

43 Inf Regt

The Forty-third Alabama Infantry regiment was organized at Mobile, May, 1862, and was at once ordered to Chattanooga and placed under General Leadbetter. It moved into Kentucky under General Kirby Smith's column, but was not actively engaged. Having passed the winter at Cumberland Gap, the regiment joined General Bragg at Tullahoma, being in a brigade under General Gracie—the Forty-first, Forty-third, Forty-ninth and Sixtieth Alabama and Stallworth's battalion. The regiment subsequently went back to Tennessee and operated there for some months. Rejoining the main army it passed through the Iron hill of Chickamauga, with very severe loss. As part of Longstreet's corps, the Forty-third was shortly afterward sent toward Knoxville, and took part in the investment there, with light loss. It was also in the fight at Beene's station, but the casualties were few. Having passed through the bitter privation of the winter campaign in east Tennessee, the regiment reached General Beauregard at Petersburg in May, 1864. When Sheridan swooped upon the outposts at Richmond, the Forty-third fought him with some loss. At the battle of Drewry's bluff the regiment was hotly engaged and lost severely in casualties. It was then in the trenches at Petersburg from June, 1864, to the close of the war, fighting continuously, and taking part in most of the battles by the attempts of the enemy to flank the Confederate line. At Appomattox, the Forty-third, with the other portions of the brigade, had just driven back a line of the enemy and taken a battery, when the capitulation of the army was announced. It surrendered as part of Moody's brigade. Bushrod Johnson's division, Gordon's corps and about fifty men were present for duty. Of 1,123 names on the rolls of the Forty-third, about 100 were killed, about 225 died of disease, and 161 were discharged or transferred. The regiment was under command of Colonel Archibald Gracie and the one company mustered from the citizens of Mobile was captained by E. H. Buck, who was wounded at Beene's



station; I. M. Hughes, killed at Petersburg, and Winfield Wolf.

--From The Mobile Daily Item,
April 26, 1910.

Musicians.-Ed. Sangrouber; Wm. B. Doyle; Moses Hill; J. E. Dunning.



Field and staff



Colonels.-Archibald Gracie, Jr. of Mobile county, promoted Brig. Gen. and killed; Young M. Moody of Marengo county, wounded at Drewry's Bluff and promoted.

Lieutenant colonels.- ~~John J. Jolly~~ Young M. Moody, promoted; John J. Jolly of Greene county, wounded at Chicamauga.

Majors.- John J. Jolly, promoted; Robert D. Hart of Marengo county, resigned; Thomas M. Barbour of Tuscaloosa county, resigned; W. J. Mimms of Jefferson county.

Surgeons.- M. A. Jolly, transferred; W. T. Abrahams, transferred; James B. Luckie.

Asst. Surgeons.- John J. A. Smith, transferred; J. L. Abrahams, .

Chaplains.- N. G. Phillips, died at Cumberland Gap; John J. Westbrook, resigned.

A. C. S.- Charles A. Lathrop, transferred.

A. Q. M.- A. O. Houston, transferred.

Adjutants.- R. H. Henly of Marengo county, resigned; John R. Shelton of Greene county, killed near Richmond; John L. Stephens of Greene county, wounded at Drewry's Bluff.

Sgt. Majors.- Robert S. Walker elected Jr. 2nd Lieut. Co. I; John L. Stephens, George C. Battle.

Q. M. Sgt.- James G. Kelly.

Dictated.

H 299 I 43

Aug. 3, 1909.

My dear Mr. Cemegys:

I am writing briefly to remind you that we still hope to have your help in the preparation of the history of the 43rd Alabama Infantry Regiment. It has been difficult for us to close up our series of narrative histories of historical sketches, but we hope to do so within the next twelve months. Quite a number of histories will be prepared by the Department, owing to the fact that survivors cannot be found to undertake the work.

Kindly let us hear from you, and with good wishes,

Yours truly,



Prof. E.F. Cemegys,

Gainesville, Texas.

