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Document: *Final Draft of South Mountain battle report, dated September 18, 1862*

Transcription:

Head Quarters 2nd Brigade
Wilcox^s 1st Division 9th Army Corps
Near Sharpsburg M^d Sept 18,th 1862

Capt

I have the honor to report that the Brigade under My Command consisting of the 45th Regt P.V. Maj J. I. Curtin commanding, 100th Penn^a Vols Regt Lt Col Lecky commanding and the 46th Regt as New York State Vols Lieut Col Gerhard commanding, marched from camp East of Middletown early on Sunday Morning the 14th of Sep^t 1862.

Arriving in front of and within range of the enemys Guns in position on the South Mountain commanding the Turnpike Road leading to Hagerstown, I received orders to lead an attack [missing word – on?] the enemy's Batteries on the right of the Turnpike from Brig Genl Willcox commanding Division.

The 100th Penn^a Vols Lieut Col Lecky, were then advanced as skirmishers along the Road. The other Troops of the Brigade were ordered to the right with the view of crossing the fields and ascending the mountain on the right of the Battery to be attacked. After having advanced a short distance an order was received recalling my command and directing me together with ~~to follow~~ Christ's brigade ~~with the rest of the division~~ to the support of Genl Cox's Division, then being engaged with the enemy a considerable distance to the left of the Turnpike near the Sharpsburg Road. leaving orders for the 100th to be recalled I hurried forward with my two Regts along the Sharpsburg Road running nearly parallel with and about 1000 Yards distant from the Turnpike. Arrived at the foot of the mountain I placed my troops in position on the left of Christs brigade forming on my right, the right of the 45th Penn^a resting on the Road and the left of the 46th N. York Regt extending toward the command of

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Genl Cox. I then caused two companies of the 45th Penn^a Regt Vols to be moved forward to the top of the Hill as skirmishers who soon discovered the enemies Infantry in great force and his Artillery completely commanding and shelling the Wood.

Heavy Masses of Infantry covered by trees and stone fences supported the Artillery. At ____ P.M. I we received an order ~~to advance my command~~ from Genl Willcox to advance and silence the Battery on the Road at all hazards. At this time the firing between my skirmishers and the enemy becoming very rapid I immediately put the 45th P.V. Regt in motion at double quick up the hill arriving on the crest, it encountered the enemy also advancing. The Battle became very fierce at this junction. The 17th Mich. Vols of Col. Christ's brigade & also a part of Willcox's division advancing on our right also became hotly engaged & took the rebels in flank. The 46th NY moved on the left of the 45th Penn^a ~~the 46th New York coming into line on the left of the 100th Penn^a Regt and~~ connecting with the Troops of Genl Cox's Command. The 100th Pa were held in reserve and followed up in support of our front. Notwithstanding the terrific fire from Infantry and Artillery together with a raking fire from a Battery near the Turnpike, our



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troops continued to advance utterly regardless of the Slaughter in their ranks until having destroyed the advanced Troops of the enemy he was compelled to give way and retreat with his Artillery and Infantry in great confusion down the hill. ~~A stand of colors and~~ Many prisoners, ~~prisoners badly~~ a number of whom were wounded, were captured by my command at the stone fence near the Road and were turned over for safe keeping to the supporting forces on our Left and rear—say 150 prisoners.

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The ammunition of the 45th Penn^a vols having become expended they used the Bayonet with success and having become considerably exhausted by their extraordinary exertions, I withdrew my command ~~being~~ as fast as relieved by Troops of Gen Sturges command. I append herewith the report of the Regimental commanders with lists of the killed and wounded.

My officers and men were enthusiastic and brave. Where all are so meritorious it would be unjust to designate individuals. I will only add that the 45th Penn^a vols of my Brigade and the 17th Michigan of the First Brigade sustained the brunt of the battle with a bravery and constancy seldom equaled in Modern Warfare.

Very Respectfully Your ob^t Serv^t
Thos Welsh Col
Comm^dg 2nd Brigade

To
Rob^t A. Hutchins Capt
and AA Adj^t Genl

Analysis: Wiggin

Except for a few words here and there, this does not appear to be Thomas Welsh's handwriting; it was probably dictated.

Scope and Content:

Handwritten report in a copyist's hand of Welsh's South Mountain Battle Report. Report details the activities of Welsh's 2nd Brigade (Willcox's 1st Division) during the battle of South Mountain. Command consists of Regiments 45th and 100th Pennsylvania, 46th New York, and 8th Michigan. Notes that 45th Pennsylvania "used the bayonet with success" and that the 45th Pennsylvania and 17th Michigan "sustained the brunt of the battle." Note: Except for a few words here and there, this does not appear to be Thomas Welsh's handwriting; it was probably dictated.

