

CHAPTER VI.

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For several days after the battle of Cold Harbor the enemy was comparatively quiet, and contented himself with keeping up a heavy artillery fire. Grant had had enough of Cold Harbor, and was looking about him to find means to extricate his army from the unfortunate position into which he had led them.

On the 6th of June, much to the regret of the battalion, Breckinridge's Division was ordered to report to General Early in the Valley of Virginia. Gladly would the battalion have accompanied him, for it was believed that Early intended the invasion of Maryland. A communication was sent to General Lee asking that the battalion be not detached from General Breckinridge, or at least that they be sent to General Early's command at all events. To this General Lee made the following reply :

HEADQUARTERS, July 19, 1864.

Communication respectfully returned. General Early is now in the Valley of Virginia. The object of this application cannot now, therefore, be accomplished. Should an opportunity occur for gratifying the wishes of this brave battalion, it will be remembered.

R. E. LEE, *General*.

After the departure of General Breckinridge the battalion was assigned temporarily to Frye's Brigade, Heth's Division, A. P. Hill's Corps, and their position changed to some distance to the rear and right, where it was held in reserve.

On June 13th the battalion was marched to White Oak Swamp, where it was sent out to skirmish with the enemy, and soon became hotly engaged. In this encounter John G. Wagoner, of Company A ; Lewis H. Viet, of Company C, and William H. Calhoun, of Company G, were killed.

Except marching and countermarching, picket duty, throwing up earthworks, etc., nothing of importance transpired until the 18th, when the battalion was marched to Drewry's Bluff, where it crossed the James River on a pontoon bridge, and halted below Port Walthall Station, in Chesterfield County, after a hot and dusty march of over twenty miles. Taking the train some distance below Port Walthall, the battalion rode four or five miles, when they were again compelled to march to within a mile of Petersburg, where on the north side of the Appomattox River they threw up breastworks for their protection.

The Second Maryland was now fairly in the trenches around Petersburg, where they were destined to spend so many weary months of privation and