

WAR STORIES.

First Georgia Regulars at Pee Dee Bridge.

of the bridge and some of Butler's cavalry were waiting for us so they could stick fire to it. When the regulars were about half-way through the bridge the enemy entered the bridge in our rear and we fought through it, while the cavalry fired it on both sides as we went. It was certainly a warm place and the boys were glad to get out of it and enter a large field on the bank of the river with the woods about one mile distant. After leaving the bridge the road inclines down the river and makes a gradual turn to the left. Colonel Wayne must have thought he had fulfilled his orders to the letter, as he galloped on to the front, leaving the regiment to follow at its leisure. When we were about a 300 yards from the bridge General Butler rode up at full speed and asked for the officer in command. Captain Tom Fort, of company L, and Captain Frank Myers, of company E, have both told me since the war that they were in command and as both were officers of known courage and veracity, I will leave it for them to settle. General Butler ordered the officer to face the regiment in line and retake the bridge, as the enemy were putting the fire out. The officer replied to him by saying that the regiment had run at least four miles and had fought a portion of the way, and they were physically unable to make the charge. General Butler got his dander up and told the officer the bridge must be retaken and burned and to wheel his regiment in line and charge it. The regiment was ordered to wheel to the left in line and as we completed the wheel a battery of six guns unlimbered on the bluff about 30 yards below the bridge. Some one yelled look out, and I saw a puff of white smoke and the next instant a shell went crashing through the line to my right, cutting off the leg of Sergeant Charley Bruce, of company I, who was one of the best and bravest men in the regiment. The regiment was in line below the bridge and opposite the battery.

We were then ordered to charge, and instead of charging the bridge we charged square down on the battery. General Butler ordered the men to bear to the right and get the bridge between them and the battery, but by that time all six guns were raising shell in our ranks, and the men had but one object in view, and that was the trees along the river bank. Believing General Butler's order, "Bear to the right, men, and get the bridge between you and the battery," was the correct thing to do, I left the right of my company and made for the right and the bridge at the same time. Several others left the line at the same time, but I can recollect the name of only one of them, and why I recollect him we both escaped death, as it were, by the skin of our teeth at the same time. It was First Sergeant Alex. Clemency, of Co. G, and a braver or better soldier did not belong to the regulars. After we were some little distance to the right of the regiment Sergeant Clemency and myself were near together, both running our best for the bridge, with Clemency about six feet in the lead. A shell struck the ground between us and exploded, covering us completely with dirt and smoke. The shock staggered me for a moment, when I again moved forward through the smoke, and as I emerged from it stumbled over Clemency, who was lying on his face stretched out his full length, dead, as I supposed. I could but envy him his condition, and expressed my feelings by saying, "Alex., poor boy, you have received your last furlough, but you are better off than I am." Desperate did not express my feelings. I would not have dodged a shell as large as a barrel had I seen one coming at me. I tried to run, but it seemed to me a terrapin could have made better time,

as I jumped up and down in the same tracks instead of going forward. On the Cheraw side of the bridge was on a level with the street, but on our side there was a plank roadway sloping from the bridge to the ground, and as I reached that Sergeant Clemency caught up with me, he having stepped in a hole and fell at the same time the shell exploded, instead of being killed as I supposed, which, no doubt, saved his life. When I passed over him he was too near exhausted to get up. When near enough to see through the bridge the scene that met my gaze for the time being transfixed me to the spot. About 30 feet within the bridge I saw an officer with his horse lying dead near him, cool and deliberately firing at the enemy, who were trying to put out the fire, while others were making the minnie balls fly thick and fast around him. If he had been backed by 1,000 men he could not have been more cool or self-composed.

Time was flying and the bullets with it, and the few regulars who had reached the bridge with Sergeant Clemency and myself decided the officer was like General D. H. Hill's corporal, needed a little reinforcements. Dropping on our knees we crawled to the mouth of the bridge, placed our rifles on the floor and made music in the air. I don't claim it was sweet music, but if you had seen the enemy scampering out of the other end of the bridge you might have called it hot music. The fire seemed to leap for joy and it seemed like only a few minutes before the bridge was in flames from one end to the other. During the time the artillery had been turned on our end of the bridge until the heat of the fire caused the boys to take shelter in a gully not far from the river bank where we stretched ourselves at full length and inhaled our lungs full of God's pure, fresh air.

