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## CHAPTER XXIX.

### THE LIGHT BATTERIES

*The First Battery—Organization—Voyage to Ship Island—Service under General Phelps at Carrollton—Assigned to the Nineteenth Corps—Expeditions and Reconnoissances—Plain's Store—Siege of Port Hudson—At Brashear City—Red River Campaign—Pleasant Hill—Monette's Bluff—Yellow Bayou—Expedition to Sabine Pass—Stay at Morganzia—Muster Out and Return Home.*

*The Second Battery—Organization—Voyage to Ship Island—Occupation of New Orleans—Attached to the Nineteenth Corps—Plain's Store—Siege of Port Hudson—Jackson, La.—Duty at Port Hudson—Muster Out and Return Home.*

*The Third Battery—Organization—Departure for the War—Attached to Ninth Corps—Wilderness Campaign—Service in front of Petersburg—The Mine—In Fort Sedgwick—Transferred to Sixth Corps—Stationed at City Point—At Fort Fisher—Fall of Petersburg and Storming of Forts Gregg and Whitworth—Return Home and Muster Out.*

### THE FIRST BATTERY.

Vermont sent three batteries of light artillery to the field. The First battery was raised for service in the Gulf. Recruiting stations were established November 18th, 1861, at Montpelier, in charge of George T. Hebard, of Chelsea, and at South Shaftsbury, in charge of George W. Duncan of that village. On the 16th of January 1862, the recruits, about 100 in number, assembled at Montpelier, and elected George W. Duncan captain; George T. Hebard first lieutenant, and Henry N. Colburn of Rutland second lieutenant. The battery was ordered into camp at Brattleboro, where its number was filled, and its organization was completed by the election of Edward Rice of Shaftsbury as junior first lieutenant and Salmon B. Hebard of Chelsea as junior second lieutenant. William Todd was appointed sergeant major and Thomas Reade, quartermaster sergeant. Captain Duncan was a man of 45 years and had

seen ten years' service in the regular army, having been a member of Captain T. W. Sherman's battery, company D, Third United States Artillery, during the Mexican war, and seen subsequent service in the Seminole war in Florida, and in California and Oregon. Lieutenant Hebard was a graduate of Norwich University and had serviced under General Sigel in Missouri. The other officers had had no previous military experience.

February 18th the battery was mustered into the service of the United States, and left Brattleboro March 6th, with the Eighth regiment, for New York, whence it sailed on the 10th, with a part of that regiment, on the transport Wallace, and after a voyage of three weeks, arrived at Ship Island April 5th. Here it was assigned to the brigade of General John W. Phelps, and went into camp about two miles from the landing. Being as yet without horses or guns the men were chiefly drilled as infantry, having however some practice with some brass Napoleon guns supplied by General Butler. On the 6th of May the centre section, under Captain Duncan, was sent to Fort Pike, at the Rigolets, which had been occupied by two companies of the Seventh Vermont, and a week later, the right and left sections under Lieutenant Hebard were sent with the remainder of the Seventh regiment to Carrollton, where on the 16th the battery reported to Brigadier General Phelps and went into camp at Camp Parapet, a mile above Carrollton. Captain Duncan with the centre section came thither on the 4th of June. The battery was equipped at Camp Parapet with six brass field pieces with caissons, battery wagons and forge; but was at yet without horses. The men were drilled daily in the manual of the piece, varied by heavy artillery practice on the siege guns. After a time the battery was assigned to the charge of some heavy barbette guns, mounted by the men, commanding the river. Sergeant Greenleaf was detailed by General Phelps as ordnance sergeant of the

post, and under his direction the other sergeants instructed squads of colored men in the use of the heavy guns, until the process was stopped by General Butler's orders and the resignation of General Phelps. On the 2d of August First lieutenant Colburn was drowned while bathing in the Neuse river, near camp Parapet. In the reorganization of the troops of the Department of the Gulf by General Banks, on the 31st of December, the battery was attached to the First division (General Thomas W. Sherman's) of the Nineteenth Army Corps, and on the 17th of January, 1863, was ordered to New Orleans, where it was mounted and received its permanent equipment of six 3-inch steel rifled pieces.<sup>1</sup> Here it was quartered in the Bacchus Street stables. Captain Duncan resigned February 11th and Lieutenant Hebard was promoted to be captain, and Second Lieutenant to be junior first lieutenant. The battery was frequently drilled as light artillery, by Lieutenant J. Schuyler Crosby of the First United States Artillery, a very efficient officer on General Banks's staff, and the battery soon became one of the best drilled batteries in the Department. March 1st the battery was moved to Annunciation Square, New Orleans, where it remained two weeks, and was then moved out to the Metairie Ridge race course, where it went into camp, designated as "Camp Farr," with the Forty-seventh Massachusetts regiment, Colonel Lucius B. Marsh.

On the 18th of April the right and centre sections under Captain Hebard joined an expedition to the east side of Lake Pontchartrain. Embarking with the One Hundred and Twenty-eighth Regiment New York volunteers, under command of Colonel D. S. Cowles, on the steamers Empire Parish and J. Morgan Brown, they went to Fort Pike and thence up Mullatt's Bayou, as far as the draught of the boat would permit, when a party was landed who went about

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<sup>1</sup> The horses selected for the centre section were cream colored; and for the other two sections grays.

four miles farther up the Bayou to a place where three schooners were concealed. These were captured and burned, as the water was too shallow to allow them to be floated out. The party then re-embarked and returned to Fort Pike. The next day the expedition went up Pearl river, about thirty miles, to Gainesville, Miss. The town was occupied and the men in town arrested. The Brown went several miles farther up the river, and seized 220 barrels of rosin, and the other steamer was loaded with tar, turpentine and cotton, found in Gainesville. Information having been received that a large steamboat lay some twelve miles farther up the river, a party under command of Captain Hebard was sent across the country thither and seized the steamer A. G. Brown. The valves having been removed from the engine by the enemy, the boat was poled down the river to where the other boats lay. It having been ascertained that the wife of the owner of the A. G. Brown was in Gainesville, she was arrested and compelled to disclose the hiding place of the missing valves. These were replaced and the steamer was taken to Fort Pike, stopping long enough on the way to seize a small schooner discovered in a bayou. Leaving Fort Pike the morning of the 21st, the expedition returned to Hickok's Landing, having seized property to the value of over \$50,000. May 1st the first death occurred, being that of Private Cornelius Gould.<sup>2</sup>

Up to the 19th of May the service of the battery was comparatively uneventful. On that date it was ordered to Baton Rouge, whence it was to move with Sherman's division of General Augur's command, to co-operate in the investment of Port Hudson. Fifty recruits sent from Vermont had supplied the losses from death and discharge. It

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<sup>2</sup> Gould had been detailed some time before as mounted orderly to General Richard Arnold, chief of artillery, Nineteenth Army Corps, and was with him at the battle of Bisland. General Arnold commended him very highly for his services and especially for carrying orders which saved a battery from capture. He died of disease in hospital.

went by steamer to Baton Rouge on the 20th; and leaving there its baggage and taking only shelter tents, it started on the 21st for Port Hudson, seventeen miles to the north, accompanied by a zouave regiment, the One Hundred and Fourteenth New York, Colonel E. B. Smith.

