

# COMPANY FRONT



THE HISTORICAL MAGAZINE OF THE TWENTY-SIXTH NORTH CAROLINA

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**"WE SAW BLOOD"**  
TAR HEELS IN 1861





An unidentified soldier of Company H (the "Caswell Boys"), 6th North Carolina. Sixth-plate ambrotype in the possession of Gary Fields.

"We saw blood." So remembered Captain Neill W. Ray of Company D, 6th Regiment N.C. State Troops, as he and his men approached the fighting at Manassas, Virginia, in the early afternoon of July 21, 1861. By day's end many of Captain Ray's comrades had spilled their own blood, and all of them had received a grim education in the reality of war. This issue of *Company Front* focuses on North Carolina in the first two battles of 1861: Big Bethel, Virginia, on June 10, and First Manassas.

The Big Bethel article is a detailed letter written June 12, 1861—just two days after the battle—by Benjamin R. Huske of Cumberland County, then serving as first lieutenant of Company H (the "Fayetteville Independent Light Infantry"), 1st Regiment N.C. Volunteers. The letter, edited by my good friend, Walt Brown, first appeared in the October 1981 issue of *Civil War Times Illustrated*. Walt has kindly granted us permission to reprint it here.

The remainder of the issue is devoted to the 6th Regiment N.C. State Troops. I have two contributions: an article on the actions of the 6th North Carolina at First Manassas, and an appendix to it that is an organizational and statistical profile of the regiment. Bob Williams has prepared a detailed account of the uniforms and equipage of the regiment in the summer of 1861.

Perhaps the most famous of North Carolina's Confederate enlisted men was Bartlett Yancey Malone of Caswell County, whose diary, *Whipt 'Em Everytime*, should be on everyone's bookshelf. We owe special thanks to Al Leonard for locating and gaining permission to use Malone's image, which adorns the cover.

Jason Goodnite and Skip Smith have spent many hours of hard work on page layout and design, making this issue perhaps the most attractive *Company Front* ever.

Note: I had hoped to provide maps for both the Big Bethel and First Manassas articles. The Big Bethel map is taken from *The Official Military Atlas of the Civil War*. The First Manassas map from the same publication is not very good, and I could not locate one in the public domain. However, a good—and downloadable—map of First Manassas is available on the website of the Civil War Preservation Trust. The url is <http://www.civilwar.org/maps/>

-GREG MAST

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The Image of Sergeant Bartlett Yancey Malone  
Company H, 6<sup>th</sup> Regiment N.C. State Troops  
(front cover)  
By Al Leonard

Sergeant Bartlett Yancey Malone was born in Caswell County, North Carolina, on January 22, 1839. At age 22 he joined a local volunteer company known as the "Caswell Boys," later mustered into service as Company H, 6<sup>th</sup> Regiment North Carolina State Troops. His war diary was published, most notably in 1960 as *Whipt 'em Everytime, the Diary of Bartlett Yancey Malone*. His oft-quoted entries record the daily activities of his regiment and subsequent experience as a prisoner of war. The material is available online, see:

<http://docsouth.unc.edu/fpn/malone/menu.html>

Some years after the war Malone described himself as "...Graduated in the cornfield and tobacco patch: And inlisted in the War June the 18<sup>th</sup> 1861." An editor of his diary describes him as "...unconsciously a brave man who took a sober sort of joy in fighting." Douglas S. Freeman noted in his *Lee's Lieutenants* bibliography that Malone "might be termed the unofficial meteorologist of the Army of Northern Virginia," because of his interest in the weather.

Sergeant Malone was wounded at the battles of Malvern Hill and Chancellorsville. On November 7, 1863, he was captured at Rappahannock Station, Virginia, along with 317 other men of the 6<sup>th</sup> North Carolina. Imprisoned at Point Lookout, Maryland, he was exchanged in the late winter of 1865 and was then hospitalized at Richmond. At war's end Malone returned to farming in the Hyco Creek community of Caswell County. There he married his "sweetheart" Mary Francis Compton, and became the father of ten children. Family history recounts that he probably contracted tuberculosis while a prisoner of war and that the infectious disease eventually "killed him and many of his family." Malone died on May 4, 1890, and is buried alongside family members near his old home place.

Sergeant Malone's likeness, made while he was a private, is a ninth-plate ambrotype, a unique reverse image on glass, probably made in 1861. He wears the early war uniform of Company H and at least one other company of the 6<sup>th</sup> North Carolina. His six-button short-waisted tunic with blousy sleeves is made of gray cassimere trimmed in black. The collar stands 5/8 inch tall, the waistband is 1 1/2 inches wide and the cuff is 2 inches. The garment is closed by brass civilian ornamented "flower" buttons, 3/4 inch in diameter. His shirt is of a small checked pattern material, and may have been a clothing item issued to the men of the 6<sup>th</sup> rather than one privately supplied by Malone. His trousers are of the same material as the tunic, ornamented by a 1 1/2 inch black side stripe. He is wearing a gray fatigue, or "forage," cap. The musket is a state issued .69 caliber smoothbore U.S. Model "1822" (U.S. Model 1816 variant, altered to percussion). Sergeant Malone carries a white cloth haversack, displays a leather canteen strap, and sits on a piece of ingrain carpet. The first two joints of the little finger on his uppermost hand are missing, and the injury is well-healed, a witness to the perils of 19<sup>th</sup> century farm life in rural North Carolina.



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Benjamin R. Huske

Photo courtesy Walter Brown





# **MORE TERRIBLE — THAN — VICTORY**

by Benjamin R. Huske

Edited by Walter Brown, Jr.

In the study of the War Between the States, contemporary accounts are often most helpful to historians. They have the merit of immediacy; and despite their occasional inaccuracies and exaggerations, they give the reader the feel for the events they describe. But it is rare to find letters written by those who had the time or inclination to deal with a particular instance or event in any detail.

Letters and descriptions are valuable for their particular perspective, but unless penned by a general or other high ranking officer, few soldiers had more than limited awareness of the broad scope of a battle like Gettysburg or Fredericksburg. And another limit to the usefulness of a source is the literacy of the writer himself; some letters and diaries are barely decipherable.

But an excellent example of a contemporary account is a letter telling of the Battle of Bethel, written by then Lieutenant Benjamin R. Huske of Co. F, 1<sup>st</sup> North Carolina Volunteers. His perspective was quite broad, and the position he occupied during the battle enabled him to observe many of the incidents that occurred. This was the first battle of the war in which North Carolina soldiers participated and it is considered by many to be the war's first land battle.

The author of this letter was a member of the Fayetteville Independent Light Infantry and served with this unit until it was disbanded after six months service to become part of the 11<sup>th</sup> North Carolina Regiment. Huske graduated from the University of North Carolina and practiced law in Fayetteville until called into service with his regiment. Then, following the dissolution of his unit in November 1861, Huske became a major in the 48<sup>th</sup> North Carolina and served with it until his death from wounds on July 15, 1862.

The following letter was written by him two days after the Battle of Bethel.



Yorktown June 12, 1861

My Dear Wife

You have gotten my letter sent by Major McLean yesterday—which was only to inform you of the result of the first battle—I was too tired and had no time to write more.

On Thursday the 6<sup>th</sup> of June we left our quarters at Yorktown and advanced some fifteen miles to Bethel Church and encamped. There were evidences of old entrenchments—probably Revolutionary which we very soon commenced to improve upon. On the next day scouts and companies at different times were sent out and from day to day the same routine. The advanced portions of our troops meeting small bodies of the enemy forces and always repulsing them. Taking occasionally a prisoner.

On Monday morning the 10<sup>th</sup> of June—we were awakened by the sound of the bugle, the appointed signal for battle and just as day dawned commenced a forward movement towards Hampton. After proceeding some 3 miles the order was suddenly give to countermarch—a lady having run up the road—whose husband had been taken prisoner by an advance party—and informed Colonel McGruder [Magruder] that the enemy were advancing. She ought to have a monument erected to commemorate her action, she has been kindly cared for and a purse made up for her—being poor and now homeless. Our scouts had of course seen a portion of them but it was through her coolness that the no. of their force was ascertained as very large.

We got back to camp about 5 o'clock and at once commenced getting ready by throwing up additional fortifications or rather embankments. Our boys you can well imagine worked with a will. They did not get upon us until 15 minutes after 9 o'clock. Their delay having been caused by the two bodies of troops, of which the force was composed, having got into an engagement with one another. They consisted of a force from Hampton and Newport News point and when they met where the Hampton and Newport News point Roads come together they each supposed it was the "Secessionist" and opened fire on one another killing 5 and wounding 15. However they soon found out their mistake and thought we were retreating before them.

I was at the main battery and had a fine view of the entire fight, having been detached from the Company with 30 men to support them in case of a charge. They came up the Hampton Road and directly in range of this battery and only  $\frac{1}{2}$  or  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile off. Their muskets gleaming in the sunshine. The Battery commenced its work and it was not long before they found that we had quit "running" for they had to do some pretty scientific dodging. Very soon their first shell came in reply and then shot after shot from each side, our shots from one piece were bad at first but from the other capital. And I could see precisely where each shot from us struck and the fellows, when it was a good one, scampering for their lives backwards & forward.

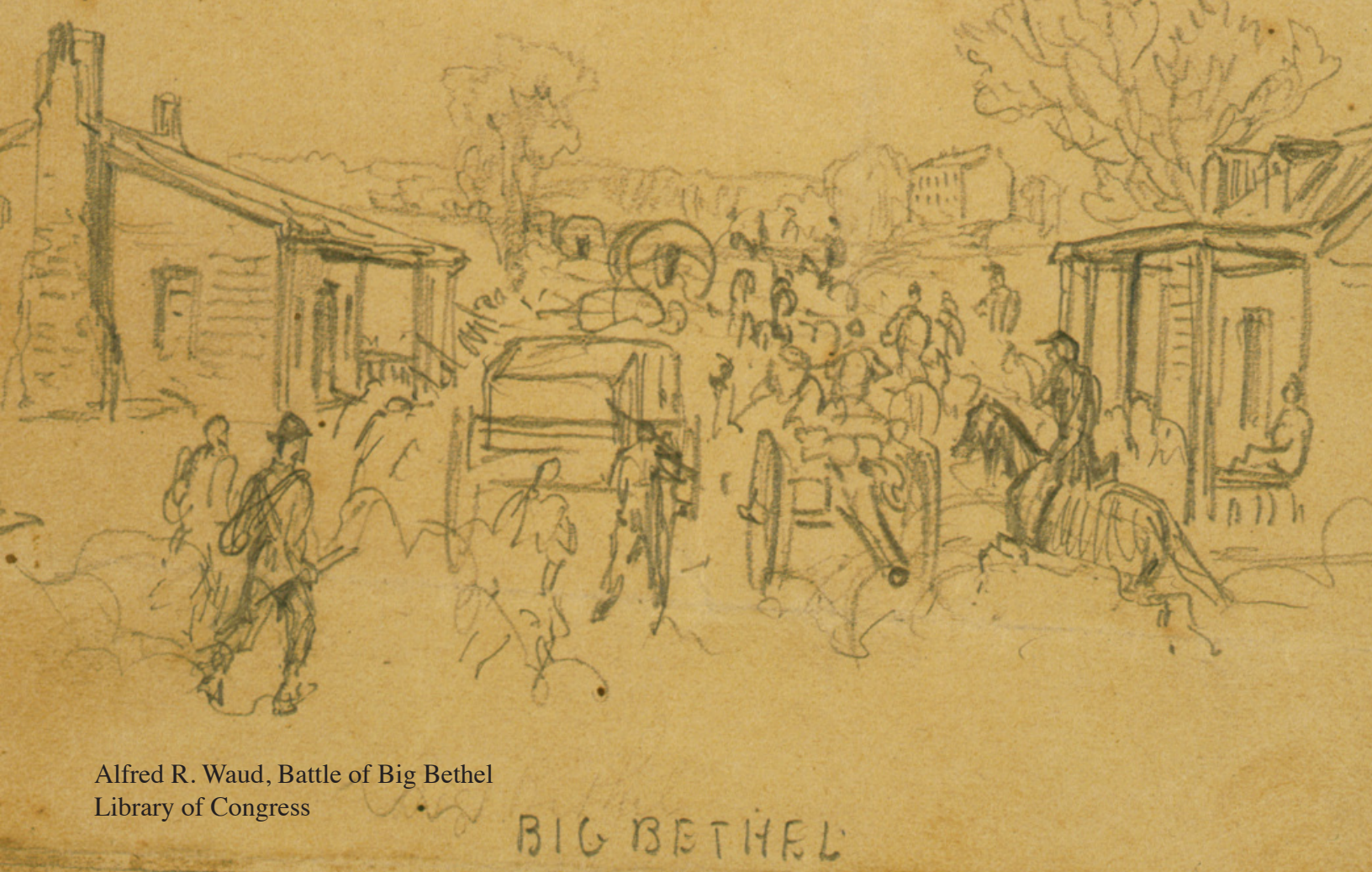
Very soon their files commenced flanking across the open space—between some houses that were there. These passed through an opening of about 30 yds and the batteries poured the shell and shot into them. After they had passed across this opening which was a movement to flank us on the right—very soon a single musket shot was heard then another and then such a roar and the hissing of the shots and the striking trees, banks & everything, made us squat close I tell you behind the embankments. They are good things I assure you. Some boys lying down said "Col. Hill knows more about good banks and ditches that we and I'll never grumble about pitching dirt again."

