

PORT ROYAL, THURSDAY, APRIL 21, 1864.

## LATEST FROM FLORIDA.

### A Soldier of the Third New Hampshire Caught in the Act of Deserting to the Enemy.

### His Trial by a Drum Head Court Martial and Speedy Execution.

### Further Particulars of the Destruction of the Transport Hunter,

&c., &c., &c.

JACKSONVILLE, April 17, 1864.

### EXECUTION OF A DESERTER.

Private Henry Miller, Company F, Third New Hampshire Mounted Infantry, was caught in the act of deserting to the enemy day before yesterday afternoon. A drum-head court martial was immediately ordered in his case, and at 2 P. M. yesterday he had been tried, convicted, sentenced, and shot.

It is about two weeks since the Third New Hampshire came here. It was attached to the Light Brigade, under Col. Henry. Being a mounted regiment, it was at once placed on outpost duty, but has given during its brief stay a great deal of trouble to the command. The veterans are at home on furlough, and those remaining on duty are for the most part substitutes and conscripts. Many of them have been in the rebel service; have been captured, and paroled; have been allowed to take the oath of allegiance, and to enter the ranks of our army. As a consequence, when they found themselves in front of the enemy they began to desert. The first night they were on duty one or two ran off. The next night another squad got away. Ten or twelve of the regiment had thus succeeded in reaching the rebel lines, taking away not only themselves, but their horses, equipments, and, it is presumed, information of great value to the Confederates.

At last, so glaring was the disposition of these rascals to desert, that a plot was laid to circumvent them in their diabolical plans. Miller and a party of other substitutes, who were suspected of foul intentions, were placed on outpost picket duty, and notified by the Sergeant that the regiment was to be relieved and ordered north on the following day. In the meantime an outer line of pickets was secretly posted three hundred yards in advance of the vidette station. There concealed, they awaited the arrival of deserting substitutes. Miller, with five others, was caught in the trap; but for lack of the necessary evidence, as I understand, his companions will not be likely to suffer the extreme penalty.

Miller was a fair sample of the crowd of ruff-scuffs who were invoiced to the regiment last fall as substitutes. He had been with the regiment about four months. When caught, he had in his haversack and feed bag all his personal effects, and was going over, with his horse and equipments, as many had gone before him.

He was shot at two o'clock yesterday, by a firing party of twelve men selected from his own regiment. Eight bullets hit him, three of them taking effect in the immediate vicinity of the heart. To the

last he seemed indifferent to his fate, and died, as he had lived, a hardened sinner. There are others like him in the regiment, of whom the old members would gladly be rid.

### THE LOSS OF THE GENERAL HUNTER.

I am enabled to send you a few additional particulars with regard to the loss of the steamer General Hunter on the morning of Saturday last. She was following in the wake of the gunboat Norwich and the hospital transport Cosmopolitan, which were both within hailing distance when the explosion occurred. Both of these vessels sent their boats to the rescue of the Hunter's crew. It is supposed by some on board that the torpedo that sunk her was attached to an apparatus by which operators on shore could raise or lower it at will, and that the Norwich was allowed to pass unharmed because she was in such close proximity to the hospital steamer.

The Hunter went down in twenty-six feet of water, within pistol shot of the wreck of the Maple Leaf. Her saloon deck is now about two feet under the surface. Much of her side was blown away, and it is said she was completely broken in two. Of course she is a total loss.

Quartermaster Harry Benson, who was in his room at the time, has not since been seen. It is supposed that he was stunned by the concussion, and when the steamer sank was drowned. Ellis Norris, the steward, had his leg broken, and Thomas Conlin, a greaser in the engine room, was thrown into the water, but was afterward picked up by the boats.

Captain Crowell, commander of the Hunter, saved his nautical implements and both his boats. Beyond these the personal effects of all were lost.

The armed transport Harriet A. Weed went up to the wreck yesterday and raised three cases of goods. Another boat will be sent up to-day.