#### PLAIN'S STORE AND PORT HUDSON

The column halted in the afternoon, after marching ten miles; and the battery-men were feeding their horses, when all were roused by the sound of artillery from the front, where Augur, with a portion of his division, including the Second Vermont battery, was engaging a force of the enemy which had advanced to meet him at Plain's Store, four miles from Port Hudson. After an hour's waiting, during which ambulances laden with wounded men began to pass to the rear, the bugles sounded; the Zouaves led off and the battery followed them to the field. Here it took position, with the infantry, on the right, to prevent a flank movement of the enemy; and one of the enemy's guns in a piece of woods, from which it was firing upon a portion of Augur's line, was silenced by the left section of the battery. The action soon after closed upon the retirement of the enemy at nightfall. The battery remained in position and the men bivouacked around the guns. The gunboats and mortar-boats in the river bombarded Port Hudson during the night. In the evening of the next day the battery was withdrawn for a mile to the rear, where it and its supporting infantry bivouacked. Next day, it took position with General Neal Dow's brigade a short distance to the left. On the 24th it moved forward, through a belt of timber, following an infantry line of battle, to a position on the left of the Union lines and within a mile of the enemy's works. In the evening of the 25th the right section, under Lieutenant Rice, was ordered to a posi-

tion near the division headquarters; and Captain Hebard was ordered to take another section forward to annoy the enemy. He accordingly took the left section, in charge of Sergeant Gould, to a position about 1,500 yards from the enemy's works, and opened fire about midnight. The enemy returned the fire with solid shot which took effect chiefly on the tree-tops. At daybreak each side obtained better range, Hebard's shells bursting in the opposing works, while the enemy's heavy guns paid especial attention to the Vermont battery. Soon a shell struck the trail of gun No. 5, wounding three men with the splinters. These, Corporal J. H. Sendell and Privates George E. Allen and Thomas Ritchie, were the first men of the battery hurt by hostile missiles. Corporal Sendell, a brave boy of 19, was struck in the abdomen and died from his injury three weeks later. The carriage of the other gun was struck an hour later and disabled and another man and two horses were wounded. The pieces were then withdrawn. In the afternoon the centre section, under Sergeant-Major E. E. Greenleaf, was ordered forward to the edge of the timber, and opened on the works, the enemy replying with two heavy barbette guns and a field piece. A shot from the latter broke a wheel and nearly dismounted gun No. 4; but the section was kept at work, and prevented the mounting of a heavy gun on an angle of the opposing parapet. The enemy ceased to respond, and at five P.M. the section stopped firing. At dark, however, it again opened fire, to annoy the enemy and keep him from resting, and kept it up till midnight, the enemy responding irregularly.

Before daylight of the 27th the left section was ordered down to the left of the centre section, and at early dawn the firing was again commenced, and after a time was returned by the enemy; but with so high elevation that his shells did no damage. At daylight the right section, in command of Lieutenant Rice, was ordered to a position on the road in front of

Slaughter's house, to silence a 44-pound rifled gun in an angle of the works. This was soon accomplished with the loss of private Andrew Ward, killed,<sup>3</sup> and private Thomas Armstrong wounded in the head by the explosion of a shell.

This day the first general assault upon the works of Port Hudson was made. In preparation for this the battery was ordered forward into the field in front to engage the enemy's batteries while the infantry charged. Moving out at two P.M. it took a position within 500 yards of the enemy's parapet, and opened a vigorous fire. It came under the first of the enemy as soon as it left the edge of the timber, but fortunately suffered no casualties. General Sherman fell, almost at the commencement of the charge, with a wound which cost him a leg;<sup>4</sup> the division was repulsed with heavy loss, and the battery returned to its former position in the edge of the timber. It retained this position near Slaughter's house until the 9th of June, during which period it was almost constantly employed in cannonading the enemy's works, sometimes firing at intervals of fifteen minutes, during every hour of daylight, for three days at a time. The enemy's fire slackened as the siege proceeded and the Union troops were kept busy advancing the parallels and constructing additional works. Captain Hebard was appointed acting chief of artillery for the First division of the Nineteenth Corps, now commanded by General William Dwight, and the command of the battery devolved on Lieutenant Rice. In the night of June 9th it was moved a mile to the left, to Battery No. 4, a redoubt built of sand-bags and earth, about 800 yards from the enemy's works. Here its guns commanded two of the bastions of a Confederate earthwork in front; beyond which the upper story of a large cotton

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<sup>3</sup> Ward's body was buried on the field by his comrades.

<sup>4</sup> General Sherman's horse, also badly wounded, ran back after losing his rider, among the battery horses, and was shot by Captain Hebard, to put him out of his misery.

gin was visible, occupied by the Confederate troops. The battery occasionally tried its guns on this target, with how much effect was not apparent. Preceding the unsuccessful assault of the 13th the battery maintained a constant fire on the enemy's works, firing at five-minute intervals. On the 8th of July Port Hudson was surrendered, and the battery moved forward and bivouacked within the enemy's fortifications.

On the 11th it broke camp, and marched with Dwight's division for Baton Rouge, arriving there on the morning of the 12th, after marching nearly all night. It remained at Baton Rouge, the usual routine varied by occasional foraging expeditions, for two weeks, when it was ordered back to Port Hudson. It took transport in the evening of July 23d, leaving Lieutenant Rice and a number of men sick in hospital, and on the 24th landed at Port Hudson and went into camp near the brigade headquarters. Here it remained during the month of August.

On the 1st of September the battery was ordered to New Orleans to join General Franklin's expedition against Sabine Pass, Texas. On the 3d, two sections—the transport not being large enough to take then whole battery—embarked, leaving the centre section under Lieutenant Gould, and went to New Orleans, where, on the 4th, they started with the expedition on the transport *Exact*; arrived at Sabine Pass on the 7th; anchored off the bar, and mounted two guns on the deck; but had no occasion to use them. The expedition having failed, the battery returned to New Orleans on the 11th, and on the 12th disembarked at Algiers and went into camp next day, with Lieutenant Rice—who had returned from hospital—in command. On the 16th the centre section arrived from Baton Rouge, and the same day the battery took train to Brashear City. Leaving two of its guns there, the rest of the battery crossed the bay to Berwick City. On the 23d the battery marched twenty miles to Fort Bisland,



where it camped for four days. On the 128th it returned to Brashear City, and remained there five months, until March 3d, 1864. The battery was here transferred to the Fourth division of the Nineteenth Corps.

From October 16th to 29th, 1863, Lieutenant Reade with one gun and a detachment of 12 men, was absent on a reconnoissance up the Atchafalaya river.

Numerous deaths in hospital and discharges reduced the battery to its lowest point of numbers, and it began the year 1864 with but 98 officers and men on the roll, with 86 reported present for duty. First Lieutenant Reade resigned December 14th, 1863. Second Lieutenant Greenleaf was promoted to the vacancy February 14th, 1864 and Sergeant-Major James B. Riker was commissioned as second lieutenant at the same date.

