

The two skirmish lines were soon engaged, as was also the Baltimore Light Artillery. One of the enemy's shells passed under General Elzey's horse, but exploded harmlessly. Hotter grew the fire ; shells shrieked overhead ; there were sharp rattles of musketry, and amid the din and roar, the piers of the railroad bridge were blown up, falling in a pile of ruins into the calmly flowing river. Although there had been a great deal of firing on both sides, and some of the men of Company A had been struck, no one was seriously hurt. What losses the enemy sustained was not known, and he soon withdrew, having evidently learned all he wished to know. Until the 19th of April several of these visits were made by the avant couriers of McClellan, the bulk of whose army still lay between Manassas and Centreville, each recurring scene being simply a repetition of the first.

A movement was now decided upon, and on the 17th of April tents were struck and shipped to some point of which the troops were ignorant. All that night and until the morning of the 19th the men were dispirited and wretched. With the tents had gone nearly all of the commissary stores, and the command was not only without shelter, but weak and hungry. On the 19th it flashed upon Lieutenant-Colonel Bradley T. Johnson (and doubtless also upon some of his command) that the day was the first anniversary of the troubles in Baltimore, and also the day upon which, on hearing of the disturbance, he marshaled a company of about seventy men in Frederick City, and hurried them to Baltimore to take part in the defense of that city. It was quickly decided to fitly observe the day, and the Colonel, being absent in Richmond on leave, the Lieutenant-Colonel relaxed his discipline and joined heartily with officers and men in the celebration. The affair was necessarily an informal one. There was neither banquet hall nor tables loaded with good cheer, but numerous small kegs and boxes suddenly made their appearance, and when they were opened and their contents were known the bare camp became the scene of good fellowship. Song, jest and story passed around, and mirth and jollity prevailed ; but there was a skeleton at the feast, for just when the glad spirit of the hour swayed each man, an order was received to move at once.

The order came like a clap of thunder, and never before had the First Maryland presented so ragged a front in its formation as it did that April evening. But the march over the railroad ties, through the darkness and rain soon began to show its beneficial effects, and when the regiment reached Culpeper, before daybreak, no one would have believed that the men of the command had been staggered but a few hours before by an enemy they had sought in vain to exterminate, and the rigid discipline, momentarily relaxed, was again resumed.

On the morning of April 20, after a heartily partaken breakfast, the troops