Well this kept up for some half-hour and our piece there got out of order, and the banks were abandoned on our right. That is the outer works. Very soon Col. McGruder who with Col. Hill was very much exposed and often at our battery said to one of our companies "This point must be retaken and maintained at all hazard, go Sir (to the Capt.) and tell them I say so." This backward movement originated from the piece gun getting out of order and as there were only 20 infantry to hold it they retired and the other companies through some misunderstanding as to orders also retired—and fell back towards us—But Col. McGruder's orders were hardly issued before the Yankees were double-quickly out of the entrenchments and our men into them and by this time the Gun which had gotten out of order was replaced and that, opening upon they scampering away the field. They then filed across the opening in front of us where they had passed at first and caught it from this battery too. Then for a time both









Alfred R. Waud, Battle of Big Bethel  
Library of Congress

we were next to. You can't form any idea of how they hissed and struck, just like a shower of hot stones falling into the war. You will see from the rough sketch sent that many of the companies were directly in range of the artillery and musketry although in the rear although in the rear were showered upon the Orange Company. Five companies of our Regiment never fired a shot as the enemy never came about them. Still they were exposed to fire and the shell were picked up through them, and their muskets struck clothes and straps—Don't think that I am giving you the movements of all the Companies or boasting of our work particularly for I only mention these particularly as I know you feel most interest in them. All the others were in danger tho not in the fight. And the Edgecombe Guards, Charlotte Grays, Buncombe Rifles, and a portion of the Orange who participated in the fight acted not only up to the emergency, but with a bravery, coolness, and daring that we nor anyone else could excel, I said I could see the whole movements of course I mean the general movements in a military point of view. And did not see the special movements of each company or would give you a full account of them.

Well very soon the musketry ceased on the left—and back to their batteries they fell again, and it looked as though they were throwing up embankments—we watched them awhile and then 4 shots, 2 from each of our guns were aimed with a precision that was perfectly surprising—I saw them strike exactly in their midst and then they scampered and so closed the first pitched battle.

Supposed to be under the command of General Butler himself. Their number was 4500, ours 1200 and of the North Carolina Regiment only 400 were engaged. When the movement on the left flank was made, a fine officer a Lieut. Colonel mounted a log and called "Rally Boys Rally"—in an instant a ball passed directly through his center and out between his shoulders. I saw a watch was taken from his person and in the inner case were two photographs about 2 inches in length with beautiful faces, one his wife and the other a sister I presume. There are many incidents that I could mention if I had time and intended to give you them but Mr. \_\_\_\_\_ is going. I have written this account hurriedly to get off by him and numbered the pages for you as I could not wait for them to dry.



The Va. troops behaved well and the artillery with great coolness and bravery. One man named Carter to whose gun I was nearest never raised his head from the sight (he was pointing the gun) when the musket balls splintered the gun carriage over him. The enemy lost 400 they say.

The scene was one of perfect rout—men with limbs shot off, Brains running out and all sorts of horrors—Haversacks, tin-cups, Ram-rods, muskets shot in two.

Well you will ask how did you feel just as cool as could be—by no means comfortable but with a determination to do my whole duty whatever the consequence. There was something grand sublime to see the coolness of all. The courage and braver of them fighting for their homes and firesides. The death of that poor officer affected me more than anything else. I knew there was one fireside whose light had gone out. Great God in mercy avert the awful results of Civil War.

To me it is terrible when it is over. That we should conquer is all I felt when we were in it. A man's blood gets up, and you don't mind the danger—but when the day is won it is as Wellington said, "nothing more terrible than a victory except a defeat." This on a small scale compared to his fights, but big enough for me. God has preserved us, only 5 in our regiment touched, two Virginians I think, is it not a miracle, we all feel proud of being in the first pitched Battle. The horses and mules were scampering all over the field and one was disemboweled in 20 steps of where we were standing, a team didn't seem to mind anything—Magruder is a splendid looking fellow. I saw Major Lanes horse tearing about in the early part of the action and felt very uneasy but we all love him. He had dismounted getting into the thickest of the fight as the balls you know range high and he had turned his horse loose. He's a nice fellow. They threw five shells at Col. Hill as he passed an opening in their view between our entrenchments and those of [Lieut.] Col. Lee.

The gold watch which was taken from the officer who was shot has been sent for by Col. Hill and all his arms and papers. A flag of truce to bury the dead was sent this morning. All that was taken [from] him to be returned.

It is horrible to think of rifling bodies but it is only valuables and arms that are taken. They say that some of the buttons of his coat were cut off as mementoes [sic] by our men.

Please send this to Dr. Ben when you are done with it and ask him to give Mr. Hale the acct. so that he can make the story. I have written very hurriedly [sic]—ask him to preserve it and send it back to you.

We marched to Yorktown the same night—15 miles as it was feared there might be an attack made there and the Louisiana Regt. had reached us just after the fight was over leaving only 1000 men to protect it. My precious you must not allow yourself to feel too uneasy—have faith in God. He has been my protection and it is strange how he preserved us all. You can form no idea of the hardships we endured from Thursday till we got here but we all stood it well and I never was in better health in my life. We found here everything comfortable and even luxurious on getting here—as McKetcham had been up to Richmond and got back while we were down at Bethel but joined us in time for the fight, and boys got plenty of boxes from home, what do you think of Irish potatoes from F, fresh butter preserved Ginger & 6 ale for men who had been living on about one meal a day.

I feel very tired. We were 500 all in the trenches yesterday upon an alarm stating they were advancing upon us 10,000 strong. The report proved false. We made our banks higher and cut a great many trees out of the war. All very tired but well so far as I hear. Dr. Graham left on furlough for home yesterday with McLean I think. Major McLean got to us in two hours after the battle having left the same morning. Please send me another curl of the baby's, I lost the other one in the fight. God bless you all & Preserve us to meet you—a hundred kisses to my darlings to all my love.

B.R.H

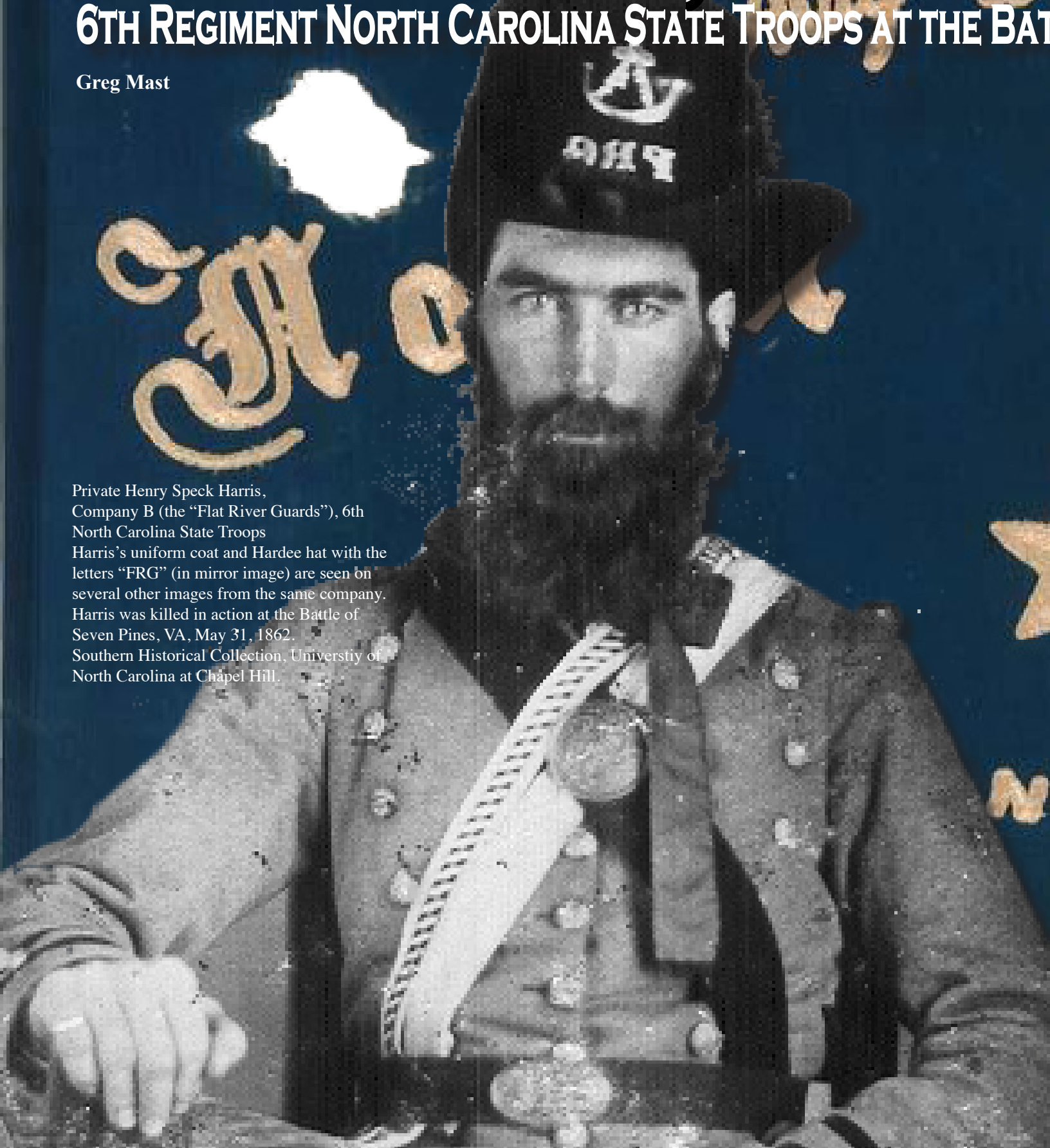


# “A SICKENING, HEART-

## 6TH REGIMENT NORTH CAROLINA STATE TROOPS AT THE BATTLE OF SEVEN PINES

Greg Mast

Private Henry Speck Harris, Company B (the “Flat River Guards”), 6th North Carolina State Troops. Harris’s uniform coat and Hardee hat with the letters “FRG” (in mirror image) are seen on several other images from the same company. Harris was killed in action at the Battle of Seven Pines, VA, May 31, 1862. Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.





# "RENDING SIGHT"

## TITLE OF FIRST MANASSAS, JULY 21, 1861

**A**s the train carrying the 6th Regiment North Carolina State Troops pulled into the depot at Manassas Junction, Virginia, on the morning of July 21, 1861, the men could hear the “dull booming” of artillery from the battle several miles to the north. The regiment wearily assembled -- some of the men had not slept for three nights -- and marched toward the fighting, its column raising huge clouds of dust. After pausing briefly at a spring to fill canteens, the North Carolinians continued until they were halted at the base of a hill; on the crest a Confederate battery fired at the enemy. The men received orders to load their weapons and rest. Despite the proximity of the cannonading, many fell asleep.

