THE WAR FOR THE UNION.

NEW-MEXICO.

Major Lynde's Surrender—Great Suffering.

We are indebted to a friend for the permission to print the following interesting private letter from a soldier who has been fifteen years in the United States service, and who was serving under Major Lynde when he surrendered to Col. Baylor, in command of the Texan forces in New-Mexico:

CAMP ON KAW RIVER, KANSAS, Oct. 29, 1861.

MY ANCIENT FRIEND: Without any excuse for the long lapse of time since writing, I commence this with a hope that you may receive it in health. I had a letter partly written to you at Fort Fillmore, New-Mexico, but circumstances hindered its completion. I had written to ——— a few days before, and trust he received it. You doubtless have heard of the ——— surrender of seven companies of the 7th Infantry, together with three companies of Mounted Rifles (100) by (our) Major Ike Lynde, to 250 Texans, of all ages, at San Augustine Spring. When you heard it you no doubt felt a sensation. So did I; and I was one of them—not the Texans. I have yet to learn how the affair is thought of in the States; all I know is, that there is not the same number of men in Christendom who feel cheaper than we do. As for myself, I hope that orders may meet us before we reach Leavenworth to turn back and take to the plains or mountains again. The Major traveled with us since we left Fort Union. Up to that time he traveled under the convoy of the Rifles, who traveled ahead of us, fearing violence from those of his own regiment. After the surrender, and the administering of the oath by Col. Baylor, C. S. Army, he waived command (would to God he had done so a week previous), and the officer next in rank, Capt. J. H. Potter, assumed it. It is strange that Major Lynde should become so *suddenly* weak as to evacuate Fort Fillmore after receiving but one volley from the Texans at Mesilla, when we went there with all the pomp and show we did to drive them out. I don't know which to impute his strange conduct to, cowardice or treason. At Mesilla we were placed in a position as much exposed as possibly could be found, without the chance of doing the enemy any harm unless by a charge on our part; but no such chance was offered us. We merely formed line of battle, flanked on either side by a wide yesquia filled with water, and cornfields, and there kept till the Texans could or would open on us. Three rounds had been discharged from one of the mountain howitzers at the town; with what effect I never learned. A long pause followed, which was broken by the discharge of a single rifle of the enemy, followed in a few moments by a volley. The Mounted Rifles, who were posted on our front as a target for the Texans, returned the fire, and retired by order. Lieut. McNally, the senior officer of the Rifles, was shot through the chest, but gave orders before he fell from his horse. One sergeant of his company was wounded, and a private killed and a couple more wounded. I don't know if they were of Lieut. McNally's or Crossey's company. Companies I and G of the 7th Infantry lost each one killed (Sherwood and Jenkins), and I believe that two other infantry men were wounded slightly. Before the Rifles had got well through the line the Infantry opened fire without receiving any order. They were then ordered, after a pause of some moments, to fix bayonets. Now, thought I, the ball commences at last, but another pause followed, when the left company, Capt. M. E. Stevenson, B, were ordered to deploy on the left (which they did along the yesquia on that side), and another long pause ensued, when the captain asked what was going on, and was told by one of his men that the battalion was retreating. He assembled the I, and formed in rear. He was ordered to deploy on the right flank as the skirmishers again, and kept that position till our return to the post, which was about 11 o'clock p. m. After supper our company was sent out on picket till daybreak. We came in, took breakfast, and while one platoon went out again on picket, the other shared the labor going on fortifying the post till 12 m. when the picket were relieved by the platoon that had been working so as to allow them to get their dinner, and take a hand at sandbag handling. This work was continued till sundown, when we received orders from the commanding officer to destroy all clothing, arms, ammunition and provisions, but what was to be carried—company, private and Government property. (But care was taken not to destroy