

There is an old negro here 110 years old March 1st 1861. He says he is the first man that beat the drum for Gen. Washington. Says that Washington brought him up, and his mother before him. Te Gen. treated him well, sent him to school, and treated him like his own child. He was owned by 13 different men since the death of Washington, and has been abused. He is very patriotic. When we left, he took off his hat, made a polite bow and said "Success to you, God Bless You." He walked over her from the Poor house, about one half mile. Very interesting to visit with.

We left our camp on July 16th, in light marching order, with forty rounds of ammunition, each musket ball weighed one ounce. We marched all day and camped at night in a thicket of pines. We heard some firing in the evening, and expected an attack. At sunrise, we had breakfast and started again.

This is a miserable country, thinly settled, the buildings poor and old, without paint, but some are whitewashed. The water is poor, the people poor and ignorant. Not half of them can talk anything but the Virginia dialect. We marched on until we were one miles from Centerville and camped a little after sundown, on the 18th. [They were on their way to Bull Run and their first battle at this time (Ed. note)]

July 21 was the first time we had to try our skill in the field of fighting. We lost our Captain, he was shot through the heart at the start. The loss from our company, besides Capt. McKune, was over twenty, killed, wounded and missing, including our color-bearer, Lieut. Messick saved the flag, by wrapping it around him, after tearing it from the staff. We carried Capt. McKune;s body off the field, also his sword, belt and pistol, to send to his family. In the retreat, we rallied several times, and charged to hold the Rebs back. Their Black Horse Troop of cavelry, the flower of their army, charged us several times, but were beaten back and badly cut up. We were on a continual move from half past two Sunday morning until Monday night. We only had about half enough to eat, but suffered most from lack of water.

Aug. 3rd. We are on our way to the upper Potomac, to stop the Rebel provision trains from Maryland. I read in the papers, that since Bull Run, there has been 100,000 men offered to the Government. Our Col. Gorman has been promoted to Brig. Gen. and Lt. Col. Miller to Colonel.