The fighting raged nearer the regiment’s position and “dense clouds of smoke rose from the opposite hills, the earth shook with the awful thunder.” The excitement of the moment electrified the novice soldiers, and they cried out “Colonel Fisher, we’re ready.” Their commander replied

‘I know that.’ Suddenly his clear voice rang out, ‘Attention!’ when every man sprung with new life to his place in the ranks, shouldered his musket, and at the command ‘Forward, march,’ we moved briskly up the hill.”<sup>1</sup>

The Battle of First Manassas was the greatest ever fought on the North American continent to that time. Colonel Fisher’s regiment was the only North Carolina unit to become fully engaged in that first of many blood-lettings of the American Civil War, and before the day ended a tenth of its members were shot down, including the colonel. The regiment was well on its way to earning its sobriquet of the “Bloody Sixth.”<sup>2</sup>

The 6th Regiment N.C. State Troops was one of ten regiments authorized by an act ratified by the General Assembly of North Carolina on May 8, 1861.<sup>3</sup> Those units, “to be known as the State troops of North Carolina,” enlisted to serve for the duration of the war. (In contrast, the enlistment terms of the numerous volunteer regiments concurrently being organized were for six or twelve months.) The personnel of the state troops regiments were, in the words of one of their historians, “the very pick and flower of the State.” In a sense they were the “regulars” of the new North Carolina army, and their military performance during the next four years was an ample source of pride for North Carolinians.<sup>4</sup> A military board chosen by Governor John Willis Ellis made officer appointments for the State Troops regiments. On May 23, the board picked Charles Frederick Fisher of Salisbury as colonel of the 6<sup>th</sup> North Carolina, to rank from May 16.<sup>5</sup>

Fisher, a forty-five-year-old resident of Salisbury, was the wealthy president of the North Carolina Railroad Company and a prominent Democrat. He had predicted the war and in 1860 began enrolling employees of both the North Carolina and Western North Carolina Railroads into a volunteer militia that he proposed to call the “Piedmont Legion” or the “Piedmont Rangers.”<sup>6</sup> Recruits for the future 6th North Carolina, eventually comprising five companies of the regiment and including many railroad employees, began assembling at Charlotte in May 1861, on the grounds of the North Carolina Military Institute.<sup>7</sup> Fisher assumed command in Charlotte, and after several weeks of drilling, moved his troops to Camp Alamance at Company Shops [present-day Burlington] in Alamance County. There he was joined by the regiment’s other five companies.

Throughout the month of June the 6th North Carolina drilled and prepared for war. On July 3 the regiment transferred to Confederate service and five days later left Company Shops for Raleigh. There the men received the somber news of the death of Governor John Willis Ellis. Departure for the seat of war was delayed while the



regiment participated in the funeral obsequies for the late governor. Ellis had died at a spa in Virginia, and two companies were sent to Petersburg to return with the body to Raleigh. The entire regiment marched in the funeral procession, and a detachment was detailed to escort the remains to the burial place in Davidson County.<sup>8</sup>

On July 11 the 6th North Carolina entrained for Richmond, stopping there for a day to await transportation and hear a speech by President Jefferson Davis. The men then traveled by train to Strasburg, Virginia, in the Shenandoah Valley, passing on their way Manassas Junction “where General Beauregard is encamped and strongly fortified.” From Strasburg the regiment was required to march the eighteen miles to Winchester, where it arrived on July 15.<sup>9</sup>

The Confederate forces at Winchester, styled the “Army of the Shenandoah,” were commanded by General Joseph E. Johnston. The general, who feared an enemy attack on Winchester, ordered the 6th North Carolina placed in line-of-battle in a wheat field immediately upon its arrival. With no cover but their blankets, the men spent their first night at Winchester sleeping on wheat stubble in a heavy rain. Some cheer was restored the next morning when Colonel Fisher himself cooked breakfast for the regiment.<sup>10</sup>

On July 18, General Johnston assembled his entire command and relayed the news that a Federal army under General Irvin McDowell advanced on the outnumbered forces of General Beauregard at Manassas. It would be necessary for the troops at Winchester to support Beauregard; part of their journey would be made by railroad, the first movement of reinforcements by train in the history of warfare. Johnston’s command spent the next day (July 19) marching to the nearest railhead, Piedmont Station on the Manassas Gap Railroad. The 6th North Carolina’s place of march was near the rear of the column. Because the number of cars available was limited, it appeared that the regiment would be among the last troops to embark for the battlefield and would probably arrive too late to participate in the fighting. A report was then received that a troop train had derailed, destroying some track and further delaying the movement of the anxious regiments. Colonel Fisher informed the authorities “that he himself was a railroad president and a railroad contractor, and had in his command civil engineers and enlisted men who had been employed in track-laying and section work.” The track was soon repaired, and the 6th North Carolina embarked on the next train for Manassas.<sup>11</sup>

The Battle of First Manassas began about 9:00 A.M. on July 21, 1861, with a surprise attack by two Federal divisions against the weakly manned Confederate left (northern) flank. Rebel troops in the vicinity, commanded by Colonel Nathan Evans and Brigadier Generals Francis Bartow and Bernard Bee, made a stand on a nearby ridge called Mathews Hill. The Confederates, outnumbered more than two to one, stalled the Yankee advance for several hours and even attempted a counterattack. Their lines were eventually broken, however, and the survivors fled to the next ridge to the south, known as Henry Hill. The Confederate command had expected an attack that day by the Federals but mistakenly assumed it would come on the opposite flank, several miles to the southeast at Blackburn’s Ford, where most of the Rebel troops were posted. The way seemed clear for the Yankees to brush aside the defeated remnants on Henry Hill and administer a crushing defeat; General McDowell rode among his troops shouting “Victory! Victory! the day is ours.”<sup>12</sup>

Unfortunately for the Union cause, the victorious troops had been quite disorganized by their success, and a lull of about two hours followed, during which various formations were rallied and fresh troops deployed. In the meantime, the Confederates began to build a formidable new line on Henry Hill. First to arrive was Hampton’s Legion of South Carolinians, but the key of the Confederate defense was the Virginia brigade of Brigadier General Thomas J. Jackson. Jackson had begun the morning with his command deployed on the Confederate right. When the fighting commenced, Jackson marched toward the sound of the guns without waiting for orders and placed his brigade below the southern crest of Henry Hill. Fragments of the routed commands of Bee, Bartow, and Evans rallied around the Virginians.<sup>13</sup> Fresh regiments also began to appear, both from the inactive Confederate right flank and late arrivals from the Army of the Shenandoah. Among the latter was the 6th North Carolina, which arrived at about 2 P.M. and was ordered to reinforce the line on Henry Hill.<sup>14</sup>

During its march from Manassas Junction, the regiment halted near the Lewis House, several hundred yards south and in the rear of the Confederate line, while Colonel Fisher scouted ahead on horseback. After his



Captain Houston B. Lowrie, Company C (the "Orange Grays"), 6th North Carolina. Lowrie served as adjutant of the regiment at the Battle of First Manassas. He transferred to Company C in September 1861 and was promoted to captain in July 1862. Lowrie was killed in action at the Battle of Sharpburg, Maryland, September 17, 1862. The image was made in the studio of Raleigh photographer Esly Hunt, as evidenced by the distinct chair back finials, and probably dates from Lowrie's service as regimental adjutant. N.C. Division of Archives and History.





return, the regiment formed up and moved several hundred yards, when it came under some artillery fire. Fisher advanced the regiment, but apparently in a direction that would have positioned it near the center or right of the Confederate line. He was cautioned by another officer to turn sharply to the left, and the regiment eventually approached the extreme left flank Rebel line on Henry Hill.<sup>15</sup>

General McDowell became convinced that one concerted assault by his forces would drive the Confederates from Henry Hill and allow him to roll up their entire line. To soften up the Rebels prior to this attack, he directed two batteries to move several hundred yards in advance, almost to the crest of Henry Hill and within a few hundred feet of Jackson's men. A regiment of New York Zouaves, the 14<sup>th</sup> Brooklyn, was ordered to advance with the artillerists. The Zouaves marched up the hill, but a ferocious volley from Jackson's Virginians sent them reeling back down. The two batteries remained, unsupported but still firing into the Rebel ranks.

Now an almost random chain of events turned the battle against the Federals. The leftmost regiment of Jackson's brigade was the 33rd Virginia and, like several Confederate regiments of the early war period, was clad at least partly in blue uniforms. The 33rd had been under heavy fire, both from the two batteries and from the advancing Zouaves. The colonel fearing that his regiment would break if it remained stationary, ordered his men to attack the two batteries by themselves.

The Virginians moved out just as the Zouaves retreated down the hill. An officer of one of the batteries observed a blue-clad regiment advancing on his flank. Although he suspected they were Confederates, a superior assured him that the troops were another Federal regiment moving to his support. The ensuing point-blank volley from the Virginians devastated the artillerists. More than fifty horses and many cannoneers were shot down. The survivors fled back down the hill to the safety of their own lines, bringing off only three of the guns. The Virginians briefly overran the abandoned cannons, but sharp Federal musketry forced them to retreat, and the artillery became the focus of an indecisive struggle that raged for nearly two more hours.<sup>16</sup>

The precise sequence of events during the afternoon battle on Henry Hill continues to baffle historians, and sources are often contradictory, but it is probable that the 6th North Carolina arrived on the scene shortly after the charge of the 33rd Virginia, and that regiment's subsequent retreat. As the North Carolinians moved from their resting place up the southern slope of Henry Hill they came under stray musketry and artillery fire.<sup>17</sup> The regiment filed to the left through "dense tangled undergrowth" and passed into a ravine. That movement placed them on the flank of the batteries. Meanwhile, in the first of several Union counterattacks, the guns had been reoccupied and, supported by a regiment of infantry, had resumed firing at the Confederates. The 6<sup>th</sup> had some trouble deploying into line of battle:

Instead of moving forward into line all of the rear companies, a movement that might have been contemplated by Colonel Fisher but for the fire of the enemy, the men in front filed to the right and those nearer the center, including most of seven companies, moved forward into line without orders through a piece of woods till they came into an open field about eighty yards from the guns and supporting line.

Three companies of the 6th North Carolina had been unable to achieve a proper position to fire, but the volley from the others, "well-aimed and fearfully destructive," felled many of the enemy artillerists and drove the Yankees from their guns again. Captain Isaac E. Avery of Company E (the color company) shouted "Colonel, don't you think we ought to charge?" Fisher replied, "Yes, Captain," and, facing his regiment, yelled "Charge!"<sup>18</sup>

The North Carolinians moved forward and claimed possession of some of the artillery, but that brought upon them a severe fire from flank and front.<sup>19</sup> The situation became even more confused: the regiment was hit in the rear by fire from another Confederate unit; an unknown mounted officer rode up and ordered the North Carolinians to cease firing;<sup>20</sup> and the enemy meanwhile "kept pouring in a murderous fire." Caught in a crossfire from three directions, the regiment retreated, leaving Colonel Fisher dead on the battlefield.<sup>21</sup> Among the wounded were Captain Avery and Second Lieutenant William Preston Mangum of Company B, the son of former North Carolina governor and United State senator Willie P. Mangum.<sup>22</sup>

Corporal John C. Bringle, Company G,  
6th North Carolina. Some sources say the  
6th N.C. State Troops were clad in blue  
uniforms at Manassas. Bringle's image sug-  
gests that some of the companies were. He  
served until captured at the Battle of Rap-  
pahannock Station, Virginia, November 7,  
1863. Image courtesy of Jeff Williams.





The fighting became desperate for the Tar Heels. Except for a small cavalry contingent, the 6th North Carolina for a time occupied the exposed Confederate left flank by themselves, and they were pressed to hold their position. Other charges on the abandoned artillery may have been made (the record is not clear), and the regiment was forced to fight both to its front and left flank. The experience of one soldier is illustrative of the tenacity of the struggle: Private William Paisley White of Company F had been ill during the day and had suffered a fainting spell.

[B]ut after we were advancing he came up. I told him to go back. His reply was “I want a pop at the Confounded Yankees and I intend to go while I can stand up.” He was shot in three places and fell beyond the enemys Batteries. . . . The enemy rushed upon him took his pistol, and were upon the point of blowing his brains out, when one of their number spoke up and Said dont do it “Let the damned dog die as he is.”<sup>23</sup>

The arrival of a Virginia and two South Carolina regiments to extend their line came as a considerable relief to the North Carolinians. Additional Confederate reinforcements appeared on the left flank, and at about dusk Beauregard ordered a general advance. The Federals, denied time and again in their attempts to secure Henry Hill, retreated under the Confederate attack. Their withdrawal quickly became a rout, and the Yankees fled to Washington, shattered and demoralized. The Confederates, nearly as stunned and disorganized in victory as their enemies were in defeat, were unable to pursue. President Jefferson Davis arrived on the scene, and “told us of the glorious victory we had won.” Roll was called in the 6<sup>th</sup> North Carolina and 125 men were found to be present.<sup>24</sup>

Once the fighting ceased the men began to count the cost. Like all Civil War soldiers in their first battle, the North Carolinians found that the carnage surpassed anything they imagined. There was a naive expectation among the volunteers of 1861, fueled by popular literature and art of the period (and by the rhetorical excesses of firebrand politicians), that war would have a picture book quality, a romantic struggle characterized by exhibitions of manly courage and knightliness. After the battle of First Manassas few members of the 6th North Carolina can have retained any such illusions about the nature of the war they had chosen to fight. The inevitable gap between the ideal and the grim reality of war was apparent in the aftermath of the Manassas battle in a manner that eclipsed any of the minor skirmishes that preceded it. An unidentified officer of the regiment recorded his impressions for a Richmond newspaper:

[I]t was indeed a sickening, heart-rending sight. The enemy lay piled up in heaps, and horses strewn all along. I counted forty horses in a distance of fifty yards. Around Sherman’s batteries, where our Regiment fired, every horse and cannoneer was killed, and lay in one indiscriminate heap. All over the battle-field were strewed the dead and dying. Some had placed their arms under their heads as they went to their last sleep. Others folded their arms across their breasts, some with features distorted and fists clenched as they wrestled in the agonies of death; others wore the calm, placid smile which should grace the face of a soldier dying in a glorious cause. In the little clump of sedars, the wounded had crawled and died, and lay there in ghastly heaps.<sup>25</sup>

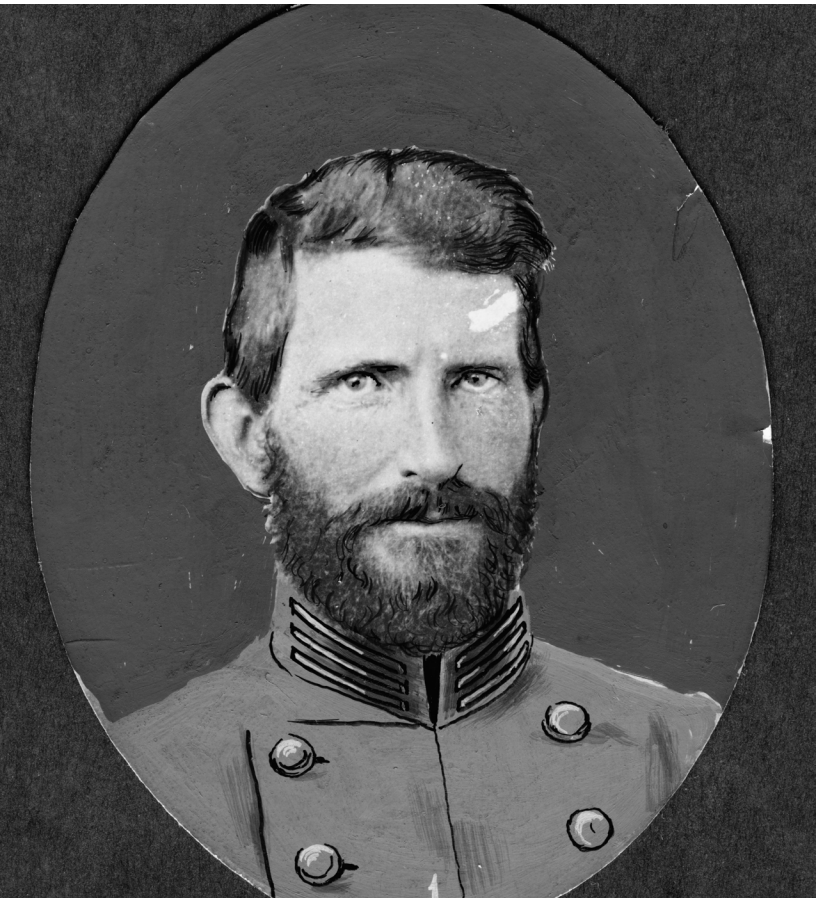
First Manassas was not the bloodiest battle of the 6th North Carolina. Although 24 men were killed or mortally wounded, 46 men wounded in action and one man captured, greater losses would be suffered at Seven Pines, Seven Days, Sharpsburg, Chancellorsville, and Gettysburg. At Rappahannock Station, Virginia, November 7, 1863, nearly 350 members of the regiment were killed, wounded, or captured. The 6<sup>th</sup> North Carolina never recovered from that disaster, numerically, but the survivors faced heavy fighting until war’s end, particularly during the Shenandoah Valley Campaign of 1864. More than 2000 men served in the 6<sup>th</sup> Regiment N.C. State Troops from 1861 to 1865. Approximately 256 members of the regiment were killed or mortally wounded in action, and more than 360 men died of disease or unknown causes. All battle casualties (including killed and mortally wounded in action) amounted to nearly 1900. When the Army of Northern Virginia surrendered at Appomattox Court House, April 9, 1865, 181 men of the 6th North Carolina received paroles.<sup>26</sup>



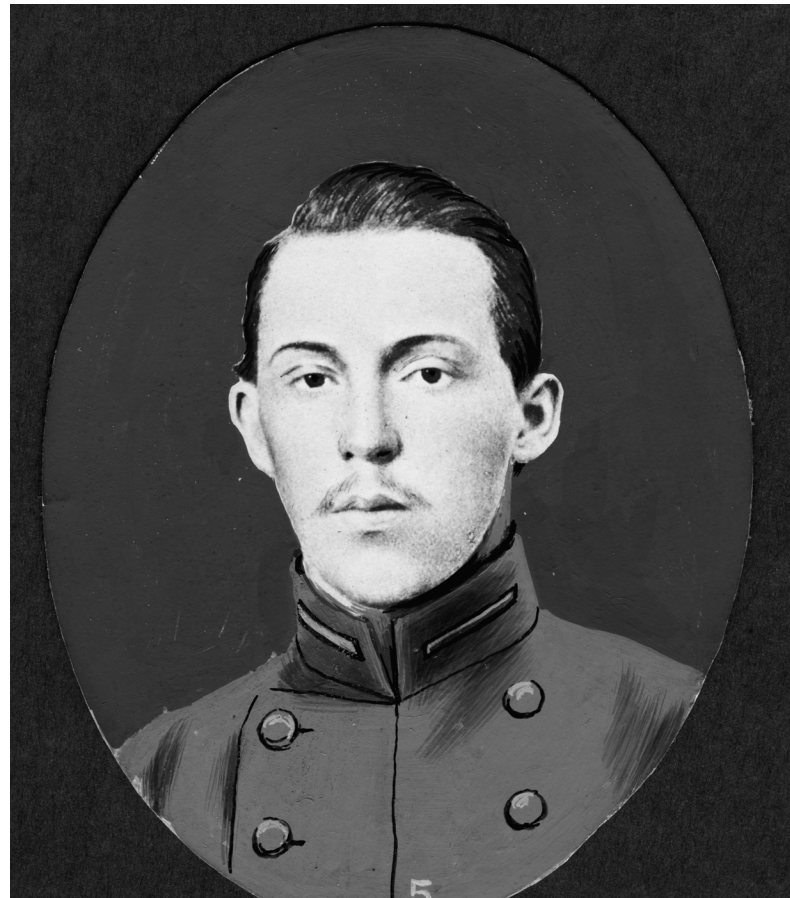
**Corporal Thomas C. Barbee**, Company I (the “Cedar Fork Rifles”), 6th North Carolina. Barbee was wounded in action at the Battle of Gaines Mill, Virginia, June 27, 1862, but returned to duty until paroled at Appomattox Court House, Virginia, April 9, 1865. William O’Quinn.



**Private William Anderson Roberts**, Company K, 6th North Carolina. Roberts sustained a severe hand wound at the Battle of Sharpsburg, September 17, 1862, and the image obviously dates from his convalescence. A clay pipe is visible threaded through the button holes of his greatcoat. The wound was disabling, and Roberts retired to the Invalid Corps in January 1865. Mrs. Joyce Miller, descendant.



The 1861 letters and post-war history by **First Lieutenant Benjamin F. White**, Company F (the “Haw Field River Boys”), 6th North Carolina, are important sources for the history of the regiment at First Manassas. White was promoted to captain in 1862. He was wounded at the battles of Second Manassas and Gettysburg, and captured at the Battle of Rappahannock Station, Virginia, November 7, 1863. N.C. Museum of History.



**Second Lieutenant William Preston Mangum**, Company B (the “Flat River Guards”). Mangum was mortally wounded in action at the Battle of First Manassas and died eight days later. N.C. Museum of History



## Endnotes

- 1 Richmond (Virginia) *Semi-Weekly Examiner*, August 2, 1861, newspaper clipping reproduced in Henry Thomas Shanks (ed.), *The Papers of Willie Person Mangum* (Raleigh: State Department of Archives and History, 5 volumes, 19??-1956), V, 410-411, hereinafter cited as Shanks, *Mangum Papers*.
- 2 Two other North Carolina units were present at the Battle of First Manassas: 5th Regiment N.C. State Troops and 11th Regiment N.C. Volunteers. Both were deployed on the right of the Confederate line near Blackburn's Ford and, while suffering from enemy artillery, never engaged the enemy infantry. The 5th North Carolina lost one killed and three wounded, while the 11th North Carolina seems to have suffered no casualties. (The 11<sup>th</sup> Regiment N.C. Volunteers was redesignated "21<sup>st</sup> Regiment N.C. Troops" in late 1861.)
- 3 *Public Laws of the State of North Carolina Passed by the General Assembly at Its First Extra Session of 1861*, c. 6, s. 1-15
- 4 Rufus Barringer, "Ninth Regiment," in Walter Clark (ed.), *Histories of the Several Regiments and Battalions from North Carolina*, 5 vols. (Raleigh and Goldsboro: State of North Carolina, 1901), 1:417, hereinafter cited as Clark, *Histories of the North Carolina Regiments*. A Maryland officer who served much of the war with North Carolinians observed of the state troops regiments: "All of the ten that I saw during the war were the better for these distinctions [appointed rather than elected officers and enlistment terms 'for the war'], and claimed something of the esprit, by some called 'uppishness' of regulars." McHenry Howard, "Notes and Recollections of Opening of the Campaign of 1864," in Theodore F. Dwight and others (eds.), *Papers of the Military Historical Society of Massachusetts* (Boston: Military Historical Society of Massachusetts, 14 volumes, 1895-1918; Wilmington, North Carolina: Broadfoot Publishing Company, 15 volumes, 1989), 4:93.
- 5 Fisher had assumed command of the future 6<sup>th</sup> North Carolina as early as May 1. He was a political ally of Governor Ellis, and his appointment as colonel was likely assured before the requisite enabling laws were passed. Joining Colonel Fisher as field officers in the regiment were Lieutenant Colonel William T. Dortch of Wayne County, and Major Charles E. Lightfoot, a Virginian and faculty member at Hillsborough Military Academy.
- 6 Richard W. Iobst, *The Bloody Sixth* (Raleigh: North Carolina Confederate Centennial Commission, 1965; Gaithersburg, Maryland: Butternut Press, 1987), 5, hereinafter cited as Iobst, *Bloody Sixth*.
- 7 The Hillsborough *Recorder* of May 6, 1861, printed the following, taken from a recent issue of the *Raleigh Journal*:  
"C. F. FISHER—We see it stated in the Raleigh Journal that Mr. C. F. Fisher is raising a Regiment of picked men—not to move until fighting is to be done, and not to stop until fighting is to cease. It is to embrace companies of smiths, carpenters, masons, engineers, etc. Members are now being quartered at the barracks in Charlotte, for instructions. The expenses are all borne by Mr. Fisher. This is certainly a very liberal enterprise."  
The geographically diverse origin of Company A (see Appendix I, below) suggests that most railroad employees belonged to it.
- 8 Iobst, *Bloody Sixth*, 15-17. The death of Governor Ellis resulted in a change among the field officers of the 6<sup>th</sup> North Carolina. The office of lieutenant governor did not exist at that time, and when the governor died he was succeeded by the Speaker of the North Carolina Senate. That individual in 1861 was Henry Toole Clark of Edgecombe County, who served as governor until the election of Zebulon Vance in summer 1862. In the ensuing political shuffle, Lieutenant Colonel Dortch was chosen Speaker of the House of Commons and resigned. Major Lightfoot was promoted to lieutenant colonel, and Captain Robert F. Webb of Orange County (commander of Company B) received the appointment as major.
- 9 "[W]e all suffered much from fatigue and want of food and the bad weather." William Preston Mangum to Martha P. Mangum, July 17, 1861, in Shanks, *Mangum Papers*, V, 396.
- 10 Iobst, *Bloody Sixth*, 18.
- 11 Alphonso C. Avery, "Additional Sketch Sixth Regiment," in Clark, *Histories of the North Carolina Regiments*, 1:341. "[I]t was late in the evening on the 20th that we were counted into box-cars -- so many on top and so many inside. There were ugly rumors as to obstructions placed on the track, evidently intended to impede our progress. With such rumors, with a train of box-cars full of sleepy, tired men, inside and on top, in the night, and through a mountainous country, it was a dangerous ride." Neill W. Ray, "Sixth Regiment," in Clark, *Histories of the North Carolina Regiments*, 1:298.
- 12 William C. Davis, *Battle at Bull Run* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1977), 159-187,

hereinafter cited as Davis, *Battle at Bull Run*.

13 This episode produced a legend: General Bee, seeing Jackson's brigade posted strongly on Henry Hill, is supposed to have shouted "There stands Jackson like a stonewall!"

14 Davis, *Battle at Bull Run*, 201.

15 The officer may have been Colonel William "Extra Billy" Smith of the 49<sup>th</sup> Virginia, a former and future governor of Virginia, and also a future Confederate brigadier general. In a rather extravagant memoir of First Manassas, written when he was octogenarian, Smith claims that he encountered Colonel Fisher and the 6<sup>th</sup> North Carolina marching in line-of-battle away from the Confederate line:

"Much exasperated, I put spurs to my horse, soon overtook them, and galloping around their left flank, drew up in their front, and brought them to a halt. . . . I heard some in the ranks cry out, "who the h-ll is that?" "To which I replied in a loud voice, " I am Colonel Smith of the Forty-Ninth Virginia Volunteers." To which Colonel Fisher promptly replied, "and I am Colonel Fisher of the Sixth North Carolina, all I ask is to be put in position."

Smith also improbably claims to have given the first order to fire to the 6<sup>th</sup> North Carolina. William Smith, "Reminiscences of the First Battle of Manassas," *Southern Historical Society Papers*, 10:436-439.

16 Davis, *Battle at Bull Run*, 221-222.

17 About this time, Lieutenant Colonel Lightfoot sustained a slight wound. However, "this did not interfere with his locomotion, calling out as he left, 'Boys, take care of yourselves,' and to their discredit or discretion, many took his advice and emulated his example, but did not stop till they reached Manassas, five miles away." Benjamin F. White, "Sixth Regiment at Manassas, 21 July, 1861" in Clark, *Histories of the North Carolina Regiments*, 5:582-83.

18 Avery, "Additional Sketch Sixth Regiment," in Clark, *Histories of the North Carolina Regiments*, 1:344-345.

19 The capture of the advanced Federal batteries was the turning point in the battle, and members of the 6<sup>th</sup> North Carolina felt that they deserved the credit for it. Yet it seems clear that the guns were first taken by the 33<sup>rd</sup> Virginia. The batteries were recaptured by the Federals and lost again at least once after the initial charge of the 33<sup>rd</sup>. It appears that the charge of the 6<sup>th</sup> North Carolina on the guns was the second Confederate capture of the weapons. The batteries were posted in an area that became a virtual "no man's land" between the two lines for several hours, and the Confederates were able to secure the guns only after their final advance forced a general Union retreat. Davis, *Battle at Bull Run*, 200-242.

20 That individual may have been Colonel (later Major General) Orlando Willcox of the 1<sup>st</sup> Regiment Michigan Infantry, who mistakenly rode into the Confederate lines and was captured. Davis, *Battle at Bull Run*, 222.

21 One source says that Colonel Fisher, after issuing the "Charge," command, moved at the left oblique from his regiment, apparently seeing some Federals in a nearby woods. His body was later found "far in advance of the point reached by anyone on the left of our line." A Sergeant Hannah of Company A is said to have followed him and their bodies were found together. The latter individual was probably Private William D. Hanner, who was indeed killed in action that day.

"The Salem People's Press, in its July 26 and August 2 issues, provided the following account:

Col. Fisher was killed in front of his regiment while leading his men on to the fight. The colonel dismounted, divested himself of his watch, sword, and coat, and swinging a carbine across his shoulder, called to his men to follow him. The colonel was struck by a conical musket ball just over the left eye, which passed through his hat at the base of the crown, and went entirely through his skull coming out behind. He of course died instantly and without pain."

Fisher's corpse was removed from the battlefield, carried on horseback "cold and stiff in death." The train transporting Fisher's remains to Salisbury stopped in Raleigh. His coat and hat were placed on top of the coffin, and crowds filing past could see the two bullet holes in his hat. Louis H. Manarin, Weymouth T. Jordan, Matthew M. Brown, and Michael W. Coffey, comps., *North Carolina Troops 1861-1865: A Roster*, 18 vols. to date (Raleigh: N.C. Office of Archives and History, 1966-), hereinafter cited as Manarin, et al., *North Carolina Troops* 4(second printing with addenda, 1989):282, 377, 707, 724; Iobst, *Bloody Sixth*, 24.

22 During the charge on the Federal batteries, Mangum "bravely passed to the onset and with waving sword and thrilling voice, cheered and rallied the heroic column as it staggered before the fiery storm." As he leaned against a captured cannon, a bullet struck his chest. A Bible absorbed much of the impact: "He had the good book in his left coat pocket. It was struck by a ball near the edge, but the book changed the direction of the bullet, and it glanced off. . . . The Book was saturated with blood." Mangum was expected to survive, but during convalescence gangrene invaded the wound and he died on July 29. His embalmed remains were returned to the family home near present-day Bahama in Durham County, where he was interred beneath a stone that reads "*Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori.*" Mangum's bereaved father died on September 7, 1861. For the next 122 years, the young soldier lay undisturbed, but in



late 1983 grave robbers desecrated his grave, possibly for his uniform and buttons. He was reinterred in 1984. Hillsborough *Recorder*, July 31, 1861; Greg Mast, *State Troops and Volunteers: A Photographic Record of North Carolina's Civil War Soldiers*, 1 vol. to date (Raleigh: N.C. Office of Archives and History, 1995), 1:96.

23 Benjamin Franklin White to J. J. Phillips, n.d. [ca. late July-August, 1861], Private Collections, James J. Phillips Papers, PC 166, Archives, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, hereinafter cited as Phillips Papers, State Archives.

Benjamin F. White was a second lieutenant in Company F of the 6th North Carolina. His cousin William Paisley White died on June 24, 1863, of wounds received at Manassas and/or "typhoid fever." Manarin et al., *North Carolina Troops*, 4(second printing with addenda, 1989):332, 343, 747.

24 Benjamin F. White, "Sixth Regiment at Manassas, 21 July, 1861" in Clark, *Histories of the North Carolina Regiments*, 5:584.

25 Shanks, *Mangum Papers*, 413-414. Another appraisal of the aftermath is found in a letter of Lieutenant Benjamin White of Company F. Mutilated corpses shocked survivors of the battle, but so did the desperate condition of the wounded. Many of the latter were not removed until three days after the battle. Flies were quickly attracted to open wounds. The resulting infestation of maggots among the untended wounds was an unexpected horror. During the hours that Private William Paisley White lay on the battlefield, Lieutenant White recorded, "the flies had blowed his wounds and filled them with loathsome creatures. The lieutenant also observed a Mississippian, shot in the head: "[H]e was carried to a barn and placed on some hay . . . he lay there thousands of maggods in his head, Crying Continually 'Worse; worser worser!' unconscious of everything else[.] [He was living in that condition five days after the Battle." Benjamin Franklin White to J. J. Phillips, n.d. [ca. late July-August, 1861], Phillips Papers, State Archives. White also added: "[Y]ou cannot imagine what a stench Hundreds of dead men and Horses will make[.] It is insufferable[,] taints the air for miles around. . . ."

26 See the Appendix below for casualty and mortality statistics of the 6<sup>th</sup> North Carolina.

## **Appendix: Organizational and Statistical Profile of the 6<sup>th</sup> Regiment North Carolina State Troops**

**by Greg Mast**

### **1. Brigade Affiliation:**

Early June 1861: Organized at Camp Alamance, Company Shops (present day Burlington), Alamance County.

July 16, 1861-mid-August 1861: Brigadier General Bernard E. Bee's Brigade (7th and 8th Regiments Georgia Infantry, 11th Regiment Mississippi Infantry).

mid-August 1861-May 1862: Brigadier General William H.C. Whiting's Brigade (4th Regiment Alabama Infantry, 2nd and 11th Regiments Mississippi Infantry).

May 1862-November 8, 1862: Colonel (later Brigadier General) Evander M. Laws's Brigade (4th Regiment Alabama Infantry, 2nd and 11th Regiments Mississippi Infantry).

November 8, 1862-January 19, 1863: Brigadier General Evander M. Laws's Brigade (4th and 44th Regiments Alabama Infantry, 54th and 57th Regiments N.C. Troops)

January 19, 1863-April 9, 1865: Hoke-Godwin-Lewis Brigade<sup>1</sup> (21st, 54th, and 57th Regiments N.C. Troops, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion N.C. Sharpshooters)

## 2. Field Officers

**Colonel Charles Frederick Fisher.** Resident of Rowan County and president of the North Carolina Railroad. Killed in action at the Battle of First Manassas, Virginia, July 21, 1861.

**Colonel William Dorsey Pender.** Native of Edgecombe County, and officer in the United States Army until he resigned in March 1861. Appointed colonel, 3<sup>rd</sup> Regiment N.C. Volunteers (subsequently 13<sup>th</sup> Regiment N.C. Troops), in May 1861. Appointed colonel of this regiment to rank from August 17, 1861. Promoted to brigadier general, June 5, 1862.

**Colonel Isaac Erwin Avery.** Resident of Burke County. Killed in action at the Battle of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, July 3, 1863.

**Colonel Robert Fulton Webb.** Resident of Orange County. Prisoner of war at the Battle of Rappahannock Station, Virginia, November 7, 1865. Oath of Allegiance at the Federal prison at Johnson's Island, Ohio, July 25, 1865.

**Lieutenant Colonel William Theophilus Dortch.** Resident of Wayne County. Resigned July 11, 1861, to become Speaker of the North Carolina House of Commons.

**Lieutenant Colonel Charles Edward Lightfoot.** Native of Virginia and faculty member of the Hillsborough Military Academy. Elected colonel, 22<sup>nd</sup> Regiment N.C. Troops (12<sup>th</sup> Regiment N.C. Volunteers), March 29, 1862.

**Lieutenant Colonel Samuel McDowell Tate.** Resident of Burke County. On wounded furlough when he was paroled at Morganton, May 16, 1865.

**Major Richard Watt York.** Resident of Chatham County. Absent on wounded furlough at the end of the war.

## 3. Company Organization

### **Company A, Mecklenburg and Burke Counties**

Organized at Charlotte on May 28, 1861, for a term of three years or the duration of the war. Many members of the company were employees of the North Carolina Railroad. Designated Company A of this regiment in June 1861. Members of the company were principally from Mecklenburg (51 men) and Burke (28 men) counties. Total enrollment was 201 men and included sixteen men from Guilford County, twelve men from Randolph County, nine men from Davidson County, eight men from Alamance County, five men from Rowan County, small contingents from seven other counties and the States of Louisiana, New York, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, and Virginia, and 45 men whose county of residence is unknown. Deaths in Company A amounted to 40 men: 17 from battle, and 23 from disease, unknown, and minor causes, for a mortality rate of 20.6%.

### **Company B (the "Flat River Guards"), Orange County**

Enlisted in Orange County, May 1, 1861, for a term of three years or the duration of the war. Designated Company B of this regiment in June 1861. Most of the men were from that portion of Orange County that became part of Durham County in 1881. Total enrollment was 206 men and included 120 men from Orange County, eighteen men from Burke County, nine men from Granville County, six men from Anson County, five men from Forsyth County, small contingents from five other counties, and 42 men whose county of residence is unknown. Deaths in Company B amounted to 61 men: 19 from battle, and 42 from disease, unknown, and minor causes, for a mortality rate of 29.6%.



### **Company C** (the “Orange Grays”), Orange County

Organized at Durham on May 1, 1861, and subsequently enlisted for a term of three years or the duration of the war. Designated Company C of this regiment in June 1861. Most of the men were from that portion of Orange County that became Durham County in 1881. Total enrollment was 189 men and included 127 men from Orange County, eleven men from Burke County, smaller contingents from five other counties and the State of Georgia, and 43 men whose county of residence is unknown. Deaths in Company C amounted to 65 men: 32 from battle, and 33 from disease, unknown, and minor causes, for a mortality rate of 34.7%.

### **Company D**, Burke and McDowell Counties

Organized in Burke County and enlisted at Charlotte, May 28, 1861, for a term of three years or the duration of the war. Moved to Camp Alamance, Company Shops, Alamance County, June 1, 1861, and subsequently designated Company D of this regiment. Members of the company were principally from Burke County (125 men) and McDowell County (23 men). Total enrollment in the company was 193 men and included eight men from Catawba County, seven men from Union County, small contingents from eleven other counties, and nineteen men whose county of residence is unknown. Deaths in Company D amounted to 53 men: 26 from battle, and 27 from disease, unknown, and minor causes, for a mortality rate of 27.5%

### **Company E**, Burke, Mitchell, and Yancey Counties

Organized in Burke County and enlisted at Charlotte, May 28, 1861, for a term of three years or the duration of the war. Moved to Camp Alamance, Company Shops, Alamance County, June 1, 1861, and subsequently designated Company E of this regiment. Members of the company were principally from Burke County (82 men), Mitchell County (46 men), and Yancey County (30 men). Total enrollment was 216 men and included fifteen men from McDowell County, small contingents from eight other counties and the State of South Carolina, and 31 men whose county of residence is unknown. Deaths in Company E amounted to 63 men: 24 from battle, and 39 from disease, unknown, and minor causes, for a mortality rate of 29.2%.

### **Company F** (the “Haw Fields River Boys”), Alamance County

Organized in Alamance County and enlisted at Charlotte, May 28, 1861, for a term of three years or the duration of the war. Moved to Camp Alamance, Company Shops, Alamance County, June 1, 1861, and subsequently designated Company F of this regiment. Members of the company were principally from Alamance County (129 men). Total enrollment was 204 men and included eighteen men from Orange County, eleven men from Burke County, six men from Forsyth County, small contingents from two other counties, and 36 men whose county of residence is unknown. Deaths in Company F amounted to 73 men: 35 from battle, and 38 from disease, unknown, and minor Causes, for a mortality rate of 35.8%.

### **Company G**, Rowan County

Organized in Rowan County and enlisted at Charlotte, May 28, 1861, for a term of three years or the duration of the war. Moved to Camp Alamance, Company Shops, Alamance County, June 1, 1861, and subsequently designated Company G of this regiment. Members of the company were principally from Rowan County (117 men). Total enrollment was 185 men and included twelve men from Burke County, eight men from Mecklenburg County, six men from Halifax County, small contingents from nine other counties and the State of Texas, and 28 men whose county of residence is unknown. Deaths in Company G amounted to 52 men: 28 from battle, and 24 from disease, unknown, and minor causes, for a mortality rate of 28.1%

### **Company H** (the “Caswell Boys”), Caswell County

Organized in Caswell County and enlisted June 6, 1861, for a term of three years or the duration of the war. Moved to Camp Alamance, Company Shops, Alamance County, and designated Company H of this regiment in June 1861. Members of the company were principally from Caswell County (156 men). Total enrollment was 196 men and included six men from Stokes County, five men from Orange County, small contingents from four

other counties, and 22 men whose county of residence is unknown. Deaths in Company H amounted to 72 men: 25 from battle, and 47 from disease, unknown, and minor causes, for a mortality rate of 36.7%.

### **Company I** (the “Cedar Fork Rifles”), Wake and Chatham Counties.

This company was also known as the “Morrisville Grays” and the “North Carolina Grays.” Organized in Wake County and enlisted May 28, 1861, for a term of three years or the duration of the war. Moved to Camp Alamance, Company Shops, Alamance County, June 1, 1861. Designated Company I of this regiment in June 1861. Members of the company were principally from Wake County (95 men) and Chatham County (43 men). Total enrollment was 208 men and included sixteen men from Orange County, fourteen men from Burke County, eight men from Yadkin County, small contingents from seven other counties, and 25 men whose county of residence is unknown. Deaths in Company I amounted to 67 men: 24 in battle, and 43 from disease, unknown, and minor causes, for a mortality rate of 32.1%.

### **Company K**, Alamance County

Organized in Alamance County and enlisted on June 21, 1861, for a term of three years or the war. Moved to Camp Alamance, Company Shops, Alamance County, and designated Company K of this regiment in June 1861. Members of the company were principally from Alamance County (139 men). Total enrollment was 208 men and included ten men from Burke County, nine men from Orange County, small contingents from nine other counties, and 36 men whose county of residence is unknown. Deaths in Company K amounted to 73 men: 24 in battle, and 49 from disease, unknown, and minor causes, for a mortality rate of 35.1%.

### **Field and Staff**

Fifty men served as field officers, staff officers, staff non-commissioned officers, and bandsmen. Thirty-one men transferred to the field and staff from the various companies. The remaining nineteen men include four men from Rowan County, small contingents from seven other counties and the States of Georgia and Virginia, and four men whose county of residence is unknown. Two deaths occurred among the field and staff: Colonel Charles Frederick Fisher, killed in action at the Battle of First Manassas, Virginia, July 21, 1861, and Colonel Isaac Erwin Avery, killed in action at the Battle of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, July 3, 1863.

### **Miscellaneous**

Fragmentary service records, usually just one document, remain of twenty-three men who may have served in this regiment, but for whom no company is recorded. Many of these are likely mistaken entries for men who actually served in other North Carolina units or in other Confederate units numbered “6.” In September-October 1862, twelve new recruits, mostly from Burke County, deserted near Staunton, Virginia, before joining the regiment. They apparently were never assigned to a company.



## 4. Statistical Summaries<sup>2</sup>

### Enlistment Summary

	<u>1861</u>	<u>1862</u>	<u>1863</u>	<u>1864</u>	<u>1865</u>	<u>Trans. Unk.</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Company A	76	52	3	54	1	--	194
Company B	84	50	10	49	1	3	206
Company C	92	43	1	35	--	2	187
Company D	86	43	7	42	--	7	193
Company E	99	51	16	35	--	4	216
Company F	86	49	12	44	--	1	204
Company G	94	35	2	44	--	--	185
Company H	100	47	6	27	--	4	196
Company I	94	53	10	29	--	10	208
Company K	83	49	10	48	--	6	208
Field and Staff	11	2	1	--	--	--	50
Miscellaneous	8	12	--	--	--	--	35
TOTAL	913	486	78	407	2	37	2082(2042)

Forty men served in more than one company of the regiment, or served in a company and transferred to the Field and Staff. Therefore, the total enlistment is 2042 men.

### Mortality Summary

	<u>BD</u>	<u>DIS/UNK</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>MORT %</u>
Company A	17	23	40	20.6
Company B	19	42	61	29.6
Company C	32	33	65	34.7
Company D	26	27	53	27.5
Company E	24	39	63	29.2
Company F	35	38	73	35.8
Company G	28	24	52	28.1
Company H	25	47	72	36.7
Company I	24	43	67	32.2
Company K	24	49	73	35.1
Field and Staff	2	--	2	NA
Miscellaneous	--	--	--	--
TOTAL	256	365	621	30.4

### Mortality by year

	<u>BD</u>	<u>DIS/UNK</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
1861	24	58	82
1862	81	157	238
1863	80	41	121
1864	64	67	131
1865	5	42	47
Unknown	1	1	2

Died in Federal prisons: 54 men.

### Desertion summary

	<u>Desertions</u>	<u>Permanent</u>	<u>DES %</u>	<u>Desertions by year</u>	
Company A	47	39	24.2	1861	7
Company B	15	12	7.3	1862	47
Company C	5	4	2.6	1863	61
Company D	13	11	6.7	1864	63
Company E	50	26	23.1	1865	4
Company F	7	7	3.4		
Company G	14	10	7.6		
Company H	5	5	2.6		
Company I	9	8	4.3		
Company K	5	2	2.4		
Field and Staff	--	--	NA		
Miscellaneous	12	12	NA		
TOTAL	182	136	8.9%		

Shot for desertion: 1.

## **5. Principal Campaigns and Battles**

This table represents casualties sustained by members of the 6<sup>th</sup> Regiment N.C. State Troops that were recorded, primarily in the men's published compiled service records. The numbers are not presumed to be entirely accurate. It is clear, for example, that many wounded-in-action casualties were never recorded.

Many casualties listed below are included under "Campaigns"—such as the Maryland Campaign—rather than



in specific battles. In those instances it was impossible to determine in which battle of the campaign a casualty occurred, or the casualty was sustained in a minor action not listed. For example, to find the complete casualties of the 6<sup>th</sup> Regiment N.C. State Troops in the Maryland Campaign, September 3-20, 1862, one must add the figures for the “Maryland Campaign”; for the Battle of South Mountain (September 14); and for the Battle of Sharpsburg (September 17).

The following abbreviations are used:

BD: “Battle deaths.” This column includes soldiers who were killed in action or who subsequently died as a result of wounds sustained in battle. Men who were reported missing in action on battlefields controlled by United States forces, and for whom no further records exist, are presumed to have been killed in action and are also included in “battle deaths.”

WIA: “Wounded in action.” Men who were wounded, survived, and were not captured are counted as “wounded in action.”

PW: “Prisoners of war.” Soldiers who were captured but unwounded are considered “prisoners of war.” Men who subsequently died in Federal captivity are included in this category unless their service records indicate they died of wounds, in which case they are counted under “battle deaths.”

WPW: “Wounded prisoners of war.” Men who were wounded in action subsequently captured by United States forces are considered “wounded prisoners of war.” This category is necessary for an accurate count because the traditional method of reporting casualties—killed, wounded, and captured—begs the question of under which category wounded prisoners should be counted; if under both wounded and captured, then the resulting figure is too large.

No soldier is counted as more than one casualty in any battle. For example, if a soldier was wounded at Gettysburg on July 2, 1863, captured in a hospital after the battle, and died of his wounds on August 1, he is counted only under “battle deaths.”

Battle	Date	BD	WIA	PW	WPW	Total
First Manassas	July 21, 1861	24	46	1	0	71
Williamsburg	May 5, 1862	0	0	1	1	2
Eltham’s Landing	May 7, 1862 <sup>3</sup>					
Seven Pines	May 31-June 1, 1862	23	72	10	5	110
Seven Days Campaign	June 25-July 1, 1862	0	4	0	0	4
Gaines’ Mill	June 27, 1862	7	46	0	0	53
Malvern Hill	July 1, 1862	4	53	3	0	60
Second Manassas	August 28-31, 1862	13	68	0	0	81
Maryland Campaign	September 3-20, 1862	0	0	2	0	2
South Mountain	September 14, 1862	1	5	20	0	26
Sharpsburg	September 17, 1862	26	96	8	5	135
Fredericksburg	December 13, 1862	6	23	1	0	30
Chancellorsville	May 1-5, 1863	13	44	20	1	78
Gettysburg	July 1-5, 1863	51	74	45	45	215

Retreat from Gettysburg	July 6-14, 1863	0	0	2	0	2
Somerville Ford	September 16, 1863	3	2	0	0	5
Rappahannock Station	November 7, 1863	15	11	305	4	335
Batchelder's Creek	February 1-2, 1864	0	1	0	0	1
Plymouth	April 18-20, 1864	11	25	0	0	36
Overland Campaign	May 23-June 16, 1864	0	0	1	0	1
Bethesda Church	May 30, 1864	0	3	9	0	12
Cold Harbor	May 31-June 3, 1864	9	15	4	0	28
Shenandoah Valley Campgn	June 17-December 1864	4	14	4	0	22
Monocacy	July 8, 1864	0	0	6	2	8
Washington	July 12, 1864	0	0	2	0	2
Stephenson's Depot	July 20, 1864	3	0	24	0	27
Second Kernstown	July 25, 1864	1	2	1	0	4
Charles Town	August 21-22, 1864	1	3	2	0	6
Third Winchester	September 19, 1864	19	12	6	8	45
Fisher's Hill	September 22, 1864	2	4	31	2	39
Cedar Creek	October 19, 1864	14	14	25	1	54
Siege of Petersburg	Dec 1864-Apr 1, 1865	0	5	1	0	6
Hatcher's Run	February 5-6, 1865	2	5	8	0	15
Fort Stedman	March 25, 1865	2	16	40	2	60
Road to Appomattox	April 2-9, 1865	1	8	107	2	118
Appomattox Court House	April 9, 1865	0	0	181	1	182
Miscellaneous and unknown		1	0	0	0	1
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>257</b>	<b>671</b>	<b>871</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>1877</b>

## Endnotes

1 The brigade was commanded by Brigadier General Robert F. Hoke from January 1863 until his promotion to major general in May 1864. Hoke was wounded in action at the Battle of Chancellorsville, May 3, 1863, and the brigade was commanded during the Gettysburg Campaign by Colonel Isaac E. Avery of the 6<sup>th</sup> North Carolina, who was killed in action at Gettysburg, July 3, 1863. Colonel Archibald C. Godwin of the 57<sup>th</sup> North Carolina commanded the brigade until he was captured at the Battle of Rappahannock Station, November 7, 1863. Following Hoke's promotion, Colonel William Gaston Lewis of the 43<sup>rd</sup> Regiment N.C. Troops was promoted to brigadier general and commanded the brigade. After several battles in the Shenandoah Valley Campaign of 1864, Lewis took an extended leave of absence. The newly-exchanged Colonel Godwin received his promotion to brigadier general on August 5, 1864, and served until killed in action at the Battle of Third Winchester, September 19, 1864. General Lewis returned to duty in November 1864 and served until he was wounded and captured near Farmville, Virginia, on April 7, 1865.

2 The following tables provide an accounting of recorded enlistments, casualties, deaths, and desertions sustained by the 6<sup>th</sup> Regiment N.C. State Troops during the years 1861-1865. The figures were abstracted by the author from casualty and mortality databases constructed by him for North Carolina units that belonged to the Army of Northern Virginia or that fought in Virginia prior to the organization of that Army.

The databases were built almost entirely from Louis H. Manarin, Weymouth T. Jordan, Matthew M. Brown, and Michael W. Coffey, comps., *North Carolina Troops 1861-1865: A Roster*, 18 vols. to date (Raleigh: N.C. Office of Archives and History, 1966-), which provides detailed service record information on each North Carolina soldier. However, some minor emendations were made to the databases from information obtained by the author during his researches on the photographic history of North Carolina's soldiers, 1847-1865, from Charles Purser *Additional Information and Emendments to the NORTH CAROLINA TROOPS 1861-1865 Seventeen Volume Roster* (Wake Forest: The Scuppernong Press, 2010), and from other sources.

3 The 6<sup>th</sup> North Carolina seemingly was present at the Battle of Eltham's Landing, Virginia, May 7, 1862, but apparently sustained no casualties.



# "WE HAVE GO

## EARLY-WAR UNIFORMS, ARMS, AND EQUIPAGE OF THE 6<sup>TH</sup> REGIMENT NORTH CAROLINA STATE TROOPS

Robert A. Williams

As President of the North Carolina Railroad Company, Colonel Charles Frederick Fisher leveraged his considerable influence along the line to attract many enthusiastic and capable young volunteers to his own 6<sup>th</sup> Regiment N. C. State Troops. While several companies that joined Fisher's command came fully uniformed by their respective home communities, most recruits enlisted with only the barest of military paraphernalia. Like many wealthy Southerners, Fisher found it necessary to initially spend his own money to provide these new soldiers with food, clothing, and basic subsistence items. Fortunately for us, the surviving written, photographic, and archeological record of the 6<sup>th</sup> North Carolina grants some insight as to how the unit was uniformed and equipped in the war's early months.

For weapons and accouterments the fledgling regiment relied on the ordnance department of the State of North Carolina. While encamped at the railroad facility of Company Shops (present-day Burlington) in late June 1861 Fisher received a shipment of .69 caliber arms from the state which included 600 U.S. Model 1822 muskets (Model 1816 variant, altered to percussion) and 200 U.S. Model 1842 rifled muskets. Accompanying these weapons was a generous supply of appendages including 800 wipers, 800 screw drivers, 800 spare cones, 80 spring vises, and 80 ball screws. Complete sets of accouterments to match the number of muskets were also received consisting of "cartridge boxes with belts," cap pouches, and bayonet scabbards. Based upon photographic evidence these items closely followed the U.S. M1839 patterns then in general use. Presumably, bayonets were also included. White cotton haversacks and tin drum canteens with leather straps were also supplied in sufficient quantities to meet immediate needs. Knapsacks from state stocks, probably of the old Mexican War design, completed the ensemble.

Most distinctive of all the accouterment items received were waist belts with a cast brass plate bearing the appellation "6<sup>th</sup> INF. / N.C.S.T." The belt plates were clearly not standard state issue and local lore has it they were specially manufactured at the Company Shops railroad foundry under the direction of Colonel Fisher. Most had black enamel painted on the background to highlight the letters and utilized three attachment prongs on the reverse. Unfortunately, these hooks were brazed on rather crudely and tended to break under normal field usage. More than thirty of these buckles were recovered by relic hunters in the 1970s from the regiment's first winter camp near Dumfries, Virginia. Nearly all had one or more broken hooks. The high survival seems to indicate they were issued to the entire regiment. They are clearly visible in early war likenesses of Marcus Edward Parrish (Company I) and Solomon Moore (Company K) **pictured right**. However, other types of belt plates including the small Pattern 1839 "US" buckle and plain rectangular sheet brass types are also seen in early-war photographs of the 6<sup>th</sup> North Carolina

While the State did a commendable job in equipping the Sixth, clothing the men in uniform fashion (or any fashion) was another matter. A military board was convened by the governor in May to determine dress regulations for State Troops and volunteers. These were first published by the N. C. Adjutant-Generals office on May 27<sup>th</sup>. Yet several months elapsed before reality even approximated the standards specified by the board. Indeed, as late as

# "IT NO CLOSE"



Clockwise; 1861 Regulation Uniform coat of Colonel Fisher, 6th NCST; 6th NCST belt plate; Private Solomon Moore, Company K, 6th NCST



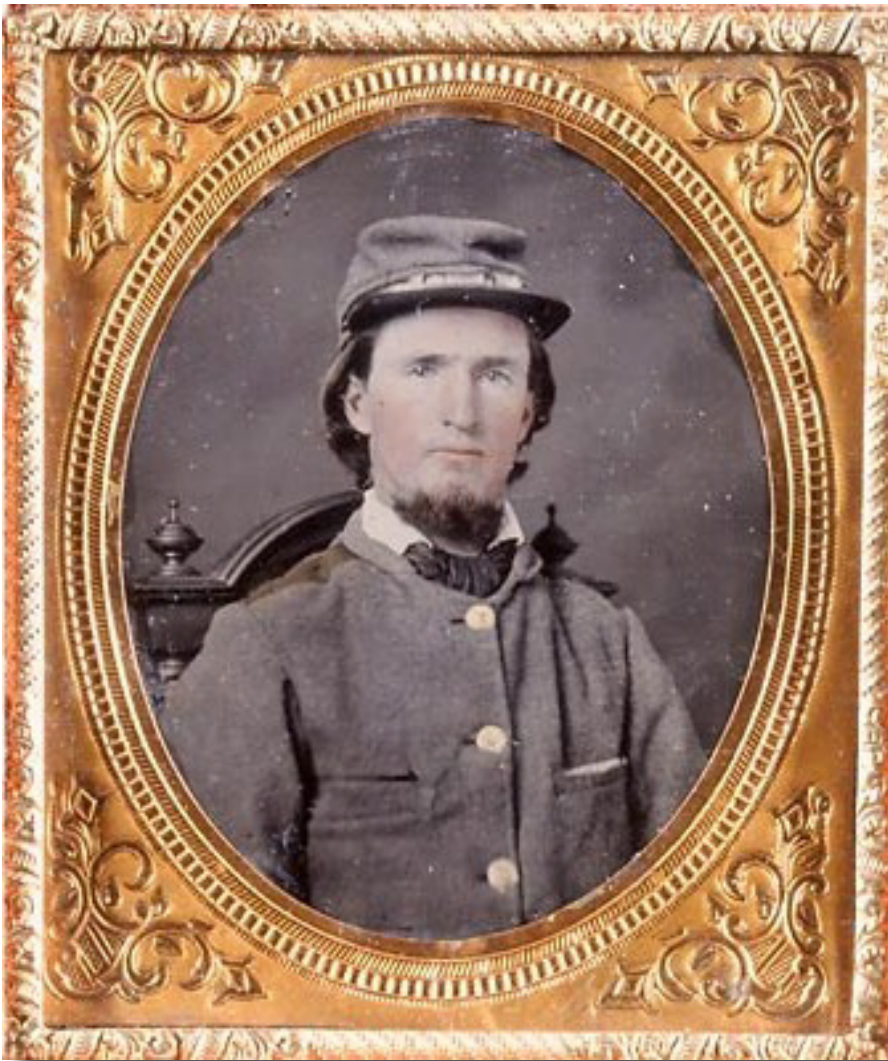
early July one member of the Sixth wrote home lamenting “we have got no close [clothes].”

From the beginning, Fisher worked tirelessly to alleviate this shortage. Assisted by friends who served as purchasing agents, he systematically garnered suitable uniform materials from a wide variety of sources. Typical purchases included 294 yards of jeans cloth from F. H. Fries in Salem, grey tweed material from Meredith Spencer & Co. in Richmond, and several thousand yards of mixed dry goods including “uniform materials, osnaburgs, and plaids” from E. M. Holt’s store in Graham, Alamance County. The Colonel’s personal prestige also allowed him some advantage with suppliers who actively sought his patronage at a time when competition for military goods was extremely fierce. One Mr. G. Rosenthal of Yanceyville offered to sell Fisher in mid-June 70 flannel shirts and 50 pair of drawers “such as our volunteers here in Caswell County received” at 75 cents and \$1.00 each, respectively. The merchant was quick to point out that “the quality is as good as can be expected for the price.”

Converting raw materials into suitable and practical clothing was another matter altogether. However, local patriotic women’s groups including the Ladies of Hillsborough and the Cedar Fork Sewing Society stepped capably to the front, “rendering a service second only to that of soldiers in the field,” Fisher acknowledged. One society matron clarified “there was not a sewing machine at that time in all this country [and] this heavy stitching of

Military Suits . . . was done with our fingers.” Based upon surviving photographs, a wool flannel “soldier’s shirt” of various styles and colors appears to have served as the initial uniform for several companies (as indeed for many hastily mustered organizations across the entire South). Trimmed or plain, such utilitarian garments were cheaply made, quickly produced by even inexperienced seamstresses, and served as excellent outerwear during the warm summer campaigning months. Clearly, for those companies not self-uniformed, Fisher intended these sturdy overshirts to “make do” until state supply systems kicked in.

It is uncertain when the first issues of regulation North Carolina state clothing were made to members of the Sixth. This would include a black trimmed, six button gray cloth sack coat with falling collar and matching trousers with a black stripe down the outer seam. Both circumstantial and photographic evidence seems to indicate at least some companies were so attired by the second week in July, 1861. The regiment was designated as part of the honor guard to march in the funeral procession of the late Governor John W. Ellis in Raleigh on July 10<sup>th</sup>, and it is highly unlikely that any members of Fisher’s regiment



**Private Newton A. Branch of Company D, 6th North Carolina. Branch was wounded and captured at the Battle of Gettysburg. The image dates from 1861, and the distinctive finials on the back of the chair in which Branch sits mark it as the work of Raleigh photographer Esly Hunt. North Carolina Museum of History.**

would have remained ununiformed for the solemn state occasion. Additionally, there exists a photograph of Private Newton Branch of Company D clad in the regulation early war North Carolina uniform, complete with a gray military cap. Through some excellent detective work in his monumental State Troops and Volunteers, Volume I, author Greg Mast concluded that this “spindle chair” image of Branch was taken in a Raleigh studio. Since the regiment departed for the Virginia front on July 11<sup>th</sup> and did not return to the area for several years, that would seem to confirm Branch’s likeness was made during the brief period surrounding Ellis’s funeral.

Furthermore, several junior officers of the regiment were photographed during these early months in uniforms that almost precisely mirrored the North Carolina adjutant-generals guidelines for line officers: grey nine button, single-breasted frock coat with gilt edged shoulder straps, gray trousers, and a tall black felt hat looped up on one side and adorned on front with the standard infantry bugle insignia. Fisher himself contracted with a tailor in Wilmington for a Colonel’s double breasted frock coat according to specifications complete with a silver embroidered eagle on the shoulder straps. That coat is now in the possession of the North Carolina Museum of History, along with other of the colonel’s effects. It bears ultra-rare uniform buttons of stamped brass displaying the early pine tree and rattlesnake emblem with the Latin motto “NOLI ME TANGERE” (Do not touch me).



**Frock coat of Colonel Charles Frederick Fisher 6<sup>th</sup> NCST. Col Fisher’s frock coat closely follows NC’s 1861 uniform regulations as prescribed for officers.**

Of particular interest when studying early war uniforms of the 6<sup>th</sup> NCST is the matter of military buttons. The state uniform regulations simply specify “North Carolina gilt buttons,” which would imply the well-known state seal pattern. Indeed, on March 13, 1861, the Raleigh *North Carolina Standard* reported that Fisher’s own tailor “O. S. Baldwin, Esq., of Wilmington, N. C., has placed upon our table a specimen of the military button, recently advertised in our paper, having embossed the coat of arms of our State. Knowing little of heraldry, we cannot see much in the coat of arms to admire, but as to the mechanical execution of the button itself, we can truly say it is decidedly neat and in good taste.”

Strangely, archeological findings from the regiment’s 1861-1862 Dumfries, Virginia winter camps yielded only one such specimen of the regulation North Carolina state seal pattern. Instead, one particular brass civilian ornamental or “flower” button was found in profusion indicating the use of on-hand mercantile supplies when making some of the regiment’s first clothing. These very attractive one-piece buttons measure approximately  $\frac{3}{4}$ ” in diameter and depict a floral bouquet on the face with a “Rich Gold Color” back mark. Upon close examination, these distinctive buttons can be discerned in several photographs of members of Company H. Fairly large numbers of pre-war US Ordnance Corps buttons depicting a flaming bomb over crossed cannon were also recovered from the camp. It is this writer’s opinion they were gleaned from existing Federal arsenal stocks and expediently used on the earliest issues of North Carolina regulation state clothing. Additionally, some eagle buttons as well as cadet patterns from the Hillsborough Military Academy and the North Carolina Military Institute at Charlotte were also found.



So how might have Colonel Charles F. Fisher's 6<sup>th</sup> Regiment North Carolina Troops appeared in line of battle on the Plains of Manassas on July 21, 1861? Following is conjectural uniform information for most of the companies based upon existing resources:

Company A – Not known.

Company B, the “Flat River Guards” : A gray waist-length shell jacket with three rows of seven buttons each forming a plastron effect on front. Buttons of pre-war eagle pattern. Jacket trimmed on collar and cuffs with two rows of black twill tape with ornamental buttons attached. Trousers of gray with black seam stripe. Headgear of Hardee style hat looped on one side with silver 1830s rifleman's insignia and letters “FRG” on front. Self-uniformed.

Company C, the “Orange Grays”: A single-breasted nine button frock coat of coarse gray jeans with dark tape trim around perimeter of collar. Gray trousers. Headgear a mixture of wide brimmed slouch hats and untrimmed gray forage caps. Uniformed by local community.

Company D - Regulation North Carolina attire consisting of a 6 button state issue sack coat of local cloth with black sewn shoulder tabs. One photograph shows two external pockets on coat, which may be alterations. Matching gray cap and pants. Buttons likely of U.S. Ordnance pattern.

Company E – A plain gray “soldier's shirt” with black plastron and collar. Gray North Carolina style forage cap with applied ornamental star on front. Trousers also likely gray in color.

Company F, the “Haw Fields River Boys”: – Not known.

Company G – A dark blue loose-fitting 6 button frock style coat with light (blue?) tape trim around collar and down front edge. McDowell style forage cap also of dark blue. Trousers of lighter color, possibly gray. Self-uniformed.

Company H, the “Caswell Boys”: A distinctive 6 button short-waisted tunic or blouse of gray cassimere with low standing collar and full, flowing sleeves closed by brass ornamental flower buttons of civilian design. Black solid color cuffs, collar, and waistband. Gray trousers of same material as tunic with single 1 and 1/2” wide black stripes topped off by gray fatigue, or forage, cap. Slouch hats of various shades and styles also worn.

Company I, the “Cedar Fork Rifles”: Photos show some members clad identically to Company H. Another source documents the issue of 61 coats which may be gray jeans single-breasted 8 button frock patterns with various black trim styles. Trousers also grey. Fatigue caps of blue or gray. Clothing furnished by Cedar Fork Sewing Society.

Company K, Alamance County - A button down grey wool flannel military overshirt with low banded collar and large patch pockets. Full sleeves with black shirt placquet and cuffs. White china buttons. Mixed headgear.

In conclusion, thanks to the selfless and herculean efforts of Colonel Fisher, the men of the 6<sup>th</sup> North Carolina were on the whole well equipped, albeit heterogeneously, in their baptismal trial by fire at Manassas. Despite his death at the peak of that heated engagement, the former railroad man turned soldier could desire no finer legacy than the distinguished record of his regiment at Manassas and on many later battlefields.

Key resources utilized in researching the uniforms of Fisher's regiment included *The Bloody Sixth* by Robert W. Iobst and Greg Mast's *State Troops and Volunteers, A Photographic Record of North Carolina's Civil War Soldiers, Volume I*. Additionally, Mr. Mast generously allowed me access to his substantial image file (many unpublished) of soldiers of the 6<sup>th</sup> N. C. Likewise, Al Leonard kindly shared the digitalized photograph of Bartlett Yancey Malone (front cover) that provided many interesting details. Especially helpful in documenting the archeological record of artifacts from the regiment's first winter camp was Howard Crouch's *Relic Hunter*. Steve Mullinax's classic *Confederate Belt Buckles & Plates* provided insight into the unit's distinctive buckle. Also very useful for both written and photographic material is the website of the reactivated Cedar Fork Rifles (Company I, 6<sup>th</sup> N.C.S.T.) at: <http://www.mindspring.com/~nixnox/cedarfork.html>.

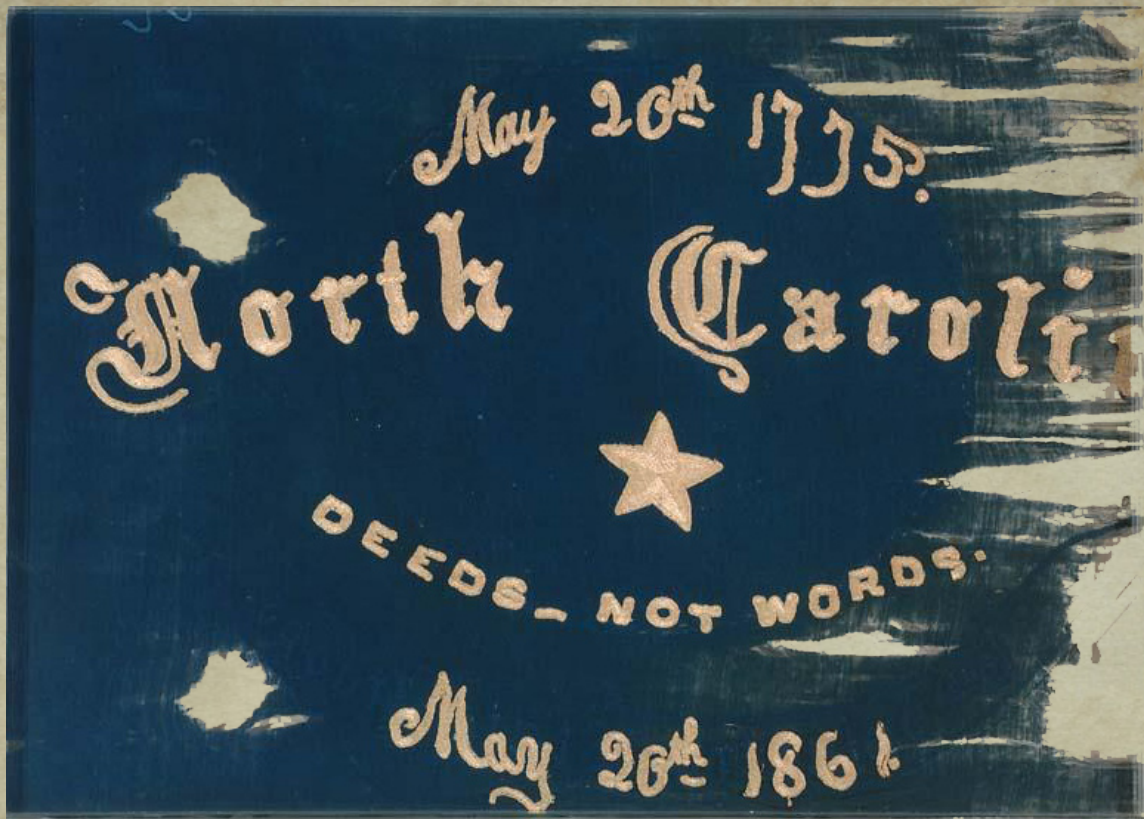


Waist belt plate and civilian pattern "flower" buttons of style found in early-war sites occupied by the 6th NCST



1861 Regulation Uniform coat and hat of Colonel Fisher, 6th NCST; North Carolina Museum of History





Remarkably, the flag carried by the 6th Regiment N.C. State Troops at the Battle of First Manassas survives, and is in the possession of the N.C. Museum of History. Colonel Fisher's maiden sister, Christine Fisher, made the flag and presented it to the regiment in June 1861. Its first use was at the funeral of Governor John Willis Ellis. A regimental historian recounts that "It was not always used in battle, especially after battle flags had been distributed to the army. It was generally brought out on parades and general reviews: but it was not displayed at Appomattox. It was carefully preserved and brought to North Carolina." Lieutenant Colonel Samuel McDowell Tate retained possession of the flag, and in 1893 he presented it to the N.C. Historical Commission, the forerunner of the N.C. Museum of History.

