

Special Announcement

We wish to call the attention of the trade to our superb line of Ladies', Misses' and Children's Dress and Walking Hats for Fall and Winter. A veritable wonderland of beauty and styles. A great variety—that is, large hats, medium-sized hats and turbans, which are popular and in good favor this season.

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J. S. ERON.

INTERESTING LETTER FROM "POOR CONRAD."

ANNIVERSARY OF THE "CRATER" EXPLOSION AT PETERSBURG—VIVID DESCRIPTION OF EVENT.

Editor County Record:—

I am going to mention a few more of the old men of Williamsburg, but while I was about to date this letter I called to mind (although it is Sunday) it is the anniversary of the mine explosion at Petersburg, Va., in 1864. I was present and saw the shell fired from a large mortar over in the Yankee lines that was the signal for the blow-up of the mine and the great charge of the Yankee soldiers at that place. It was not quite daylight and I watched the fuse burning in its shell as it passed high over our lines and burst somewhere in the city. The words I used at that moment as I saw the shell on its mission of death were these: "Boys, the devil's to pay." Presently, before the words had scarcely left my mouth, a sheet of flame and white smoke belched from every cannon, mortar, battery and small arm along the whole Yankee line that surrounded Petersburg. Richmond and the handful of ragged, war-worn veterans; but those were men, readers, those were men. The roar of three hundred cannons that hurled solid shot and shell was terrific, but they stood their ground. That was an awful day; the ground was open and the sun was hot, very hot; the roar of the battle shook the ground like an earthquake and South Carolina can ever boast that two of her regiments held that part of the line. Mr Robert Wheeler, uncle of Mr Press Wheeler of Kingstree, was killed that day. In the fight our battery was masked about 300 yards on the rear line, about 400 yards to the right; we fired but one shot. I saw the whole affair as well as the charge of Wright's brigade which recaptured the line that was broken at the mine. A brigade of negro soldiers led the charge and white soldiers behind them, one line after another, rushed for the crater that was made in the earth by the explosion. They crowded in until the hole was full of completely demoralized men, and their officers could not make them fight. There they were in that hole like cattle. Small mortar batteries that had been placed about one hundred yards in rear of where the Confederates expected the explosion would occur managed to drop their shells among the seething mass of human beings in that hole.

Havoc was played with them, the breastwork was blown up and by some means the dirt was thrown back and made a high wall, behind which the Confederates fired. Bayonets were fixed on the guns and pitched over on the men in the hole, killing and wounding many. Hand grenades—very deadly weapons—were also tossed over upon them. The hole was packed full of dead and wounded. Readers, imagine! The 30th day of July, the hot sun steaming down on the poor wretches on both sides, famishing with thirst; but there was no let-up. It was strike, strike, strike, strike. The next day a flag of

truce was hoisted up by the Yankees asking leave to take up the wounded. I went down there and stood on the breastwork while the dead were being buried and the wounded removed. It was a sad and sickening sight; men piled on one another dead; some crosswise of each other; some with faces turned down, others with faces turned up to the blazing sun. I saw one poor fellow that lay helpless on his back trying, with a small piece of tent cloth on the ramrod of his gun, to shade his face from the hot sun until relief would come, or death.

Some of those dead and wounded were Confederates, as a few were taken prisoners, and while they were being rushed across the ground between the two lines, were killed by our own guns. Behind and in the wall of dirt made by the explosion many of the Confederates were buried. I saw some who were completely covered, except the hands sticking out; some, you could just see the tops of their heads. I saw one with only the back exposed, head, feet and hands buried too deep to get out, and many others smothered in different positions. The line was retaken by the Confederates about 2 o'clock after the explosion. The Yankees lost about 5,000 men, the Confederates 700—a most uncivilized kind of warfare and should be a shame and disgrace to the Union forces and to General Burnside and also General Grant, who gave Burnside his consent to undermine and blow up a single line of almost worn out, half-fed, ragged soldiers. But these were Southern men who went there to stay, come what might: Ragged, few, but undismayed, Marched into battle as blithely as on holiday parade.

Some would ask why the Confederates did not countermine. Wells had been made in front of our lines, but were said to be not over fifteen feet deep, two men in each, a stake placed upright with a candle burning on the top to detect any jarring of the earth, but the Yankees tunneled 30 feet from the top of the ground and the continued booming of cannon and rattle of musketry day and night made it impossible for the sentinels to hear the work going on below them. The firing of small arms was day and night at our front, from the time the positions were taken by the two armies, which was from June till the following April, an incessant pop, pop, pop, and more and more as it became dark. To give an idea how much shooting went on during those weary days and nights, during the hoisting of a flag of truce one day James Murray and myself went out in the rear of the mine to pick up the rifle bullets that lay about over the ground, as lead and powder found ready sale in Petersburg, and during the two hours of the truce I picked up 200 pounds of rifle bullets and Murray got 225 pounds. That will show what amount of shooting was done at that place. It was like picking blackberries, but not so pleasant; you could not pick up the smallest stick or anything on the ground that did not have the mark of a bullet. Our battery was posted in an apple orchard, the trees about as large as a good-sized walking stick, and every one had small bullet marks, some cut off to the ground.

One thing more I want to relate is

concerning a small chicken that had been left by the people who had fled from the house near which we had our guns. One of our men took and petted it until it was quite tame. One hot day the little chicken was wallowing near in the dust when a bullet fired by the Yankees cut its head off.

It was close work in that place. We had made strong "bomb proofs" from 10 to 12 feet deep with oak logs about 12 inches in diameter laid across and 10 or 12 feet of dirt on top. We remained in these pits for safety until we would be needed in time of attack. I had charge of one rifle cannon we captured at Gettysburg and sometimes I would slip a 10-pound shell in and fire at some horseman galloping across over in the Yankee lines, then I would get a return salute from all the Yankee batteries on our immediate front without doing us any harm, as we would all go down into the bomb-proof pit and laugh and talk until Uncle Sam's bullets got what they thought was satisfaction.

No more at present, Mr Editor; hope to give you and the readers of The Record something on the old men next time. I wish to say also that no one has had the courage to hand me a dollar for you to send your paper.

Yours truly,
POOR CONRAD.

P S—Not so brave as some old vets.

No Need to Stop Work.

When your doctor orders you to stop work, it staggers you. "I can't," you say. You know you are weak, run-down and failing in health, day by day, but you must work as long as you can stand. What you need is Electric Bitters to give tone, strength and vigor to your system, to prevent breakdown and build you up. Don't be weak, sickly or ailing when Electric Bitters will benefit you from the first dose. Thousands bless them for their glorious health and strength. Try them. Every bottle is guaranteed to satisfy. Only 50c at M L Allen's.

MALARIA

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EDITOR COUNTY RECORD:--

Too much praise cannot be accorded the Continental Fire Insurance Co., of New York, represented by the Kingstree Insurance & Real Estate Co., for their prompt adjustment of the claims I had against them for the destruction of my dental office fixtures and library by fire, on June 16. Just fourteen days had expired when they turned over to me a check for full amount of loss without the slightest demurrage.

Hurrah for the Continental and the Kingstree Insurance & Real Estate Co!

Respectfully yours,

A. M. SNIDER.

Kingstree, S. C., 7-4-'11.

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