January 30th, 1864, Captain Hebard, with 20 men and two guns, went on an expedition to Grand River, returning on the 2d of February.

### THE RED RIVER CAMPAIGN.

On the 3d of March the battery marched twenty-nine miles to Franklin to join the troops under General Banks in the Red River campaign. At Franklin the armament of the battery, which had been reduced by the transfer of two rifled guns to the First Indiana battery, was made good by the addition of two twelve-pound Napoleon guns. The battery marched with the First division of the Nineteenth Corps, under General Emory, one hundred and eighty miles to Alexandria on the Red River, arriving there March 26th. After two days' rest, it proceeded eighty miles farther to Natchitoches, Miss., reaching there the 2d of April. On the 6th it started again and marched forty miles to Pleasant Hill, arriving there the 7th; and thence the next day moved on fifteen miles to Wallace's Mills. General Richard Taylor, com-

manding the Confederate troops in that quarter, had collected his forces to dispute the advance of his old antagonist in the Shenandoah Valley, and in the afternoon of the 8th the battle of Mansfield, or Sabine Cross Roads, was fought, after which the portions of Banks's army engaged retired to Pleasant Hill, where General Banks concentrated his forces, re-formed his lines, and awaited the enemy's attack on the day following.

The First Vermont battery was not engaged in the fighting of the 8th. About seven P.M. that day it was ordered forward from Wallace's Mills, with two other batteries, to assist General Emory; but the roads were blocked with trains and troops falling back from the front, and after marching three or four miles the artillery was ordered back to Pleasant Hill. The Vermont battery moved back with Cameron's division of the Thirteenth Corps, and at three in the morning bivouacked for the remainder of the night.

#### PLEASANT HILL.

In the disposition of the artillery next day, the battery was posted about noon on the left of the Natchitoches road, along which the enemy assaulted, and on the right of Colonel Benedict's brigade of Emory's division, which received the burnt of the attack. It was the first service of the battery in resisting infantry in the open field; but officers and men stood firmly to their guns, and showed that the confidence reposed in them was not misplaced. At three o'clock the advancing lines were within range and the battery opened fire with shell, with noticeable effect. The enemy brought forward two 10-pound Parrott guns to reply, one of which was soon dismounted by the fire of the Vermont battery. Parsons's Missouri division then advanced upon the left flank and front of Benedict's brigade. The battery fired shell till the enemy

was within 80 yards and then, changing to canister, and assisted by the first of the Eighty-ninth Indiana regiment, it drove back the Missourians, who left the ground covered with their killed and wounded.<sup>5</sup> Lieutenant Rice, with the right section, was then detached and sent to assist Battery L, First United States artillery, and the other two sections were advanced several hundred yards, halting and opening fire at various points. In the advance of the reserves, which finally drove back the enemy, one of the guns of Battery L, from which the gunners had retreated, was rescued by the infantry, and was drawn in behind the First Vermont battery, by some of the men of the latter. Though several shells exploded over the guns and many bullets whistled by, the Vermont battery escaped with one man wounded,<sup>6</sup> and five horses killed and wounded. Officers and men behaved well, not a man leaving the guns, though the enemy charged to within 50 yards of them.

The battery remained on the field till two o'clock next morning, when General Banks, having decided to retire to Grand Ecore, 40 miles down the river, the battery started thither with Emory's division; arrived at six P.M. next day, and went into camp on the edge of the bluff. Here the battery was transferred to the Reserve artillery of the Nineteenth Corps, and its guns were taken for a time to arm transports on the river.

General Banks having been instructed by General Grant to return to the Mississippi, the battery left Grand Ecore with the corps on the 22d, for Alexandria, and made a rapid march of forty miles to Monette's Bluff, on Cane river. Here

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<sup>5</sup> "Captain Hebard, being advised, as the enemy approached within pistol-shot, to spike his guns and retreat, turned to his men, threw his hat upon the ground and said: 'Not by a — sight, boys! These guns are not going to be spiked or captured. Give them double canister!' and they did it, saving the guns and driving back the enemy."—Army Letter

<sup>6</sup> Wounded,—Jesse Laundry.

General Bee with several thousand men and four batteries had taken a position commanding the road leaving to Alexandria. On the 23d this position was forced by General Emory, who while engaging the enemy in front across Cane river sent a strong column under General Birge to cross the river three miles above, and to flank the enemy. During Birge's attack Captain Hebard with two of his own guns, -- the rest of his pieces not having been yet returned to him,--and three 20-pound Parrotts belonging to the First Indiana heavy artillery, engaged the enemy's batteries with good effect. General Bee got away in a hurry, and the battery joined the cavalry in pursuit of the enemy till midnight, when a halt was ordered and the troops bivouacked in the pine forest. One of the enemy's battery wagons filled with supplies, was brought off from Monette's Bluff by Sergeant Howland, and several prisoners were captured by the men of the battery. The casualties were two horses wounded. On the 24th the infantry came up and the march was continued to Alexandria.

Meantime General Taylor had sent a thousand men under General Major, with artillery, to David's Ferry, on the Red River, 25 miles below Alexandria, to interrupt Banks's communications by way of the river; and at this point on the 2d of May the transport Laurel Hill was fired into by Major's artillery. Sergeant Emery with one gun of the Vermont battery was on the transport, as guard, and returned the fire, and after an hour's engagement silenced the enemy's piece and drove its supports out of sight. For ten days following the river was blockaded by the enemy's batteries, and rations began to be scarce in Banks's army, so that the daily ration was cut down one-third. On the 13th of May the battery left Alexandria with the corps, marched 15 miles, and bivouacked without grain or forage for the horses. The march continued slowly, the horses being jaded and scantily fed on corn obtained in the country, for four days, when on

the 17th the battery arrived with the First division artillery at Simsport. The enemy pressed closely on the rear with his cavalry and there was some sharp skirmishing near Mansura on the 16th, but the battery, being attached to the advance cavalry, was not engaged. Next day, however, it took part in the battle of Yellow Bayou, near Simsport, when Polignac's Confederate division attacked Banks's rear, and was repulsed with a loss of 500 men, killed and wounded.

In this action Lieutenant Rice reported with the four rifled guns of the battery to General Mower, commanding the rear division, and taking position near Bayou De Glaize, engaged the enemy's batteries with effect for forty minutes, and was subsequently engaged at other points, accompanying the infantry in its movements. On the 19th the battery held a position all day to guard the rear of the column; but was not engaged. Before daylight next morning it crossed Yellow Bayou, and went into position on its east bank, and engaged the enemy's batteries, which fired feebly. That afternoon it retired through Simsport with the command and crossed the Atchafalaya on a bridge of steamboats lying side by side. A broken trail of a gun was all the damage received in this engagements. "The battery" says Captain Hebard, "was highly commended by General Mower." The officers and men behaved with determined courage. Captain Hebard specially commended Lieutenants Rice and Greenleaf for efficiency and recommended private Lemwin for promotion.