The Hunter is the third steamer lost in the present Florida campaign. The first was the General Burnside, wrecked on St. John's bar in the heavy February gales; and the second was the Maple Leaf, destroyed by a torpedo similar to that which blew up the General Hunter on Saturday last.

### PERSONAL.

Captain Dana of the Signal Corps has been relieved from duty here, and has taken with him Lieuts. Bruyn, Roberts and Weible. He is succeeded in charge of the Signal party in the District of Florida by Lieut. T. C. Vidal, who will be assisted by Lieuts. Hatfield and Weber.

Col. Brown, of the 157th New York Volunteers, is Post Commander at Jacksonville, and Col. Noble, of the 17th Connecticut, goes to St. Augustine.

Mr. A. B. Day, who has gratuitously and yet thoroughly and satisfactorily performed the duties of the Postmaster here since our occupation, has been relieved by Mr. Reed, son of the former tax commissioner, who has received the appointment from the President.

### SOLDIER SHOT AT BEAUFORT.

We understand that one of the privates of the 56th N. Y. Vols., by the name of John Graves, belonging to Co. H, was mortally shot last night at Beaufort, by Captain Metcalf, 33d U. S. Troops, officer of the guard. Graves was intoxicated and attempted to wrest a gun from the hands of a colored sentry, and failing in this, struck the sentry repeatedly. He was several times warned, to desist, and informed that he would be shot if he persisted in his riotous course. He became more turbulent and frenzied, and as the last resort, Capt. Metcalf shot him down.

Graves died from his wounds a short time thereafter.

### NAVAL MATTERS.

The Eriesson monitor Catskill, Commander N. B. Harrison, arrived at this port from the Charleston blockade a few days since for repairs. She is now at the Navy Yard at Station Creek, in the hands of the workmen. The following is a correct list of her officers:—Commander, N. B. Harrison; Lieut. and Ex. Officer, H. L. Harrison; Lieut. W. Abbott; Acting Master A. Tellinghast; Acting Ensign, Clawson; Assistant Surgeon Chalmers, Acting Assistant Paymaster, George Barker, Second Assistant Engineer, George Emmons, in charge; do., Pero; Third do., Plunkett; do., Booth; do., J. Dennett; Acting Master's Mate, Trescott.

The gunboat Ellen reached here for repairs, on Saturday last, from Light House Inlet, where she has been stationed for nearly a year past. She actively participated in the operations before Charleston, and made for herself an enviable reputation, of which her officers may well be proud. She will remain in port for some time.

DETACHED.—Acting Master E. M. Baldwin, from the South Carolina, and awaiting orders; Acting Master G. W. Ewer, from the Catskill.

APPOINTED.—James Plunkett, Acting Assistant Engineer, and ordered to the Catskill; Acting Ensign Henry C. Whitmore, of the Pantucket.

CONFIRMED.—Acting Ensign Cecil C. Neil, and ordered to duty on the Sonoma.

RESIGNED.—Acting Ensign Thomas H. Daggett, of the Wabash; Acting Master's Mate Charles E. Culver, of the Seneca; Acting Master's Mate Edward E. Fiske, of the Seneca.

Acting Volunteer Lieutenant Welch, late commanding the gunboat Potomska, has been ordered to the command of the gunboat Ladona, now stationed at Sapelo Sound, Georgia, with the barks Fernandena and Braziliara.

CHANGES IN OFFICERS AT THIS POST.—Several important changes have been recently made in officers at this Post.

Capt. Charles B. Fessenden, Jr., 9th U. S. C. T., has been appointed Post Commissary, succeeding Capt. Dandy, of the 100th N. Y.

1st Lieut. H. B. Beebe, Quartermaster of the 9th U. S. C. T., succeeds Lieut. Colton, of the 6th Conn., as Post Quartermaster.

1st Lieut. Washington A. Huntley, 9th U. S. C. T., is the new Boarding Officer.

1st Lieut. E. W. Morey, 9th U. S. C. T., is Post Treasurer.