the commissary stores, which fell into the hands of the Texans). We were kept at this work of destruction till 12 midnight, when we sallied out in silence, and took our road toward Cruzos, eight miles distant. When within that town, we turned off toward the Organo mountains (we thinking it to be a circuit to avoid the town, and that we would strike the road again, and follow the river to Fort Craig, therefore never thought of filling our canteens); by the Fork Stanton road we traveled till the sun was two hours' high, our flanks protected by companies deployed as skirmishers, when they were called in. About 7 o'clock the men began to wish they had toted some water along, and calculated they would never again carry a dry canteen, no matter how close they traveled to water. We were told that if we followed the road to San Augustine Spring, it was about 27 miles from the river, but water was to be had in abundance never or eight miles from the spring, in the mountain to the right, and about 1½ miles from the road. Before the rear guard (Companies A, B, and E,) had arrived abreast of the spring in the mountain, the major with the column had turned into the canon, and were fast approaching the spring on the opposite side of the mountain, San Augustine. The teams were freighed, and about to give out, overloaded as they were. Seven six-mule teams to nine companies, and carrying, besides, the rations, about seventy or eighty women and children, independent of the officers' wives, who rode in their own ambulances. They finally did give out in the pass at the critical moment. By the time the last team and wagon passed the first spring half a mile, not twenty of the rear guard were in the ranks. Gone up to the spring, or started on ahead, tired of the slow pace of the mules, and seeing little prospect of getting to camp by following them, or lying behind any bush that would afford shelter from the burning rays of the sun, even if only large enough for the head. Some Mounted Rifles, who came down from the spring reported the advance of the Texans on our rear from the direction of Cruzos, and another body of horsemen from the direction of Fort Craig road, who proved to be Capt. Gibbs, with his Company I, Mounted Rifles. There was a race between the two bodies of horsemen to see which would join us first. Capt. G. was successful. As soon as the Texans saw he had effected a junction, they turned up to the first spring, where they stacked the muskets of about twenty of our fellows who had got to sleep after a good drink, and then woke them up. Col. Baylor took the canteens of all those and filled them, to bring them down to the poor fellows he had passed on the road, and promised to bring water to. He also made his own men fill their canteens and give them to the worn out of ours all along the road. He told those at the spring that the camp was his, and not a shot would be fired. He was right in one part, in the second not quite; for a German of Company K, 7th, named Bishop, when ordered by a stripling to deliver up his gun, said, "No, but would give him his ammunition," at the same time discharging his rifle at the boy. The ball did not follow his intent, merely cutting his shirt on the shoulder. Bishop was immediately pistoled by one of the Texan officers. He, poor fellow, was the only one who fell by a bullet. Two others died of thirst, and were found several miles in the direction of the road to Fort Craig. They were named Kaleish of Company B, 7th, and Barlow of Company I. Col. B. and all the Texans, as they passed the stragglers on the road, would say to them, "Keep in the shade, boys, and water will be sent out; there's to be no fighting." And sure enough, upon the demand of Maj. Waller, C. S. A., Maj. Lynke surrendered unconditionally, and asked whether private property was to be respected, and was told the right to private property would not be interfered with. He (Maj. L.) surrendered without consulting his officers, and when Capt. Gibbs expostulated with him for surrendering his command, Company I, Regiment M. R., Maj. L. ordered him to dismount, and order his men to dismount, saying he commanded all; and when Capt. Gibbs interrupted Maj. W., he (W.) drew his revolver on him. He obeyed Maj. L., and ordered his Rifles to dismount. The day following he brought his own and Companies B and F of the Rifles to Cruzos, and turned over the horses and arms. His baggage-wagon had been taken on the plain by the Texans, and ite contents.

