

Turner out with a sufficient number of troops to develop the plans of the enemy. This was accordingly done. The pickets of the enemy were mostly captured, some of them caught asleep from exhaustion, and they were glad at being captured, and they were pleased the main force let them free to come into our lines. They aver that there are many more who would desert, but who are deterred by the stories industriously told them by their officers, viz: that we put them in iron chains, and that unless they tell just what we wish to hear, we will torture them in a manner in contrast with the horrors of the Inquisition seem a pleasant pastime.

Our forces pushed boldly on, and Gen. Turner and Ames soon reached the Petersburg railroad, which they again destroyed in the space of three or four miles, doing work most thoroughly and efficiently. A considerable number of prisoners were captured in small squads, and it was evident that they were not anxious to get away. Major Ludlow, of Gen. Butler's staff, with a small body of our men came up to Major F. W. Smith and his orderly. Drawing a bead upon the man they were supposed to be murdering, when the gallant Major bade his orderly wave his white handkerchief as a token of submission. The soldiers lowered their pieces, when the Major took to his heels and the woods, leaving his orderly to be captured. "This all comes of serving a damned coward," was the philosophic remark of the victor.

Gen. Turner's operations were at Waltham Junction, Gen. Ames about that point, while Gen. Terry and Foster moved up the turnpike toward Richmond. This sudden evacuation, and the absence of Lee's troops, who should have been marching toward Petersburg, was unaccountable. It is since explained by the fact that orders issued to the troops in our front to march to Petersburg upon the appearance of Longstreet's corps, from above were misunderstood, and that instead of waiting the arrival of the corps, they left for Petersburg early in the morning, leaving their pickets out to deceive us. This has proved a dear mistake to them, inasmuch as Gen. Weitzel, taking advantage of the absence of the rebels, proceeded to exercise his engineering skill upon their works. These works were destroyed by irregular character, each man having a rifle-pit and bomb-proof on his own account. These were turned to the best account possible by Gen. Weitzel. The slashings and obstructions of the rebels were destroyed, the reductions made to "right about face," and the general appearance of the line so altered as to look like one of our defensive lines.

Gen. Ames and Gen. Terry and Foster pushed on up the turnpike they encountered the advance of Lee's army, Pickett's division of Longstreet's corps. They were marching along in the most careless sort of manner, unconscious of the evacuation and confident of being within their own lines, when our skirmish line letting the column come well up, opened a deadly fire upon them. This was followed by an attack, and the advance of Lee's army was thus suddenly checked. Meanwhile orders came from General Grant, whose headquarters are at City Point, for General Butler to withdraw his force, as Lee's whole army was about advancing. This was skillfully done, as the rebels had not recovered from the shock occasioned by their surprise. Had General Butler had sufficient force to attack Pickett's division the whole force might have been captured. As it was, the rebels did not follow up our withdrawing troops closely. In establishing our picket line more in advance of its former position, Gen. Butler disposed his troops to meet any assault which might be made upon him. Meanwhile, the 6th Corps was reported in sight, and it is anticipated that they will be held in position to-night. As I close, a battery of 30-pound Parrotts has opened on our right to shell the turnpike and railroad during the night.

The Richmond Whig of the 15th reports that Lieut. Gen. Rishaw's brigade killed in the fight at Glendale June 16, 1864, 4,000 men. The rebels having come up in force on our right, are making an assault on our line at that point. The firing is quite brisk, and we await intelligence from Gen. Terry. The veterans of the 6th Corps are marching by Headquarters. Another wing to our lines, and we shall soon be enabled to assume the offensive.

Later - The news from the front is that the rebels failed to drive in our picket line. They are evidently forced as to the movements of Grant, and in relation to the force at this point.

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