Forty-third Alabama Regiment.

Organization. — Was organized at Mobile, Ala. in May ¹⁵ 1862. for 3 years or war.

Ledbetter's Brigade. — Was temporarily in Brig. Gen. Ledbetter's brigade, Stevenson's division, Department of East Tennessee, under General Kirby Smith in July 1862.



Gracie's Brigade. — Was in General A. Gracie's brigade in October 1862, with 55th, Georgia, 58th, 62d, and 64th North Carolina regiments in East Tennessee; later Hilliard's Legion was attached.

Transferred. — In September 1863, with Longstreet's corps joined General Bragg at Chattanooga; returning after battle of Chickamauga to East Tennessee in November 1863.

Transferred in the spring of 1864 to Virginia; in September 1864 in General Bushrod Johnson's division, Army of Virginia; ^{the brigade} commanded in March 1865 by Col. Stansel; commanded in April 1865 by General Moody.

Surrendered. - Was surrendered at
Appomattox, April 9th, 1865, by General
Robert E. Lee.



Copy.

H 299 J 43

(copy)

Archibald Gracie

1527-16th St. N., Washington,

December 22, 1909.

Rev. J. H. B. Hall,
402 East Clinton Street,
Huntsville, Alabama.



Dear Sir:-

I wrote you on the 12th inst., and though I have already acknowledged the receipt of former letters, written on May 25th and August 4th, I have not completely answered one which I put aside, during my vacation, until I should return home---viz: Your favor of May 25th.

(1) I have made the corrections on my ms.-copy of your history of Company G.

(2) I have written to Dr. Owen about your work, but will write again, to-day.

(3) Answering your interrogatories: Comrade C. Scott's information to you is about correct; Gracie's Brigade, during the winter of 1862-3, was at Cumberland Gap; it wintered, in 1864, in Eastern Tennessee----Longstreet's Campaign, correctly called the "Valley Forge of the Confederate War, when these Confederates marched through the snow, insufficiently clad, and insufficiently fed---mostly without shoes, in the depth of one of the severest winters---making their way across rivers up to their waists, leaving a trail of blood on the snow behind them. The winter's itinerary was from Knoxville to Bean's Station and Merristown, where most of the severe winter was passed. The last winter, of 1864-5, was at Petersburg, Va.

I have copied from your letter, the statements made by David and Charles Scott, giving their testimony as to the holding of the hill of Herse-Shee Ridge, after the Federal capture, on the P. M. of Sept. 20th, 1863. I enclose a copy of an affidavit made out by Comrade Thomas W. Barley, of Company E, 43rd Alabama Regt.---which will serve as a sample of what I desire. Nothing in my work is more important, for preservation for the sake of future history, and justice to these brave men of Gracie's Brigade, than this obtaining of all available evidence of the fact that, when Gracie's Brigade finally drove the Federals from their position on the heights, the latter never regained the position which they had lost, and which was occupied thereafter, by the 43rd Ala. Regt., from the time that they gained possession, on the evening of Sept. 20th, until their departure, on the P. M. of Sept. 21st, towards Chattanooga.

If you desire me to send you a check in payment of any expense that may be incurred, in obtaining these affidavits, I will gladly send it back to you, or, if you prefer to pay therefor yourself, and allow me to reimburse, I shall be equally pleased. I do not mean that you should make a special trip from Huntsville, for this purpose, but that, sometime, when you are able to do so, during your stay at Mr. Hill's, you might make the trip to these places, in the vicinity of Birmingham, in Jefferson County, where these Comrades reside.

In your letter of August 4th, you wrote: "If you have secured additional data, in the history of Co. G., I should be glad to have the use of the same, in rendering my work as complete as possible." I think that you have already done exceedingly well, in giving the individual records as far as possible, of the officers and men of Co. G. You have also given a history of its organization. The only addition to the work which I might suggest, would be an historical memorandum, as to its itinerary, and the battles in which it was engaged. After it became a member of the Regiment, I suppose that it participated in all the different battles in which the 43rd was engaged, and that further history of the company would be the history of the Regiment.