The battery now rejoined the reserve artillery of the Nineteenth Corps, and marched with the corps to Morganzia, where it arrived on the 23d, and was glad to rest after its march of nearly 500 miles. At the close of the campaign the battery reported an aggregate of 140 men, with 111 for duty and 28 on the sick list.

While at Morganzia, the Eighth Vermont regiment, returning from its furlough after re-enlistment, joined the Nineteenth Corps at that place, and the regiment and battery,

Which began their service together, were again near each other. While here the battery was temporarily attached to Lawler's brigade of the Thirteenth Corps.

Under the ruling of the War Department, alluded to in the histories of the Seventh and Eighth regiments, the term of service of the original members of the battery expired on the 1st of June, 1864. The battery accordingly proceeded early in July to Baton Rouge, where the guns, equipments and horses were turned over to the Thirteenth Wisconsin battery. The recruits whose term had not expired, 46 in number, were transferred to the Second Vermont battery, and the 82 officers and men remaining of the original number made their preparations to return home. Captain Hebard went to New Orleans and was there mustered out of the service August 10th, and as Lieutenant Rice was absent on sick leave in Vermont, the command of the battery devolved on Lieutenant Greenleaf.<sup>7</sup>

The battery left Baton Rouge late in July on the steamer Constitution, went up the Mississippi to Cairo, and thence by rail via Chicago to Brattleboro, where it was mustered out of the service August 10th, 1864, with three officers and 75 men.

#### THE BATTLES OF THE FIRST BATTERY.

Plain's Store	May 21, 1863.
Siege of Port Hudson,	May 25 to July 9, 1863.
Pleasant Hill,	April 9, 1864.
Monette's Bluff,	April 23, 1864.
Yellow Bayou, or Bayou de Glaize,	May 18, 1864.

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<sup>7</sup> Lieutenant Greenleaf had been for a time detached from the battery as adjutant of the Reserve artillery of the First division of the Nineteenth Corps, but returned to the battery and commanded it until its final muster out.

The final statement of the battery is as follows:

### FINAL STATEMENT.

Original members—com. officers, 5; enlisted men, 151; total	156
GAINS.	
Recruits—enlisted men	61
Aggregate	217
LOSSES.	
Killed in action—enlisted men	1
Died of wounds—enlisted men.	2
Died of disease—enlisted men	42
Died from accident—com. officers	1
Total of deaths	46
Honorably discharged—com. officers (resigned), 4; enlisted men (for disability), 28; total	32
Transferred to Veteran Reserve Corps, Regular Army, and other batteries—enlisted men	55
Deserted	3
Total loss	136
Mustered out—com. officers, 5; enlisted men, 76; total	81
Aggregate	217
Total wounded	6

### THE SECOND BATTERY

The Second battery, like the First, was enlisted under the act of November 21st, 1861, authorizing the raising of two regiment and two batteries of light artillery, to form part of General B. F. Butler's New England Division. A number of Vermonters had previously enlisted as members of a regiment of New England cavalry, which General Butler was raising at Lowell, Mass. under a permission, granted by Secretary Cameron, to "fit out and prepare such troops in New England as he [Butler] may judge fit for the purpose, to make an expedition," etc. This erection of the New England States into a recruiting department independ-

ent of the State authorities, caused immediate friction and in time an angry controversy between Governor Andrew of Massachusetts and General Butler; ending in the revocation of the authority given to General Butler, and the giving of the governors the control of the volunteer recruiting service in their respective States. The State authorities of Vermont, as well of those of Massachusetts, refused to recognize enlistments for the New England cavalry; and the 22 Vermonters who had so enlisted were allowed to transfer their enlistments to the Second Vermont battery.

A recruiting office was established at Leicester, subsequently removed to Brandon, in charge of Lensie R. Sayles of Leicester, and on the 13th of December, 1861, the battery organized at Brandon by the choice of officers as follows: Captain L. R. Sayles, First Lieutenants Benjamin N. Dyer of Leicester and Coridon D. Smith of Calais, and Second Lieutenants John A. Quilty and John W. Chase of Brandon, Sergeant Major Elbridge S. Williams, Q. M. Sergeant Moses C. Hunt. These officers and 89 men were mustered into the United States service December 16th, 1861. Twenty additional men were mustered December 24th and the next day the battery went into camp at "Camp Chase," Lowell, Mass.,--being the only Vermont organization whose rendezvous was in another State.

Before leaving Lowell, 21 more men were added by enlistment, raising the aggregate of the battery to 130 officers and men. It was armed with six 12-pound Sawyer (rifled) guns. Before the battery left Lowell, Captain Sayles resigned and Lieutenant Pythagoras E. Holcomb, at that time first lieutenant in the Seventeenth United States infantry, was appointed captain in his place. Captain Holcomb was a native of Ohio, but was residing in Texas when the war broke out; was driven from his home on account of his Northern birth and loyalty, and went to Illinois, from which State he was appointed first lieutenant



of the Seventeenth United States infantry, Colonel Heintzelman. He was recommended for the captaincy of the battery by General Butler, and was one of the best artillery officers in the Department of the Gulf. During the first week in February the battery left Lowell, and on the 6th of that month embarked, at Boston, with the First Maine and Fourth Massachusetts batteries, on the sailing ship Idaho bound for Ship Island. The Idaho reached Ship Island on the 8th of March, after a long and stormy voyage. She ran aground in approaching her anchorage, and it was four days before she was got off after throwing over part of her cargo. After thirty-four days on shipboard the battery at last landed on the 12th of March and was attached - with the First Vermont battery, which had not yet arrived - to General John W. Phelps's brigade.

The battery formed part of the force selected by General Butler to accompany Farragut's fleet in the operations against New Orleans. It embarked on the steamer Matanzas with the Ninth Connecticut regiment on the 11th of April; lay off the passes during the four days' bombardment of the forts; and moving thence to New Orleans, disembarked on the 2d of May, being the first Union battery landed in that city. The first and second sections of the battery were stationed at the United States Mint, and the third section at the St. Charles Hotel, where General Butler established his headquarters. The shotted pieces and the presence of the resolute men who handled them had a noticeable effect on the lawless mob of that turbulent city. Not all the inhabitants of New Orleans, however, were rebels, for between 20 and 30 men, most of them, it is true, of foreign birth, enlisted in the battery, in that city, during the month of May.

May 31st the battery was ordered to camp Parapet, at Carrollton, and landed there June 1st with 149 men. During the last week in July, Captain Holcomb with the first sec-

tion of the battery, accompanied an expedition, sent, under Major Peck of the Twelfth Connecticut, to the northern shore of Lake Pontchartrain. They went by the United States gun-boat Gray Cloud, to Pass Manchac, where some buildings and bridges were destroyed, and thence to the Tchefuncta river. At a point three miles below Covington the channel was found obstructed by sunken boats, and a detachment was landed and sent to the village. On their return the Gray Cloud was fired into by guerrillas from the shore, and the battery raked the bushes with canister. Pearlington on the Pearl river, Shieldsboro on the Bay of St. Louis, and other points were visited and the expedition returned to Camp Parapet August 20th. The battery remained at Camp Parapet till the end of October, the men suffering much from heat and miasma. During the four months there the battery lost 16 men by disease, and 22 discharged for disability; and, on the morning of October 31st, when it left Carrollton for New Orleans, only 15 men reported for duty. During this period First Lieutenants B. N. Dyer and Coridon D. Smith were dismissed for misappropriation of commissary stores; and on the 1st of November, Second Lieutenant John W. Chase was promoted to be first lieutenant and Sergeant Major Charles H. Dyer to be second lieutenant. At New Orleans the battery was stationed at Annunciation Square and at the Factors' Cotton Press. It was now for the first time fully mounted. Its armament consisted of two six-pound Sawyer guns, two 12-pound howitzers and two three-inch rifled guns.

