FROM THE TWENTY-NINTH REGIMENT.

Head Quarters 29th Conn. Vols. col'd, }
Camp Holly, Va., Nov. 7th, 1864. }

When did I write to the Transcript last? Certainly I have forgotten. Yet even though I neglect it, it finds its way into my tent bringing its County gossip, and is ever welcome. Though very neglectful of it I am not forgetful. Every moment has been so fully occupied that not a moment could be spared for other business. Hours seem weeks and weeks years when as at the present hour I call memory to unroll her scroll and recite the events of the past two months. It is in vain that Reason asserts that it is only five weeks since we lay "Before Petersburg," where probably my last letter to you was written. It may fill your columns, and tire your readers to recount its scenes and changes of those five weeks. I will therefore only give a hasty review of the part we have taken in the advance towards Richmond. Sept. 29th, we acted as support to Paine's colored Brigade, 18th A. C., losing two officers, and several men wounded. Oct. 1st we were ordered to support the same brigade during the assault of the enemy upon Fort Harrison. Amid a heavy fire of artillery and musketry we ran to their support, leaving several killed and wounded. Oct. 13th, we supported the 7th and 8th U. S. C. I. who with Co. D of our regiment were deployed as skirmishers. Here we had four killed and thirteen wounded. It was not till Oct. 27th, that our men were tried in the extreme front. Our whole regiment was deployed as skirmishers, covering the front of the whole Division. Being myself, during the twenty-two hours we held the skirmish line, constantly on the line, moving with orders from one post to another, I can fully endorse the report of Capt. F. E. Camp, who in the illness of Maj. Torrence that day commanded the regiment, which report I will in part quote from hearing.

* * * "At 7 A. M., we deployed as skirmishers, through a thick wood and drawing in a strong line of the enemy's pickets advanced to a position in the edge of the woods, in view of their main line of works, which position we held till dawn of the 28th. I desire to call attention to the unusual steadiness and bravery of both officers and men. They did all that was required of them."

Col. U. Doubleday commanding the Brigade thus speaks of us.

* * * "The 29th Conn. Vols. Capt. F. E. Camp commanding, were deployed as skirmishers and entering the woods, speedily drove the enemy's pickets from the line of rifle pits occupied by them back to their main line of works. Though exposed to a hot fire, they held their ground all day, not being relieved till dawn of the 28th. They were most gallantly and skilfully commanded by Capt. Camp and proved themselves *steady, brave* and *reliable* soldiers. Capt. Camp speaks in high terms of the conduct of his officers and men."

Gen. Hawley who commanded the Division in the absence of Gen. Birney, and Gen. Birney upon his return on the evening of the 28th were both pleased to congratulate the Capt. commanding upon the excellent order of the regiment. We lost in this reconnoisance twelve men killed, one officer, Capt. James C. Swatiend, who I am happy to say has only a flesh wound in the thigh, and sixty-eight men wounded. We went into the engagement with thirteen officers and five hundred and seventy-one men. From about noon of the 27th till 3 A. M. of the 28th, we had a cold rain storm and yet our men were wakeful and, watchful and anxious for the enemy to make a sally from their works. During the early part of the day artillery was used throwing grape and canister, but soon it was too dangerous for the gunners to expose themselves and consequently no attempts were made to use it after we altered our position.

It is not for self praise I repeat this, for we know that we did only our duty. Had we done less we had been negligent. It is for those who will not yet believe that black men will make as good soldiers as white men, I write. There are those even in Windham County who believe or try to believe, that it is a mere chimera of their opposite political party. We ask now a place and an equal place with any Connecticut regiment as long as we can show a record like this.

I have another nut for these copperheads to crack. Lieut. Col. Henry C. Wood of this regiment, received from Gov. B. his commission as Colonel of the 11th C. V. Though a dear personal friend of the lamented Col. Stedman he refused the commission, and has accepted the Colonelcy of the 81st U. S. C. I. Though we regret to lose him we rejoice in his deserved promotion.

I cannot write without egotism, if egotism it be to praise the men among whom I feel it an honor to serve. Ready, observant, brave and steady. What more can we ask? Wherever confided they have showed that we may put all confidence in them. It is contraband to tell how many there are around us, but enough to satisfy any observer, as he travels through the different camps, that they are soldiers in every sense. Pardon me if I am lengthy in my praise of them. I am anxious that the people of Windham County may know how her Black Regiment is sustaining the reputation of the State.

We are now on the extreme right of the line held by the Army of the James. The redoubt in which I write being the extreme angle to the north-east. Detachments are garrisoning other forts on our left. Only a few days ago we came here relieving a new regiment. Our regiment was selected because a "steady" one was wanted. To-night we are expecting an attack. We do not invite it but are ready to meet it. The men are all sleeping on their arms, in their new and comfortable quarters for wood is handy, and they have not been limited in the supply used. A good log house covers me, and a fine fireplace with such a fire as our grandparents used is burning therein. My comrade is saying, "Come, it is after taps; put out that light and turn in." So amid the quiet, broken only by the tread of the sentinel before the door, we will "turn in," ready to "turn out" upon a moment's warning, for unless some one is in great error the enemy intend to try our mettle. He will find our bullets true, and our steel cold steel we hope.

To-morrow wins a victory with the ballot. All the hopes, the prayers, the fears of the army are centred in the result of to-morrow. It cannot be that the rebels shall defeat us there. Windham County will give her sons here a chance for pride. May the whole country, with an overwhelming majority for Abraham Lincoln cheer our armies and strengthen our cause both at home and abroad.

Yours respectfully,
H. H. B.

P. S. The 29th C. V. C. is now in the 1st Brigade, 3rd Division, 19th A. C.