We last week inadvertently omitted to mention that Lieut. Haskell M. Phelps, of the 9th U. S. C. T., had been appointed Assistant Provost Marshal. Lieut. J. P. King's appointment was as an additional Assistant Provost Marshal, having charge of the patrol and dock.

PARTY AT SEABROOK.—On the evening of the 16th, the officers of the 76th Pennsylvania Regiment, at Seabrook, gave an entertainment to the officers of the gunboat Chippewa, Lieutenant-Commander E. P. Stone. The Chippewa's officers came ashore at about five o'clock, and were received at the landing by Colonel Campbell, Capt. Knerr, and others of the 76th. They escorted them to their quarters, where a splendid dinner was served, and a very agreeable evening passed. Capt. J. Lanahan, of the 3d R. I. Artillery; Mr. Gleason, of the Custom-house, and some other invited guests were there, and the presence of a number of ladies added much pleasure to the party. The

officers of the 76th are noted for their hospitality, and it was particularly exhibited on this occasion.

### ARRIVAL OF THE MASSACHUSETTS.

Important Northern News—Fort Pillow Captured by the Rebels—Shocking Barbarities—Boiler Explosion on a Gunboat.

We have Northern dates to the 16th inst. On the 12th the rebel General Forrest captured Fort Pillow on the Tennessee shore of the Mississippi, 75 miles above Memphis, under the command of Major Booth, of the 13th Tennessee heavy artillery. Two flags of truce, demanding surrender, were sent in and refused. A successful assault then occurred, in which Major Booth was killed, and the rebels swarmed in. A horrid butchery followed. Wounded men were bayoneted, dead bodies outraged, women and children slain, and particular inhumanity shown towards the black troops. Only 200 out of 600 remained alive.

The rebels are also reported to have attacked Paducah.

The gunboat Chenango, while going down New York Bay on the 15th, exploded one of her boilers, killing several persons, and scalding about thirty.

### INTERESTING FROM THE STONO RIVER.

A Reconnoissance and a Skirmish with the Enemy.

A correspondent at Cole's Island informs us of a successful reconnoissance on the 15th, by a detachment of the 127th New York Regiment to Battery Island, on Stono River, opposite Legareville, and joined to James Island by a dyke. The expedition consisted of Cos. E and H, and detachments from Cos. A and I, under command of Capt. Gurney of Co. E, with Lieuts. Haviland of Co. A and Sammis of Co. I. It started at about half-past one o'clock, P. M., crossed the bridge at the left, and proceeded to skirmish up the road toward the enemy's pickets. The gunboat Sonoma also went up the Stono River, and commenced to shell the rebel picket line. The rocket battery took a position opposite the rebels on James Island, throwing rocket shell between the gunboat and the battery, making the rebels skip around pretty lively. The expedition found after skirmishing over the Island some 15 or 20 torpedoes buried in the middle of the road, one of which was exploded by one of the pioneers stepping on it, while going to fix the bridge. The following were wounded: Pioneer Ellias B. Miller, Co. B, in the face; Pioneer Morgan, Co. K, in the arm; Private Geo. Bloxomb, Co. E, in the face. They are getting on finely.

### DEATH OF A WELL-KNOWN OFFICER.—

Capt. Lewis C. Allen, Jr., of Co. F, 6th Regiment Conn. Vols., died in camp, yesterday morning. Before the present war Capt. Allen was a member of the Columbus Guards, Georgia, and was present, with them, at the grand military muster at Milledgeville, when all the troops of the State competed for a stand of arms, which the Guards obtained. His parents removed after that to Stratford, Conn., and he went into business in New Haven, Conn. He was for many years a valuable member of the National Blues, of that city, acting, in connection with Capt. Peck, as drill officer. At the breaking out of the rebellion, he entered the service of the United States as 1st Lieut. of Co. C, 3d Conn. Regiment, under Capt. Root, and was engaged in the battle of Bull Run. When the call was made for three years troops, he received a commission as Captain, and recruited and organized Co. F, of his Regiment,