In the last week of December 1862 the battery was sent with the unlucky expedition to Galveston, Texas, which resulted in the loss of the United States gun-boat Harriet Lane and the blowing up of the United States gun-boat Westfield. The transport which carried the battery did not arrive at Galveston till after these transactions had taken place, and it then returned to New Orleans, and to its

quarters at the Factors' Cotton Press. On the 25th of January, it was sent seventy-five miles up the river to Donaldsonville, with the Second Louisiana infantry, and on March 17th it went on an expedition to the vicinity of Port Hudson, returning two days later. In April the battery was sent to Baton Rouge, where it was attached to Augur's division of the Nineteenth Corps, and soon after took part with that division in the campaign against Port Hudson.

#### Plain's Store and Port Hudson.

The battery left Baton Rouge May 18th in light marching order, with two days' cooked rations, and next day accompanied Dudley's brigade to a point six miles east of Port Hudson, where a Confederate cavalry outpost was dispersed by a few rounds from the battery. On the 21st Chapin's brigade joined Dudley's, and moving forward two miles to Plain's Store, encountered the enemy in force. The latter was dispersed chiefly by Augur's artillery, the Second Vermont battery taking an active part. In the course of the actions it engaged a Confederate battery, and after an hour's rapid firing, dismounted one of the opposing pieces, crippled another, and as Captain Holcomb reported, killed a lieutenant and 16 men. The enemy retired behind the fortifications of Port Hudson; and the Union troops bivouacked on the field, and next day, the 24th, moved to the front of the enemy's works. In the general assault of the 27th one section of the battery shelled the Confederate skirmishers out of the woods; and at two p.m. the battery was ordered forward to within seven hundred yards of the works and fired rapidly for an hour, when the infantry assaulted and were repulsed. The battery then assumed its former position. This it held until the morning of the 13th of June, when it took position in an earthwork within 300 yards of the enemy's works, in the centre of the line, on the Clinton road. In the

second general assault, on the morning of the 14th, the battery opened before daylight and continued firing until six o'clock, and afterwards at intervals until the infantry attack had been made and failed. Two men, Frank Sebastian and David Sweenier, were wounded this day.

From this time on until the surrender of Port Hudson the battery was constantly on duty, firing more or less daily to keep the enemy from strengthening their fortifications. It was almost constantly under fire from the heavy siege guns of the enemy. It was nearer to the enemy's works than any other Union battery in that portion of the Union lines, and the flag of truce sent by General Gardner in the night of July 7th, to negotiate the surrender, was received by Lieutenant Chase. During the siege four more men - J. A. Howard, J. Shoro, James Rixley and George Snyder were wounded, together with three men of the One Hundred and Seventy-fifth New York, serving temporarily in the battery, two of whom, Sergeant Charles Jacobs and Private William Quinn died of their wounds.

Upon the surrender of Port Hudson, July 8th, the Second Vermont battery had the honor of being the first of the Union artillery to enter the stronghold. The battery remained at Port Hudson during the last year of its service, on guard and garrison duty, varied by occasional expeditions into the interior. During this campaign the number of effective men became so much reduced by sickness, wounds, discharges and deaths, that there were not enough to man the guns, and they were reinforced by details from the One Hundred and Seventy-fifth New York, volunteers and the Forty-second Massachusetts volunteers. Forty-three men of these regiments were thus for a time on the roll of the battery.

On the 3d of August a serious disaster befell the battery. The day before, the second section, under command of Lieu-

tenant C. H. Dyer, was ordered to accompany an expedition sent to Jackson, Louisiana, 15 miles north of Port Hudson, in hope of capturing a small force of the enemy which had appeared there. The force sent thither comprised about 500 colored troops, under command of Major Hanham, a newly appointed field officer of the Twelfth regiment, Corps D'Afrique. They marched to Jackson, arriving there in the evening found no enemy, and remained there during most of the next day. About three o'clock in the afternoon of the 3d, through want of precaution on the part of Major Hanham, they were surprised by a much larger force of Forest's cavalry. Lieutenant Dyer was feeding his horses, near the Asylum buildings, when he received the first notice of the presence of the enemy in a volley from a thicket near by. He took his guns to higher ground and fired a few rounds at the enemy, when he was ordered to change his position. While making the movement the battery was fired upon by a line of the enemy behind some fences. Lieutenant Dyer was wounded by a ball, which passed through his leg, disabling him and killing his horse. Several of the battery horses were killed; and as the infantry supports had disappeared, Dyer directed his men to look out for themselves. They accordingly scattered. The lieutenant with 15 men and the two guns were captured by the enemy. The colored troops lost about 30 men killed, wounded and captured. Dyer was paroled, and the next day was brought in to Port Hudson by a party sent for him under a flag of truce. The men were taken to Andersonville, where five, John Crow, Frank J. Hubbard, Edmund Green, Jacob Metzler and John Plade, died in the enemy's hands. The rest were finally released in the spring of 1865. The loss of the guns was a deep morti-

fication to the officers and men. Lieutenant Dyer always maintained that if the infantry had supported him, he could not only have preserved his pieces but have repulsed the enemy. The captured guns were re-captured by some troops of General Herron's command, near Morganzia, a year later, and restored to the battery.

During this month of August, 1863, the battery lost its efficient command by the promotion of Captain Holcomb to be major of the First Texas loyal cavalry. Lieutenant John W. Chase of Brandon, was thereupon commissioned captain in his stead; Second Lieutenant C. H. Dyer was promoted to be first lieutenant; and Sergeants Perry A. Baker and George W. Daskam were appointed second lieutenants. Captain Chase commanded the battery during the rest of its service and was a faithful and competent commander.

In January, 1864, 45 recruits were received, giving an aggregate of 133 men, of whom 111 were on duty and 19 sick. At the expiration of their term of enlistment the original members of the regiment had been reduced to 41 men. Of these 21 re-enlisted. The remaining 20 were mustered out September 20th, 1864. The battery retained 136 officers and men. This number was doubled, by the addition of recruits, in October, and at the opening of 1865, it had an aggregate of 260 officers and men. This being in excess of the regulation number, in March, 1865, under orders from the Department commander, 119 of the recruits were organized as a company of heavy artillery, under the title of First Vermont Company of Heavy Artillery, for service in the works at Port Hudson. Sergeant Major Henry

W. Fales was appointed captain of this company, Sergeant Martin Peil first lieutenant, and Sergeant William W. Kasson second lieutenant. This company remained on duty at Port Hudson during the remainder of the term of service of the men.

