

Army Correspondence.

CAMP CONVALESCENT, Vt.
June 13th, 1863.

Eds. REPORTER.—My attention being called to a slip cut from one of your papers, giving an extract from a letter written by A. L. Robbins which is calculated to mislead the public in judging of the part taken by Gen. Howard in the battle of Chancellorville, I have thought it best to send you this correction of those statements. Gen. Howard was ordered to take the position which he occupied, by Gen. Hooker, it being the extreme right. That there was no fault in the disposition of his men, is proven by the fact that Gen. Hooker passed along the whole line during the day, and if there had been mistakes I think he would have corrected them. Also, that each division was within easy supporting distance of the other, and had the men fought as they ought to, and when compelled to fall back, had they done so in any order, I feel certain the enemy could never have passed the position of the second division, for we could have been supported by the twelfth corps, as stated by Mr. Robbins.

That the whole corps was drawn up so as to be shot in the back is not correct, for we were in regular line of battle, the third division on the extreme right, the first division next, the second (ours) next. Our Regt. (154th) did at first occupy a position intended to guard against an attack from an other direction, where we might have got shot in the back had we not changed it. The attack was made directly in front of the 3d division, the rebels advancing in three columns. The 3d division soon broke and fled in confusion. The rebels then attacked the 1st division in flank, and they soon followed the example of the others, leaving our division (with one brigade detached) to meet the attack of the whole rebel force. Two regts. of our brigade soon followed the flying mass, and five companies of another regiment followed them. The part taken by our Regiment, I need not recapitulate for it has been given to the public already. The fact that one brigade was detached from our division during the fight, was no fault of Gen. Howard's, for he was ordered to support the right flank of the 3d corps in a movement to the front, for the purpose of ascertaining the strength of the rebels in that direction, they having thrown shells into our lines and made other demonstrations during the 1st and 2d of May.

The faults were with the men, and not in their commanders. In the first place, they were mostly Germans, and were not satisfied because Sigel did not lead them in the next place there were many of them two years men whose time was nearly out, and they did not like to be shoved in to a hard fight.

Mr. Robbins says in his closing paragraph that he is inclined to think that our men allowed themselves to be taken prisoners to escape marching and fighting for a time by being parolled. Now, if he refers to the 154th, the imputation is unjust, for instead of yielding themselves up willingly as prisoners, they fought the enemy as long as it was possible, then retired through a cross-fire—were separated from the rest of the regiment by a column of the enemy, and were at one time exposed to the fire of both friend and foe, being between the rebels and the 3d army corps, but finally joined the 3d corps and fought, and were taken prisoners with a portion of them.

By inserting this in your paper you will but do simple justice.

Jas. M. MATHERSON,
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