Companies A., B., C., E., F., and H., of the 43rd Regt., about Jan. 1st, 1865, furnished the State of Alabama, "Historical memoranda of the kind referred to, but I do not know why Companies G., D., J., and K. did not. And nothing is to be found in the Department of Archives, in Montgomery, about them. Your history of Company G. ought, therefore, to be the more valuable to the State, which, if you desire it, should publish your history at its own expense; and I think that Dr. Owen would be glad to do this, and if you desire, I will suggest it to him.

I enclose a copy of the Historical Memoranda, which Co. G.'s former Captain, W. J. Mims, furnished to the State, he, at the time referred to, being the ranking officer in command of the Regt. There were various occasions, when certain companies of the Regiment were separated from the main command. I am able to recite certain occasions, but am unable to specify the names of the companies belonging to each section, when thus separated.

You would be doing a service to me, as well, if you can obtain information as to the particular section, with which Company G., associated, on the various occasions, which I will now specify:

(1) The Regiment was divided into two sections, on June 25th, 1862, when 7 companies went by boat to Montgomery, and 3 passed over Mobile Bay to Blakely, and took the train, there, to Montgomery.

(2) In the fight at Huntsville, Tenn., Gen. Gracie assaulted Fort Clift, with 2 companies of the 43rd, which he led in person. Who can tell us what companies these were?

If there were other occasions, I do not now recall them.

If it were possible, your history should recount the loss incurred in each one of the battles in which it was engaged, also, if it bore a conspicuous part in any one of these battles, this also should be mentioned. Also, if at any time it occupied any unusual position, it would be well to state this. Personally, I would like to know the relative position in line, with respect to the other companies, which was usually occupied by Company G.

Some of our friends of Company G., may also be able to help me in the information which I seek, about different periods; when the 43rd Regt. was more conspicuous than other regiments of the Brigade:--

(1) On May 12, 1864, the 43rd Regt. was deployed as skirmishers ---leaving the fortifications north of Richmond to be protected by the 60th Regt., and possibly, the 41st Also. It (the 43rd) pursued Sheridan's cavalry through the woods. Whether the 59th Regt. and the 23rd Battalion followed into the woods, I cannot find out. The 43rd, however, followed up the pursuit, into the open field beyond the woods; crossed a marshy creek, and climbed the north slope of a hill called Strawberry Hill, to the farm on the summit, owned by

Mrs. Geech. When the 43rd had reached this position, a courier brought dispatches from General Bragg, who was back in the fortifications---ordering General Gracie to stop pursuit. Much to the disgust of the General and his Staff, who had expected to accomplish the capture of Sheridan's whole Command, he was forced to obey the order.

From newspaper-clippings of the time, I learn of the 43rd's position, at Geech's Farm; and the "Historical Memoranda" written by Capt. Mc Alilly, of Co. G., indicates that his company was at this point. Major Mims also calls the point "Geech's Farm." But I have no surviving Comrade of the Brigade, who has yet been able to give me information stating that he was present, and remembers the position occupied, at Geech's Farm.

I have been over the whole field of operations, with Colonel John B. Purcell, who, on May 12th, 1864, was a boy-Courier, ordered to take dispatches to General Gracie; and it is he who has recounted the arrival of another courier, from General Bragg, ordering the pursuit to be halted, etc.

That the 43rd took the most important part in this engagement, is indicated by the fact that it lost thirty, out of forty-one killed and wounded, in the whole Brigade. Its Adjutant, John R. Shelton, was among the number killed.