On the 28th of July, 1864, the battery went on an expedition under General Herron to Clinton, La., having a long and fatiguing march, without any obvious results.

In June, 1864, Second Lieutenant Perry A. Baker was promoted to be first lieutenant, and Sergeant Major Miranda R. Blake was appointed second lieutenant. Lieutenant Blake resigned in March, 1865, and Q. M. Sergeant Henry F. Tower was appointed second lieutenant.

The battery remained at Port Hudson till the 7th of July, 1865, when it and Captain Fales's company marched in the night of the 7th to Baton Rouge, where the guns and horses were turned over; and, on the 9th, accompanied by the Twelfth Massachusetts battery, they took steamer up the river to Cairo, and went thence to Vermont by rail. They arrived in Burlington at noon of July 20th, and were received with a salute of artillery; were escorted to the City Hall by a procession of citizens headed by the band of the First Vermont brigade; were welcomed by Professor M. H. Buckham of the University, and a collation was served by the ladies, with accompaniments of singing, flowers and cheers.

On the 28th the Artillery Company was mustered out with three officers and 78 men, and the battery was mustered out on the 31st of July, 1865, with five officers and 148 men.

### The Battles of the Second Battery

Plain's Store, near Port Hudson, La.,  
Siege of Port Hudson,  
Jackson, La.,

May 21, 1863.  
May 25 to July 9, 1863.  
Aug. 3, 1863.

The final statements of the Second battery and the First Company of Heavy artillery are as follows:

### Final Statement of the Second Battery

Original members-com. Officers, 5; enlisted men, 106; total.	111
Gains	
Transfers from other batteries-enlisted men, 51; recruits, 295; total	346
Aggregate	457
Losses	
Died of wounds, 1; died of disease, 47; died (unwounded) in Confederate prisons, 5; died from accident, 1; total.	54
Honorably discharged-com. Officers (resigned), 3; enlisted men (for disability), 70; total	73
Dishonorably discharged-com. Officers, 2; enlisted men, 1; total.	3
Promoted to U.S.A. and other Vermont Organizations	6
Transferred to Veteran Reserve Corps, Regular Army, and other Vermont organizations	123
Deserted	18
Total loss	277
Mustered out-com. Officers, 5; enlisted men, 175; total	180
Aggregate	457
Total wounded	8
Total re-enlisted	21

### Final Statement of the First Company Heavy Artillery

Promotion from other Vermont organizations-com. Officers	3
Transferred from other Vermont organizations-enlisted men.	116
Aggregate	119
Losses	
Died of disease, 8; (unwounded) in prison, 1; by accident, 1; total	5
Honorably discharged-enlisted men (for disability)	3
Dishonorably discharged-enlisted man	1
Deserted, 1; unaccounted for, 1; total	2
Total loss	11
Mustered out -com. Officers, 3; enlisted men, 105; total	108
Aggregate	119



## THE THIRD BATTERY

The Third battery was one of the last two organizations sent from Vermont to the war. It was raised under Governor Holbrook's General Order of August 3, 1863, authorizing the raising of two regiments of "Veteran Volunteer Infantry" and one battery of "Veteran Volunteer Artillery." It was expected that it would be quickly filled by the re-enlistment of nine-months men whose terms had just expired. Romeo H. Start of St. Albans, and W. A. Phillips of Montpelier, were appointed recruiting officers. The work of recruiting lagged, however, and it was not till the last week in December that the battery rendezvoused at Burlington. On the first of January 1864, it was mustered into the United States service, with 151 officers and men, eleven men who had enlisted in excess of the maximum being thrown out. The battery was organized with the following officers appointed by the Governor: Captain, Romeo H. Start; First Lieutenants, Roswell C. Vaughan and W. A. Phillips; Second Lieutenants, J. H. Wright and Aaron F. French. All but Lieutenant French had had military experience. Captain Start had had nearly two years' experience as lieutenant and captain in the line of the Third regiment. Lieutenant Vaughan had been adjutant of the Twelfth regiment throughout its term of service. Lieutenant Phillips was second lieutenant of company H, of the Thirteenth regiment. Lieutenant Wright had been first sergeant of company B, of the Fourth Vermont. Lieutenant French was an ingenious mechanic and inventor, who was designated for his office by a vote of the company. First Sergeant W. R. Rowell was a youth of 19, a son of Hon. A. J. Rowell of Troy, and had been a cadet at West Point. Quartermaster Sergeant John B. Langdon had served in the Second and Thirteenth regiments. The rank and file included many re-enlisted veterans.

The battery started for Washington January 15th, arrived

there on the evening of the 18th, and marched through mud and rain to Camp Barry, the Artillery Camp of Instruction on the Bladensburg road, and went into quarters in barracks, with twelve other light batteries. January 23d, 1864 the men received their horses, and a few days later the men presented horses to Captain Start and Lieutenant Phillips, with mutual compliments. On the 30th of January the first death took place, that of Byron K. Oakes, a promising young soldier, who died of typhoid fever in the camp hospital. The battery soon received its guns, and was occupied for three months in drill, in which it made rapid progress. April 4th it was assigned to the Ninth Corps, then reorganizing at Annapolis, proceeded to Alexandria, and marched with the crops through Fairfax Court House, to Bristoe Station. On the 29th it was assigned to the Fourth division (Ferrero's) consisting of two brigades of colored troops, and went back with the division to Manassas Junction. Thence it started May 4th to join the rest of the corps, which was moving to the Rapidan. On the 5th it crossed the Rappahannock at Rappahannock Station, and, on the morning of the 6th, crossing the Rapidan at Germanna Ford, joined the Army of the Potomac on the field of the Wilderness. During the battle of the Wilderness, the division was employed in guarding the roads and army trains near the Rapidan, and was not engaged. From the 9th to the 17th of May, the battery was with the division on the right of the army north of Todd's tavern. On the 17th it moved with the division to Salem Church. Moving thence on the 20th the battery marched through Bowling Green, Milford Station, Newtown, Tunstalls, New Kent Court House and Charles City Court House, to Wilcox's Landing. During this month of battles for the Army of the Potomac, the battery shared with the division the responsible but bloodless duty of guarding the army trains. June 17th it crossed the James on the long ponton bridge and went into camp on the river bank a mile above the crossing. It was

about six o'clock; supper was preparing and the guns in park when a Confederate battery which had been firing at some of the Union gun-boats in the river from the high opposite bank, elevated its guns and suddenly began to pitch shells into the camp of the Vermont battery. It was the first time that the battery had been under artillery fire. Its lower position did not permit of its replying. The only thing to do was to strike tents, harness up and move to a better position. This was done with a coolness and good order which showed that the men had the right stuff in them.

