

Field Report: Battle of Sessionville: Boone Hall Plantation

Respectfully Submitted by: 1<sup>st</sup> SG O'Madden Co. B 88th NYSI Irish Brigade

November 13, 1862

Troops arrived at Boone late in the day of November 13<sup>th</sup> 1862. Our supply wagons followed and arrived after dark. Our Camp was close to enemy lines, we could smell the wood smoke from the Rebel camps. Officers call was at 9 o'clock. The battle plan for the morning engagement was detailed. We would attack the Rebel Fort with four battalions. Our Co. would be joined by the 13<sup>th</sup> US and another Co. commanded by Capt. Clark. We would be the last battalion in reserve for the engagement.

November 14, 1862

Reveille was at 7. Role Call: 4 present and one Pvt. on furlough. Pvt. Charles (Cookie) Sherrill was officially presented his Corp Badge, Reg. numbers and Co. letter. Huzza

Our Irish Flag was placed at the end of our company street.

We drilled in the morning to ensure all battalions knew the battle plan. We march to the Avenue of the Oaks at 12:30, stacked arms and took rations. Re-formed and march to our positions at 2 PM. We could hear skirmish fire and cannon fire. We were soon ordered forward. As we came into the clearing and the fort was visible the cannon fire ceased. And a quiet calm came over the battle field as we march forward in column formation. The order Company into line followed shortly after we entered the clearing. The first and second battalion march forward and engaged the enemy. The first Battalion got within yards of the fort walls. The second Battalion covered the right flank. The first battalion suffered heavy casualties. The order to retreat was given to the first two battalions. The third and four battalions were ordered forward. The 88<sup>th</sup> was in the fourth battalion and were ordered forward to within 50 yards of the fort. We took a knee and cover and fired continuously for about 20 min. We were ordered to retreat and reform. Pvt. Fulton was wounded in the first assault.

The second wave of the attack was no more successful than the first. Ammunition was running low, heavy losses continued we retreated and reformed again. In all, four separate attacks were not successful. All four members of the 88<sup>th</sup> were wounded during the first day of battle. We retired from the field and returned to camp.

The wounds suffered by the 88<sup>th</sup> were minor and all the men were ready to engage the enemy again the next day. Pvt. "Cookie" Sherrill prepared meals and fed the men well. Huzza.

November 15, 1862

Pvt. "Cookie" Sherrill prepared the morning meal and fed the men after role call. The camp seemed to be in slow motion as men tended to the wounds and prepared for this days engagement. Women, who had joined the 13<sup>th</sup> US, were taking photographs with the men to raise the spirits. (New recruitment poster)

The 88<sup>th</sup> was ordered to form up at 12:45. We placed boxwood in our caps. We marched off to our battle positions. The Battle plan was unchanged from the previous day, but the ranks were thinner.

The first two battalions were ordered forward, canister fire and musket fire rained down on our men, as they charge the Rebel Fort. The Fourth battalion was ordered forward and took up position on the right flank. Pvt. Fulton was shot and wounded badly. We could not tend to him as musket and cannon fire was hot on our position. Capt. Clark ordered at the double quick to the extreme right of the line. At this point Pvt. Sherrill was also wounded, and I could not see him through the dense smoke on the field. Men were falling on either side of me as we reached the extreme right we all took cover. There were only eight men left. Pvt. O'Sullivan and I the only men left from the 88<sup>th</sup>. As we moved forward Pvt. O'Sullivan was wounded and fell. I also took a musket ball to the chest and was knocked unconscious. When I awoke, I saw Pvt. O'Sullivan rise to his feet and charge he got off one round before a cannon fired. He was hit and thrown off his feet and mortally wounded. The musket ball that hit me, hit my eagle brass plate. I loaded my musket from a prone position. I could hear the Rebel commands in the fort. I waited till I heard "Fire by Company". I raised quickly taking aim at the rebel Capt. Fire my musket hitting him in the head. I heard a cannon fire.....

I awoke the next morning in a field hospital. I had suffered minor wounds that had knocked me unconscious on the field.

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