It did not seem long before the bridge gave way and went down into the river. Our difficult task had been accomplished, and the muddy waters of the swift rolling Pee Dee went whirling on in its march to the sea, while Sherman's forces were on one side and Hardee's on the other. While lying in the gully I saw Colonel Wayne on his horse behind a tree some 500 yards from the bridge, and from the compliments he was receiving in the way of bursting shell, the enemy must have seen him, too. Sergeant Clemency, myself and four others crawled up that gully some 200

yards to where the bushes on the river bank concealed us from the enemy and then made our way to the road and our brigade. It was 10 a. m. when the bridge fell in and the regiment was ordered out. They were nearly all below the bridge concealed behind the trees on the river bank, and would have been exposed to the enemy's fire at least one mile. So getting out was out of the question until night cast her dark mantle over fields and river; then they silently stole away and joined the brigade. Lieutenant Palmer with his detail of three men, Sergeant Watson, Corporal Musgrove and Private Overman, were captured and carried to a Northern prison. That night while resting our weary limbs we could see Cheraw in flames several blocks at a time. General Sherman had been careless with fire again, and treated Cheraw like he had Atlanta and Columbia.—Atlanta Journal.

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After the companies were formed he was placed in command of company E, which he made one among the best companies in the regiment. He was a brave ever-ready and reliable soldier, and always at the post of duty. Wherever you found company E you would find Captain Wayne. He led his company in every engagement the regulars were in in Virginia. Company E with Captain Wayne, Lieutenant Frank M. Myers and First Sergeant William D. Kellett, was a fighting machine. In the fall of 1863 he was promoted to major and commanded the regiment until the fall of 1864, when he was promoted to colonel and was in command until the surrender at Greensboro, missing but one engagement the regulars were ever in and that was Olustie, Florida. He was absent then at Tallahassee, president of a courtmartial. As a captain I don't think he was admired by the men of the regiment as he was a gruff, short spoken officer, a man of but few words, but meant just what he said. After he assumed command of the regiment and we learned to know him, he was the idol of his men, and there was not a man in the regulars who would not have died for old Sandy. You could always tell when he was absent, the men seemed restless and weary, but when at the head of the regiment the boys seemed to care for nothing, believing him capable of getting out of any trouble we might get in. The voice we so often heard in command has long since been silent, the heart that knew no fear has ceased to beat, the strong right arm that flashed his bright sword in the thickest of the fight has returned to dust, while his excellent spirit has winged its flight to the God who gave it. Sweet be the sleep of the gallant Wayne, beneath the shade of the beautiful trees, free from war's cruel strife, the roll of the drums, the sharp report of the rifle and the angry boom of the cannon. A braver man or a better soldier never wore the gray or drew

permission, or we are under many obligations, but it was Johnnie take care of yourselves if you can, we have pressing business beyond the river and will see you later. After they had passed we looked to our left and saw the enemy about 150 yards off, like a drove of black birds making for our rear. Colonel Wayne ordered a retreat and we started down the street at the double quick with the enemy at our heels. It was a running fight through the street; we would load on the run, wheel and fire while the women and children were screaming and waving everything they could get hold of that was white. I was beside the color bearer, Sergeant Bennett, who seemed to be enraged at the white signals around him and would wave his flag around his head, yelling, "You may wave your rags and newspapers, but here is the battle cross." We heard the report of cannon about the centre of the town and some one said, "Cheer up, boys, we have artillery on our side of the river yet." When we arrived at the street that leads to the bridge we fled to our left and as we did so, a Federal battery of several pieces about 150 yards on the same street to our right opened fire.

It was one of the closest places the regulars were in during the war, and while the grape and canister were cracking through the regiment our entire length we could do nothing but run, as our safety depended on crossing the bridge, which was several blocks away. Before reaching the bridge we went down a hill and were out of sight of the artillery with the exception of our flag which they were firing at. Captain DuBose ordered the colors lowered but Sergeant Bennett swore he would die before he would trail them, but finally did as Captain DuBose ordered him. We then left that street by turning to our left around some buildings and entered the bridge over the Pee Dee, which was walled up and covered over. Rosie had been strewn on both sides



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