June 18th the division moved to the lines of Petersburg, and rejoined the Ninth Corps, from which it had been separated for six weeks. It was placed, after one or two changes of position, in the second line of trenches on the east of Petersburg, in an unfinished earthwork, occupied later by the Seventeenth Vermont regiment. This work was completed with sand-bags, by the men, working by night and keeping under cover by day. On the 20th the battery moved into the strong earthwork known as Fort Morton, on the right of the Norfolk railroad. Here it fired from 20 to 100 shot and shell each day. It was under frequent heavy artillery fire from three of the enemy's batteries in front, and was so near the enemy that the men were in constant danger from the Confederate sharpshooters. Several of the battery horses were killed and wounded, but the men escaped. The constant firing and excitement night and day, however, affected the health of the weaker men, and the sick list increased to upwards of 30. The effective men became experienced artillerists, and under Captain Start's industrious and capable command, established a reputation for discipline, efficiency and accuracy of fire, second to that of no other battery in the corps. In the battle of the mine on the 30th of June, the battery was actively engaged. Two sections were in Fort Morton, otherwise known as the "Fourteen-gun Battery," which was General Burnside's headquarters during the bat-

tle, and a section in Battery 16, to the left of Morton. They opened fire with the rest of the artillery, immediately upon the explosion of the mine, and in the five hours following fired 395 shot and shell. The work of the battery was done largely under General Burnside's eye, and he expressed his approval of it.

July 2d First Lieutenant Vaughan was appointed U.S. commissary of subsistence, and left the battery; Second Lieutenant Wright was promoted to the vacancy,, and First Sergeant Rowell was promoted to be second lieutenant.

For two weeks after the disaster of the mine, Fort Morton was under continual fire from heavy guns and mortars and the men suffered much from want of sleep as well as from the intense heat. During the active operations of August 18th, when Hancock made a demonstration against Richmond and the Fifth Corps seized the Weldon railroad, the enemy's batteries opened heavily upon the works of the Ninth Corps, and Fort Morton was subjected to a tremendous fire of mortars and heavy ordnance, which began at nine o'clock in the evening of the 18th, and lasted until nearly dawn. The guns of the fort, including those of the Third Vermont battery, returned the enemy's fire. Several artillerists were killed in the fort, but the men of the Third battery escaped with a few contusions from fragments of shells.

During the 19th the battery was relieved, and moved half a mile to Romer's battery, near the Avery house. On the 21st, when Lee attempted to regain the Weldon railroad, the battery was sent to the left and out upon the Jerusalem plank road for three miles to the Williams house, where it relieved the Twenty-seventh New York battery. On the 23d it was ordered to take position near the Aiken house, where it assisted in sustaining the lines which the troops of the Fifth and Ninth Corps were entrenching upon and near the Weldon Railroad. On the 25th it was ordered to report to General Wilcox of the First division, who was then moving to

the assistance of General Hancock at Reams's Station but did not reach there in time to take part. On the 27th, the battery reported back to General Ferrero, whose division was then near the Aiken house, and remained in camp at that point until the 30th. Thence it was ordered to Fort Sedgwick, called by the soldiers "Fort Hell," from the constant fire from heavy siege guns and mortars to which it was subjected. Here it remained until September 6th, when it was assigned to the Reserve Artillery of the Second Corps, and went into camp near the Avery house. Having but about 100 men for duty, the battery at this time turned in two of its guns and Captain Start went to Vermont on leave of absence, leaving Lieutenant Phillips in command. Soon after the battery was transferred to the Reserve brigade of the Sixth Army Corps, which had been left behind when the corps went to the Shenandoah Valley. Service in the reserve artillery at this time was by no means easy service. The battery was ordered hither and thither at very short notice. The horses were often kept harnessed for several days at a time, and horses and men became much worn by constant duty, night and day. During the flurry caused by the raid of Rosser's cavalry in the rear of the army on the 16th, a section of the battery was suddenly ordered to Prince George Court House. The men were tired, having just moved to Battery 16, but they turned out promptly and marched seven miles to the Court House, in mud and rain, in an hour. Before its arrival, however, Rosser had escaped with his booty of beef cattle, and the battery was not called into action, though it remained on the alert all night. It returned to its camp next day.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Headquarters Artillery Brigade, Sixth Corps.

September 21, 1864.

*Lieutenant W. H. Phillips, commanding Third Vermont Battery:*

"For the prompt action in reporting for duty and getting into position and excellent execution done by yourself and men on the 16th inst. At Prince George Court House, the commanding officer highly commends you. After enduring the hardships, strain and fatigue your battery has for the past few weeks, their promptness merits the highest praise and thanks." W. A. Harn, Captain commanding.

September 19th the battery was stationed in Fort Meikel in front of the Avery house. Here it was under frequent fire and in reply fired, on an average, 35 shoots per day. It remained here until October 3d, when it was withdrawn and moved a mile to the left, to Battery 27, near the Jerusalem Plank Road, where the men had a much needed respite, as the work was but little exposed to the enemy's fire.

October 5th the battery reported to General Ferrero at Poplar Spring Church, where his division was supporting the movement against the Boydton Plank Road, and fortifying the ground gained. In this work the Third battery took part, and erected an earthwork which the men named Fort Phillips, afterward officially designated as Fort Urmston. This work the battery occupied until October 12th, when it moved back into Battery 16, and was again under constant fire. On the 25th Captain Start was ordered to take his battery to City Point, where he reported on the 26th to General H. Benham, commanding the defenses of that point, and was stationed in Fort McKean, which was one of the principal works which guarded the base of supply of the army. Here the battery changed its guns for light 12-pounders, and here it remained for three months. During September and October, 83 recruits carried its aggregate up to 223, with 181 present for duty, and it became again a six-gun battery. January 15th, 1865, it was ordered to report to General Wright, commanding the Sixth Corps, and moved to Warren Station on the Weldon railroad and went into camp near the corps headquarters. The weather was severe, with snow and rain, and for a week the men suffered from the cold, until they built some winter quarters for themselves. In the movement to the left on the 6th of February, the battery moved with the Sixth Corps artillery, and was stationed in Fort Fisher, where the men found excellent quarters vacated by the Second Corps artillery. January 2d

Sergeant W. B. Perrin was commissioned as second lieutenant, in place of Lieutenant French, discharged October 10th, 1864, for disability. Lieutenant Phillips was also honorably discharged early in February, for disability resulting from sickness. Second Lieutenant Rowell was advanced to the vacancy, and Quartermaster's Sergeant Eben Taplin was promoted to be second lieutenant.

In the important capture of the enemy's entrenched picket line, in front of Fort Fisher, on the 25th of March, the Third Vermont battery had a highly creditable part. At this time Lieutenant Rowell was in command, Captain Start being on leave of absence. Two sections of the battery were in Fort Fisher, and one section under Lieutenant Taplin was in Battery Lee, at the left of the fort. The First brigade of the Second division of the Sixth Corps, commanded by General James M. Warner, had advanced but had been checked by the enemy's artillery, and was still annoyed by the first from a small earthwork to the left. Warner thereupon sent to General Wright for some artillery, and Colonel Cowan, commanding the Sixth Corps artillery, directed Lieutenant Rowell to send him a section of his battery. Rowell at once hurried to the skirmish line with the first section, and, reporting to General Warner, was directed to a crest, along which Warner's men were hugging the ground. Taking his guns thither he opened fire on the troublesome battery, distant about 700 yards. Rowell's guns were carefully aimed, and after forty minutes of active firing the enemy's guns were silenced, and Warner's lines, advancing again, carried the entrenched picket line in its front. Rowell's handling of his pieces on this occasion was warmly complimented by General Warner. Lieutenant Perrin was with him and rendered efficient service. The battery suffered no loss, being kept sheltered behind the crest, to the top of which the guns were run by hand. Lieutenant Taplin's section was also engaged during the

afternoon, firing from Battery Lee, and did good execution.