Maj. L. wished our officers to march their companies to Cruzos, carrying arms, as many of the mules had been lost, and Col. B. had no transportation; but they refused, and consequently we had to wait two days at the springs till wagons came out to carry the arms, &c., in. We marched back in the night, and found barrels of water placed at intervals along the whole route, through the orders of Col. Baylor. We were sworn, by company, by Col. B. not to take up arms or serve directly or indirectly against the Confederate States (!) during the existing war, unless properly exchanged by the Presidents or Secretaries of War of the two Governments.

Choice was given them to refuse, and be detained as prisoners; but he advised them to take the oath, for some officer might have control of them who would not have the same consideration for them that he had. About 25 refused the oath of our battalion, and remained behind prisoners.

After we had heard him recite the oath we were formed into three sides of a square, with Col. B. in the center to address us. He commenced by saying he had known the Seventh many, many years; that his earliest recollections were of their dress parades at Fort Gibson; that many of the officers were his personal friends, and that some of the men were still in the regiment who had nursed him; that none felt prouder of the name they had earned in hard fought fields, second to no other regiment, and he doubted if there was one among them who felt the pain caused by the surrender more than himself, although it might reflect some credit on himself. He felt for them deeply and sincerely, and neither he nor any one else could attach any blame to them; that they had behaved themselves like soldiers, and therefore had done their duty. He knew, he said, who was to blame, but of course it was not for him to say who it was. He would give us rations and transportation to carry us to a Government post, and arms to defend ourselves against the Indians, and hoped he should meet us again under more cheering circumstances. Part of the waggons were those that had been given up or left at Fort Fillmore. The arms were sixty of our own dear little rifles, (long range, God bless them!) and the rations were from our own commissary, which should have been burned. Tents we had none and did not get until we arrived at Albuquerque, where we received one Sibley to each Company, along with some wagon-covers, but we had got used to roughing it without tents in Arizona, and didn't grumble, (which you must know is a soldier's only privilege), much. We left Cruzos on the 6th of August, and arrived at Albuquerque on the 19th. We left that town the 21st, and arrived at Fort Wise on the 2d of October, 252 miles from Union, 307 miles from Albuquerque, from Wise to Larned eleven days, called 240 miles; from there to Fort Riley, which we will strike to-morrow, God willing, nine days, 120 miles by the Smoky Hill Fork route. We saw some good sport buffalo hunting, but were not permitted to take a part, as discharging our pieces was prohibited.

Near Fort Atkinson, on the Arkansas, we passed a Rappaho camp of some 2,000 souls. They had the old United States banner waving from a pole in the center of their camp. We passed as many more on the road, with their large poles dragged by ponies, on their way to Fort Wise, to dispose of their peltries. There is but two companies of soldiers at Fort Wise. At Fort Union about twenty-five companies. Kit Carson is Lieutenant-Colonel of one of the New-Mexico regiments of volunteers. We expect to be at Fort Leavenworth by the 31st inst., 120 miles, and then—. The day before yesterday we encamped about seventeen miles north-east of Salina, and while one of the officers' waiters was trying to light a fire he set fire to the prairie. The wind was high, and you may bet we had an exciting time to prevent the total destruction of all our equipage. Major Lynde's ambulance was burned to the wheels. The men were rigging him yesterday as he was driving along in the old frame. No matter how much injury he has done us and our cause, one must be devoid of all feeling who would not feel pity at least for his gray hairs. I don't profess to be an angel, or to have more than the ordinary allowance of veneration, but I could not mock him though I could try him by a proper tribunal, and if not proved guiltless of cowardice or treason *hang* him.

I give you the facts as I know them, without any of the surmises or suspicions attached to others of our officers by our men. He took the whole responsibility of the surrender upon himself, without summoning his juniors in counsel; and what they might, should, or could do after they learned the disposal he had made of them, I cannot judge. That will be done by those whose duty it is. We, as soldiers, and they also, I suppose, were bound to obey him. Now, about the oath of parole, I have concluded, in my own mind, not to observe it for the following reasons: My enlistment states that I'm to serve honestly and faithfully, &c., &c., and to obey my superiors, &c. That is a recognized oath administered by a competent person. I surrendered by order of my superior. But was Col. Baylor competent to administer an oath to conflict with that administered by a Notary of the United States? I think not; and d—n me if I will pretend to respect it when my conscience don't back me. They may hang me if they catch me, but hang me if they do. If we are discharged, which I think would be the best way to reëstablish discipline in the battalion, I will try Uncle Sam again till the termination of the rebellion, if I don't "spin off this mortal coil" before that.

I was unable to finish last night. This morning we forded Republican Fork, and found it very wet and co'd "you bet." We will sleep here to-night outside of Fort Riley. Company J, 8th Kansas Regiment (Bully for K!) is stationed here. They relieved Company G of the 2d United States, who left for Leavenworth yesterday.

I must tell you how some of our men suffered the 27th of August. Thirst burned them so that some cut their cheeks or hands and drank their own blood. Others killed the suffering dogs and vainly sought to slake their burning thirst with the hot blood of the animals, and a great many resorted to their own urine to quench the thirst that was burning their tongues. Some bee me deranged, and did not arrive in camp till the night of the 28th. Yet there were enough in