An interesting incident, first related by Ord-Sergt. Fowler, now dead, is to the effect that a Federal Captain was captured on this occasion and given his parole, in order to take a note from General Gracie to General Sheridan. They (General Gracie and General Sheridan) had been at West Point together, and had been stationed at the same Army Post, when fighting Indians, in Oregon and Washington Territories. These notes read:

"Dear Phil: I have got you, so come in."

In about an hour, the reply came back:

"Dear Archie: Oh, no! You must come and get me first."

Comrade Fowler, of the 43rd, quotes this, on the authority of Captain Jeffries, of the 41st, and I have some corroboration elsewhere, of it, as a camp story. I relate this incident for the particular purpose of obtaining further confirmation of it.

(2) The 43rd Regt. had figured prominently, in a skirmish which occurred on Monday, May 9th, and this same newspaper article, written to the "Advertiser," by "43," gives more than any other account, in the following statement:***The enemy made a demonstration of our front, and General Gracie, with a detail of skirmishers, one piece of artillery, and the 43rd Alabama Regt., went forward to reconnoiter, and fought a brisk little fight. The enemy had two regiments of cavalry and a battery, but the skirmishers and Col. Moody's "gallant 43rd" soon sent them rapidly towards their gunboats. Five were killed, and a number of arms, several horses, and two stands of colors were taken.

"The next day (May 10th,) Barten's and Gracie's Brigades moved forward to find out the strength of the enemy, and got up another fight. Barten's Brigade suffered severely; Gracie's drove back the Yankees to their entrenchments, with but little trouble, and had only three or four slightly, and one (Lieut. Smith of the 59th) badly wounded. Col. Hall's regiment was on duty that day as skirmishers, and behaved magnificently. One company that numbered only 44 men, captured and brought into camp 47 Yankees."

(4) On Tuesday, May 16



(4) On Tuesday, May 16th, was fought the great battle of Drewry's Bluff, in which the Brigade acquitted itself with great credit. The 60th and 41st Regts. went over the enemy's line and breastworks, without being checked; the 59th suffered the most severely of any regiment in the Brigade; the 43rd was badly handled by its regimental officers, in the beginning of the engagement. This latter may have been due to the severe wound of Col. Moody, and, Lieut-Colonel Jelly being absent on furlough, the command of the regiment devolved upon Major Barbour, who does not seem to have been equal to the occasion: after the battle was over, his resignation was accepted.

Much-desired information concerns the relative positions of the different regiments of the Brigade. A study of my files indicates to me that the relative order of the regiments, from left to right, successively, (the left flank of the Brigade against the James River), was as follows: 60th Ala. Regt.; 59th Regt.; 23rd Battalion; 43 and 41st.: I want the truth, or confirmation of it. I have two esteemed Comrades, of the 41st Regt., who claim this position was on the left flank of the Brigade, but I believe them to be mistaken, though, if placed according to rank, I should expect that Col. Moody would have been in command of his Regt., on the right of the Brigade. General Beauregard's report shows that Kemper's Virginia Brigade, commanded by Col. Terry, was on the right of Gracie's brigade. Perhaps some Comrade of Co. C., will help me with information that will solve the difficulty.

(5) Another occasion, on which the 43rd particularly distinguished itself, in helping to save the whole of Beauregard's Army, whose defeat meant the capture of Petersburg and Richmond, was that on the evening of July 17th, 1864, when the 43rd Regt., came into Petersburg on flat-cars, and were fired upon before they had disembarked, in the R.R. Cut, afterwards known as Gracie's Salient. Here they formed in line of battle, charged eastward, up the slope of Hare's Hill, meeting, I believe, the 99th, returning in distress, with: "Halle, 59th! Here's your 43rd!", and the two regiments went into the fight with the Battalion and the 1st.; drove back the Federals; recaptured the outer line of Confederate works, which had been lost and abandoned, earlier by the panic-stricken men of Wise's Brigade. According to Gen. Beauregard's account, and that of the Historian, Col. Roman, these three regiments and Battalion of Gracie's Brigade captured from 1,500 to 2,000 prisoners." He says that the Brigade consisted of 1,200 men, but whether he took into consideration the fact that the 60th was then absent on Prevest-Guard duty, in Richmond, I knew not. I fear that I shall be long, in discovering the number of men belonging to the Brigade, who participated in this affair, for I am quite sure that I cannot determine it from the Official Records, nor from the Archives in Montgomery; yet it may be possible to approximate, by an exhaustive study of such Rosters as the Department of Archives affords. From this latter source, Dr. Owen could approximate, as to the number of the 43rd Regt., engaged in this fight. He could also approximate as to the number of the 60th, who were at that time in Richmond. And finally, with such data as I possess in my Rosters, we could approximate the numbers in the 41st and 59th Regts., and in the 23rd Battalion.

