

Report of 1st SG Madden, Eighty-eighth New York Infantry.

Camp near Fair Oaks North Carolina: Battle of Bentonville

General Wolfe Commander of Vincent's Brigade:

General: The men of the Eighty –eight New York arrived in camp late in the date of March 19, 1865. We had a long hard march from Fayetteville. The men were exhausted from the heat and lack of food. The men were ordered to search for food and water once we arrived in camp. We could smell the wood smoke from the Confederate camps which were reported to be less than a mile away.

On the morning of the 20th the men were well rested and fed. The Eighty- eighth NY fell in with 104 PA men. We march out to a clearing, a field where cotton had been planted. The soil was dry and sanding. The dust, choked the men as we march across the open terrain. There were reports that the Confederates were massing their troops in the woods to the north of our position. The order to dig in and build a trench was given to the men. We would hold a defensive position.

The Confederates came out the woods and formed a battle line. We held our fire until they began to march towards our position. The Confederates charge our line several times and were repulsed every time. The men preformed gallantly .

We returned to camp as the sun set. Our men were feed and clean their weapons. We would be ready for another fight tomorrow. Reports indicated that the rebels we regrouping their men and had not left the area.

At dawn, on the morning of the 21st, the men were ready for another fight. Hopefully this would be our last fight. We march the men to a position North east of the battle yesterday. Once again we dug trenches in the sandy soil, and fortified the trench with wood. We sent out skimmer line of men. About 30 minutes later we began to hear musket fire. None of skimmers returned. Then we could see Confederate troops in a line of battle coming through the woods. The fight was hot. We fired at will. The Confederates overran our position. Another line of Union troops was behind our position and held off the advance of Confederates. The men left in our Battalion reformed and march to a position east of the Confederates which was directly behind their lines. We broke through the woods and formed a battle line. We opened fire and the Confederates were caught in a cross fire from the front and the rear. The Confederates were totally destroyed. It was a totally victory for our troops .

Respectfully submitted ,

1st SG Madden

88th NY Infantry

Irish Brigade.