From March 28th to April 1st, during which the final assault was in preparation, the greatest vigilance was exercised, the cannoneers standing to their guns at three A.M. each morning and remaining till after daylight. On the 30th, in consequence of a general order reducing all light batteries to four guns, two guns of the battery were again turned in.

On the night of April 1st, the honor of giving the signal for the charge of the Sixth Corps, which pierced the lines of Petersburg, was assigned to the Third Vermont battery and was given by it, as described in previous pages. The officers and men of the battery were of course on the *qui vive* during the exciting events following. They knew that the army had gone through the works and held the battery in readiness for any call. At eight o'clock everything west of the inner line of Confederate works facing west, along the line of Indian Town Creek, west of Petersburg, had been carried by the various Union corps; but operations had been brought to a stand by the resistance made in this line of works by the enemy, who realized that on the holding of them depended the last hope of holding Petersburg and Richmond. Two powerful works, Fort Gregg and Fort Whitworth,<sup>9</sup> on the west side of the creek, guarded the front of the line. General Gibbon had been ordered to carry these, and had assaulted them with Foster's and Turner's divisions of the Twenty-fourth Corps, without success, largely for want of artillery with which to reply to the guns (of the Washington artillery) in the forts. He thereupon dispatched Colonel Peter S. Michie, serving temporarily on his staff, to the nearest Union fort, for a battery or batteries. The nearest fort was Fisher, and thither Michie hastened. His somewhat excited request for a bat-

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<sup>9</sup> This fort is called Fort Baldwin on some of the maps.



tery was promptly responded to by Captain Start. Moving north a mile, the battery passed the captured picket line, and first took position 300 yards from Battery Owen, a Confederate work, without artillery, in front of Gregg. From this the enemy's sharpshooters were soon dislodged. Then moving forward to a position due south of Fort Gregg, the battery opened an effective fire on that work. The desperate defense of this fort was witnessed by General Lee in person, and it has been the theme of Confederate historians and the pride of the Southern soldiers.<sup>10</sup> Its guns replied with spirit, and a solid shot from one of them carried away half of the stock of one of Start's pieces. But an hour's vigorous firing on the part of the latter silenced the guns in Gregg, disabling two of them, which were captured in the fort, and killing several gunners.<sup>11</sup> Turner's infantry then renewed the assault and stormed the fort, taking in it 300 prisoners, with a Union loss of over 600 men killed and wounded.

Many of the shots of the Third battery, aimed at Fort Gregg, passed over it and took effect in Fort Whitworth, which was in line with Gregg and about 400 yards north of it, and contributed to the fall of that work, which was carried by Foster's division after the fall of Gregg.<sup>12</sup> The officers of the Third battery saw no Union guns except their own in these

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<sup>10</sup> "Fort Gregg was the Confederate La Tourgue. When it falls all of the old traditions of the South fall with it. When the Federal standards wave over it, there is then to be centralization, negro government and four times the ruin inflicted on the South as was put by Germany on France."—Napier Bartlett, in *A [Confederate] Soldier's Story of the Late War*.

<sup>11</sup> Fifty-five dead bodies lay around the guns when the fort was captured.

"The enemy had planted a battery in a field seven or eight hundred yards beyond the creek. It had been so posted as to have Gregg and Whitworth in the same line, and shots that passed over the former could and did strike the latter."—General C. M. Wilcox, *Southern Historical Society Papers*, Vol. iv, p. 27.

<sup>12</sup> General Wilcox adds that the fire of this Union battery was "a brisk and well directed fire."

operations; and as General Wilcox, who commanded the troops which defended the forts, mentions but a single Union battery as concerned in the attack on them, there is reason to believe that the work of the Union artillery in these decisive events was chiefly, if not entirely, done by the Third Vermont battery. Its conduct was highly commended by Generals Gibbon and Turner.

After the fall of the forts the battery again moved forward and engaged the works on the east side of Indian Town Creek. On these a fire was maintained, with brief intervals, during the rest of the day; but pending the result of the operations further to the right, Grant did not push his infantry against these works that day, and next morning they were found to be undefended, Lee having evacuated Petersburg in the night.

Captain Start says the behavior of officers and men throughout the day was "splendid," and he especially commends Lieutenants Rowell and Perrin; Sergeants Parker, Thomas, and Clay; Corporals Kelly, Gilman and Sibley, and Private William Washburn for coolness and gallant conduct.

Next morning Captain Start was placed in command of the Reserve Artillery brigade of the Sixth Corps, consisting of four batteries, including his own. Twenty pieces of artillery captured by the corps in the defenses of Petersburg, were also placed under his charge, and were taken by him to City Point. Lieutenant Eben Taplin was made assistant adjutant general of the brigade, and held the position until June 5th. The reserve brigade did not join corps in the pursuit of Lee, and the battery remained at City Point for a month, when, May 3d, it took up its line of march, with the artillery of the Army of the Potomac, for Alexandria. Marching by way of Richmond and Fredericksburg it arrived on the 18th at Alexandria. On the 3d of June the guns were turned over to the Ordnance Department, and on the 5th the battery, numbering 218 officers and men, started by rail

for Burlington, where they arrived on the morning of the 9th.

On the 13th, they were mustered out, paid off, and dispersed to their homes. The officers so mustered out were Captain R. H. Start; First Lieutenants W. R. Rowell and W. B. Perrin; and Second Lieutenants Eben Taplin and John W. Marsh, Second Lieutenant John H. Wright having resigned and received an honorable discharge a few days before. The battery had been singularly favored in respect to casualties, and brought home a greater proportion of its original members than any other Vermont organization which took the field.

### THE BATTLES OF THE THIRD BATTERY.

Petersburg Mine,	July 30, 1864.
Petersburg,	Aug. 18, 1864.
Petersburg,	March 25, 1865.
Petersburg,	April 2, 1865.

The final statement of the Third battery is as follows:

#### FINAL STATEMENT.

Original members—com. officers, 3; enlisted men, 148; total	151
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#### GAINS.

Promotion from other regiments—com. officers, 1; recruits, 103; total	104
Aggregate	255

#### LOSSES.

Died—enlisted men (from disease), 20; (from accident), 1; total	21
Honorably discharged for disability—com. officers, 3; enlisted men, 3; total	6
Promotion to U. S. Vols.—com. officers	1
Transferred to Veteran Reserve Corps—enlisted man	1
Deserted	7
Total loss	36
Mustered out—com. officers, 5; enlisted men, 214; total	219
Aggregate	255
Total wounded	3