

CHAPTER IV.

The weeks had now rolled around in this pleasant camp near Orange Court House, and the army was rested and in fine condition to take the field, and the men longed once more to measure strength with the enemy. The ranks of the different regiments had been recruited by the return of absentees and convalescent wounded and sick, and the army again bore a strong resemblance to that which had marched so proudly into the enemy's country earlier in the year. Their old foe, with whom they had parted at Williamsport, were not far off, and it seemed to be but a little while when the two armies would again be brought face to face.

On the 14th of September the troops were startled by hearing the long-roll beat. The enemy were reported to be advancing in force beyond Orange Court House, but after marching two or three miles in that direction it was discovered that the alarm was occasioned by the enemy making a cavalry reconnoissance in force, but they were easily driven back by the Confederate cavalry which they encountered.

After this incident, which had served to do a little "limbering up," Johnson took up a position on the Rapidan, and covered Merton's Ford : and here the brigade remained until October 8.

In the meantime Longstreet's Corps had been sent to Tennessee, leaving those of Ewell and Hill to confront Meade. General Lee had planned an attack upon that General somewhat similar to that brilliant movement against Pope at the second Manassas, but unfortunately he had not a Jackson to carry out his daring conception, and it failed.

To accomplish successfully this well-conceived plan to administer to the enemy a crushing blow, Ewell was to make a detour of some seventy miles so as to get in the enemy's rear, whilst Hill was to attack him in front, having but fifteen miles to march. Ewell moved slowly in the direction of Culpeper Court House, and leaving that place to the right he crossed Hazel River and struck the Warrenton turnpike at Jeffersontown, and thence moved to the Rappahannock, where a portion of his forces had a slight skirmish. The corps then moved along the Warrenton pike, through Warrenton, until it had reached within five miles of the old battle-field of Manassas. Thence Johnson's Division marched to Bristow Station, where a sharp fight ensued, but without material results. The enemy had taken the alarm and retreated within his strong fortifications at Centreville.

For the failure of this short campaign General A. P. Hill was much blamed, and narrowly escaped a court-martial. Upon this occasion, at least, General Hill