

scare. The march was made by night, and some two or three of Colonel Thomas' volunteer aids were riding in advance. At one part of the road they imagined the fireflies in a distant field to be a company of the enemy firing at long range, and in their excitement they discharged their pistols. The troops were naturally thrown into confusion, so unexpected was the apparent collision. The command was halted and guns were loaded, but the cause of the alarm was soon discovered, and the march was resumed. After the return of the companies to Richmond the following modified official order was promulgated :

HEADQUARTERS VIRGINIA FORCES, RICHMOND, VIRGINIA, May 27, 1861.

The volunteers from the State of Maryland accepted into the *service of Virginia* will assemble at Charlestown, Virginia, and be there organized into regiments by Colonel Francis J. Thomas and instructed in their duties. This command will be under the orders of the commanding officer at Harper's Ferry for service on that frontier.

BY ORDER OF MAJOR-GENERAL LEE.

R. S. GARNETT, *Adjutant-General*.

The opposition to Colonel Thomas — for reasons that are not apparent — of which Colonel Jackson spoke officially, soon became stronger and more marked ; and after the proclamation of Governor Letcher, on June 8, transferring the land and naval forces of the State of Virginia to the Confederate Government, Colonel Thomas was relieved of his command, and Arnold Elzey was appointed in his stead. Colonel Thomas was soon afterward attached to the staff of General Joseph E. Johnston, and was killed at Manassas on July 21. In his official report of the battle General Johnston thus refers to a gallant soldier :

Many of the broken troops, fragments of companies and individual stragglers were re-formed and brought into action with the aid of my staff. . . . The largest body of these, equal to about four companies, having no competent field officer, I placed under the command of one of my staff, Colonel F. J. Thomas, who fell while gallantly leading them against the enemy.

The objection to Colonel Thomas on the part of the Harper's Ferry companies was not personal, but because the officers there aspired to command themselves the companies they had raised and brought from Maryland. They sent an officer to Richmond with a petition to the President to appoint Captain Charles Sidney Winder Colonel, Bradley T. Johnson Lieutenant-Colonel, and E. R. Dorsey Major.