross cowardice in the face of the enemy. Captain John A. Taner, of company K, Ninth Michigan Volunteers at the first alarm left his quarters abandoned his company and fled from his command under the enemy's fire, and I therefore inclose you herewith charges preferred against him for violation of the 52<sup>nd</sup> article of war.

Capt. Charles V. DeLand, company C, Ninth Michigan Volunteers, deserves especial mention for cool and gallant conduct throughout the entire action, and the fearless mode in which he led his company as skirmishers in pursuit of the enemy when repulsed; also, First Lieut. Hiram Barrows, company A, same regiment, for the tenacity with which he held his ground although sorely pressed by the enemy.

The loss of the detachment of the Ninth Michigan Volunteers has been very severe for the number engaged, amounting to one officer and twelve men killed, and three officers and seventy-five wounded. The enemy's loss has been much more severe than our own. More than double the number of their dead were buried with ours, and their wounded are found in almost every house. Among their wounded are a Colonel and a Major, two Adjutants and a Surgeon.

I enclose you herewith the surgeon's report of the killed and wounded of the Ninth Michigan Volunteers. Not having been present at the subsequent surrender of the detachment of the Ninth Michigan Volunteers, under Lieutenant Colonel Parkhurst, I can only state the facts as reported to me, which show that this force, isolated and reduced by killed and wounded, to less than seventy-five men after having held their ground from 4 A.M. to 1 P.M., were compelled to surrender or be cut to pieces by the entire force of the enemy.

I am reliably informed that company B, Ninth Michigan Volunteers, under command of First Lieutenant Wright, held the court-house against an incessant attack by a greatly superior force, from 4 A.M. to 7 1/2 A.M., and did not surrender till the enemy had possession of the lower story of the building and had started a fire with the evident intention of burning them out.

Of the surrender of the Third Minnesota Volunteers and Hewitt's Battery under command of Colonel Lester, I cannot speak from personal knowledge, nor have I received any information from sources sufficiently reliable to warrant my communicating to you any details. Indeed I would much prefer not to do so. The circumstances of the case as reported bear painfully upon the honor of a brother officer, now a prisoner, and therefore unable to defend himself. I inclose [sic] you herewith a list of killed and wounded of

the Third Minnesota Volunteers furnished me by the Assistant Surgeon of that regiment, amounting to two killed and two wounded in line, the remainder in camp.

In the early part of this attack I received two gunshot wounds, one passing through the right testicle, the other through the left thigh. These, although bleeding profusely and very painful, did not prevent me from remaining on the field with my own regiment, until the attack was repulsed; when, fainting from pain and loss of blood, I was carried from the field, and was, therefore not a witness of what subsequently occurred.

At noon of the same day I was made prisoner by Brigadier General, but, in my then helpless condition, was released upon my parole not to bear arms against the Confederate States until I am regularly exchanged.

I remain, Colonel, your ob'd't serv't

WM. W. DUFFIELD

Col. Ninth Mich. Inf'y Vols., Com'g 23d Brigade.

Col. JAMES B. FRY, A.A.G., Chief of Staff

Huntsville, Ala.

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