Before closing, I must repeat my appreciation of your work, in assisting me in obtaining such valuable information, from our Comrades of Co. G. I also sincerely appreciate--- as expressed in your favor of the 25th---your good wishes and prayers, particularly the latter, that I may have the strength and health to complete the difficult task which I have laid out for myself.

With the compliments of the season, and hoping to hear from you, I am,

Fraternally yours,

(Signed.) Archibald Gracie.

A.G./L.M.T.



(2 ENCLOSURES:-- (1) Historical Memoranda of 43rd Ala. Regt., and Co.s
A., B., C., E. and H.---Copies of, from the Dept.
of Archives, Montgomery, Alabama.

(2) Copy of Affidavit of Thomas W. Barley.)

H 298
Gracie's Brigade
43 Regt Ala
Inf.

CORRESPONDENCE OF THE REPORTER.

LETTER FROM GRACIE'S BRIGADE.

Gracie's Brigade.

Camp near Richmond, May 1, 1864.



Why we came here, the man who issued the order may know-- I do not. Suffice it to say, our brigade, by special order from the War Department, came here three days ago--is encamped at Mrs. Christian's farm, and report to Gen. Ransom. Wher will we go next? is the question. Some say up the Valley, others to the Rapidan, and others again down the Peninsula. "Soldiers propose and General Cooper disposes" is the late reading of the apothem.---- It matters little with us, as we are always "semper prompti et bone parati." We only ask rations and now and then a few articles of clothing, and are ready at a moments' notice, with wild cheers and merry laugh, to march whithersoever our honor, duty and our country calls us.

Richmond is full of dry goods and "notions" of every kind. Prices are extravagant. A dinner will cost from ten to twenty dollars; everything else in proportion. Of course we privates don't dine out often. Rations are very good. We get plenty of bread, bacon--not quite so plentiful, but enough---peas, coffee and sugar.

Our men were, when we marched through the city, very dirty and ragged, but we hope to get a supply of clothing in a few days.

I will go in town next week and try and furnish you with the latest Congressional news.

All are in good health.

MAX.

Selma Morning Reporter, Selma, Alabamay May 12, 1864.

The Last Confederate. - Only one Confederate soldier now remains at the Fair Grounds Hospital - Sergeant Thomas M. Rives, of Company E, Forty-third Alabama Regiment, Gracie's Brigade. Sergeant Rives received his wound at Appomattox Court House on Sunday April 9, 1865, about fifteen minutes before the flag of truce was hoisted, and within a few yards of the famous apple tree under which Generals Grant and Lee signed the articles of surrender. He is still a sufferer from the wound, which was very severe. Although the hospital diet is very good, yet he longs for a change. Let some of our kind hearted ladies prepare some little delicacies - they best know what - and take or send them up to him. We were astonished to learn last evening from his own lips that, during many long and weary months of confinement to his quarters, only a few, a very few ladies, had darkened the door of the hospital. We would suggest to our young ladies to make it their duty to visit him. For several weeks longer he may be confined to his cot. For the honor of our community let him suffer for nothing - Pittsburg. (Pa) Express. - Jacksonville Republican, (Ala.) January 27, 1866.

