

the breastworks we occupied had been thrown up by Geary's Division the day before, but that Geary had been called over to the left to assist in repelling Longstreet's attack, leaving but the brigade of Green in the works.

Upon the angle above spoken of Johnson made a direct assault and was repulsed with heavy loss. He could easily have flanked it, leaving a regiment or two to keep Green in the angle, and, moving down the enemy's flank, could have taken his line in reverse before the return of Geary. But, then, General Johnson was not a Stonewall Jackson, and the opportunity was allowed to pass unimproved.

Fearing a sudden attack, I returned the three left companies to the breastworks, where the men of the Third North Carolina and Company A were falling every minute from the deadly fire of the enemy in the angle. Had the brigade been moved a hundred yards to the left over the ridge, all could have been sheltered, and many a life saved. But these brave men were kept in their exposed position and needlessly slaughtered.

Until 11 o'clock in the night the firing continued steadily, and after that time it broke out fitfully until daylight, when it was renewed with redoubled fury, for during the night reinforcements to Green numbering many thousand men had assembled in front of Johnson's Division.

To add to the horrors of the situation a battery or two opened upon the division at short range, and most of their shells fell among the men of Stuart's Brigade, who were compelled to closely hug the ground behind the breastworks for protection. A more terrible fire men were never subjected to, and it was a miracle that any escaped.

In describing this fierce struggle for the possession of Culp's Hill the historian Bates says :

What a field was this ! For three hours of the previous evening, and seven of the morning, had the most terrible elements of destruction known to modern warfare been wielded with a might and dexterity rarely ever paralleled. The woods in which the battle had been fought was torn and rent with shells and solid shot and pierced with innumerable minnie balls. Trees were broken off and splintered, and that entire forest, where the battle raged most furiously, was, on the following year, leafless, the stately but mute occupants having yielded up their lives with those whom they overshadowed.

And speaking of the state of the hill on the 4th :

We came upon numberless forms clad in gray, either stark and stiff, or else still weltering in their blood. . . . Turning whichever way we chose, the eye rested upon human forms lying in all imaginable positions. . . . We were surprised at the accuracy as well as the bloody results of our fire. It was, indeed, dreadful to witness: