

Orange Light Infantry.

Judge Mallett

(Written by an old Confederate, who was at the Battle of Bethel.)

EDITOR OF THE NEWS:

Let's keep history straight as far as it goes. I was a member of the Orange Light Infantry, Co. D., First North Carolina Reg. (Bethel Reg.) I joined the company at Chapel Hill before the war came on. After it became evident that we would have to go the officers that were chosen were R. S. Ashe, Captain, with Richard Saunders, James Jennings and Malet Lieutenants and Fletcher Freeland as Orderly Sergeant. On the 17th day of April, 1861, we were ordered to Raleigh and camped in the old fair grounds, where the Regiment was formed with D. H. Hill as Colonel, Lee, Lieut. Col., Lane as Major, Po-teat Aujutant, Dr. Hines of Raleigh as Surgeon. On the 20th day of May the State seceded. On the 21st day of May 1861 we were ordered to Richmond and took up camp in Howard's Grove, where we stayed but a few days, and were ordered to Yorktown where we were put to work in good fashion, drilling, cutting down timber, throwing up breastworks, pulling up big guns with ropes, of the Dalgreen variety weighing 16,000 pounds, 16 feet long, to be mounted in the forts. A few days before the fight came off at Great Bethel we were ordered there. On the morning of June 10th, '61, the regiment was formed in line, the cavalry and a battery of artillery were placed in front, and the command given to march. About three miles below Great Bethel is a church called Little Bethel. We marched about 2 or 3 miles and were halted. All were anxious to know what was the trouble. Word was soon passed down the line that the Yankees were advancing on us, but they took the road to Little Bethel, otherwise we would have met in open battle. We were ordered to about face double quick march, and the command was obeyed to the letter. We took our positions in line of battle and threw up some temporary breastworks as best we could out of logs and sand then waited for the Yanks to come on and try their corn stalks on us and see how they would come out. But after they got in the right road they came on with a brigade (five regiments) with artillery and cavalry to match. Everything being ready, we waited for the attack. Colonel Hill came around and said when you hear the bugle blow you may know the enemy is in sight. We did not have long to wait, for it blew with that peculiar sound that will never be forgotten: ta ta ta ta ta ta ta ta ta ta ta ta ta ta ta, dwelling on the last three notes. Immediately our artillery at the church opened fire on them. A wounded prisoner that was brought

to headquarters said the first two shots from our artillery went over their heads but the third hit him above the knee and cut his leg off. He said it turned him around, and as he fell he saw that every man in the same fire was cut down for at least one or two hundred yards, for the road was straight and level. Then they filed left and formed in line of battle on our right and the fight commenced in dead earnest. Col. Winthrop who commanded the forces that attacked us on the left, crossed the creek under cover of the trees and undergrowth and opened fire on us. Col. Hill ordered us to hold our fire until they came out into the open field, which we did. They made a charge on our works, but were driven back. Again they charged, but all in vain. At this point Col. Winthrop mounted a stump and threw his sword over his head and said, "come on my brave men, never disgrace yourself in the face of the enemy." Capt. Ashe said to Wane McDade, "Shoot that d--- Yankee. He fired and Winthrop's sword fell from his hand and he fell backwards with a bullet in his breast. Capt. Ashe asked Sam Mayho if he wanted to shoot; he said yes, and fired. Who killed Winthrop I do not know, as the bullets were coming thick and fast. While this was going on the Yankees had heavy columns on our right, and their sharpshooters had made their way to a house in front of our line, and were shooting out of the windows. This was the house that Wyatt volunteered to go and fire. Gen. Magruder ordered it fired by shell which was done. The battle lasted for three hours. Then the enemy withdrew their forces from the field, but we did not know whether they intended to renew the attack or not, so we remained there until about night but they never came, so ended the first battle of the war.

As soon as I got the chance I went out over a portion of the battle field, and I counted twelve dead Yankees. I heard a cavalryman say he counted eighty wounded in one yard. They carried all off of the battle field they could. So it will never be known how many they lost, but we will always believe that they lost between two and three hundred killed and wounded. I shall always be thankful to God for two things that happened that day, for it seemed that His merciful providence protected us. First, that they took the wrong road and we did not meet them in the open field. Second, that the shell they fired at our right flank hit a large white oak and glanced down the creek. Also for the good mothers, fathers, wives, sisters and sweethearts that were praying for us. About night we took up our line of march back to Yorktown to the song of the "Old North State Forever."

But alas, there are but few of us left, they have passed over the river. We soon shall follow.

C. WHIT LLOYD.

Chapel Hill, N. C.