

THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION,

Headquarters, Army of the Potomac, } Falmouth, Dec. 19.

To W. H. Halleck, General-in-Chief, Washington:—

General, I have to offer the following reasons for moving the Army of the Potomac across the Rappahannock...

Positions were, therefore, selected to oppose his advance after crossing. The narrowness of the Rappahannock, its winding course and deep bed, afforded opportunity for the construction of bridges at points beyond the reach of our artillery...

Under cover of darkness and of a dense fog on the 12th, a large force passed the river and took position on the right bank, protected by their heavy guns on the left.

The morning of the 13th, his arrangements for attack being completed, about 9 o'clock, the movement veiled by a fog, he advanced boldly in large force against our right wing.

In the meantime the enemy was fiercely encountered by Gen. A. P. Hill's division, forming Gen. Jackson's right, and after an obstinate combat repulsed. During this attack, which was protracted and hotly contested, two of Gen. Hill's brigades were driven back upon our second line.

To the brave officers and soldiers who accomplished the feat of re-crossing the river in the face of the enemy, I owe everything. For the failure in the attack I am responsible, as the extreme gallantry, courage, and endurance shown by them was never exceeded, and would have carried the points had it been possible.

To the families and friends of the dead I can only offer my heartfelt sympathies; but for the wounded I can offer my earnest prayers for their comfortable and final recovery.

The fact that I decided to move from Warrenton on to this line, rather against the opinion of the President, Secretary of War, and yourself, and that you left the whole movement in my hands, without giving me orders, makes me responsible. I will write you very soon and give you more definite information, and finally will send you my detailed report, in which a special acknowledgment will be made of the services of the different grand divisions, divisions, corps, and my general and staff department of the army of the Potomac, whom I am so much indebted to for their support and hearty co-operation.

I will add here, that the movement was made earlier than you expected, and after the President, the Secretary, and yourself requested me not to be in haste, for the reason that we were supplied much sooner by the different staff departments than was anticipated when I saw you. Our killed amount to 1,132; our wounded about 9,000, and our prisoners to about 700, which last have been paroled and exchanged for about the same number taken by us. The wounded were all removed to this side of the river, and are being well cared for, and the dead were all buried under a flag of truce. The Surgeon reports a much larger proportion of slight wounds than usual; 1,632 only being treated in hospitals.

I am glad to represent the army at the present time in good condition. Thanking the Government for that entire support and confidence which I have always received from them, I remain, General,

Very respectfully, your obedient servant, A. E. BURNSIDE, Major-Gen. Commanding.

THE FREDERICKSBURG BATTLE. The Richmond Dispatch of the 17th inst., contains the following:—

GEN. LEE'S REPORT OF THE EVACUATION Headquarters near Fredericksburg, } Dec. 16, 1862.

As far as can be ascertained this stormy morning, the enemy has disappeared in our immediate front, and has re-crossed the Rappahannock. I presume he is meditating a passage at some other point.

(Signed) R. E. LEE, General Commanding. GEN. LEE'S OFFICIAL REPORT OF THE BATTLE.

The following official report of Gen. Lee was received in this order on yesterday:—

Headquarters Northern Virginia, } Dec. 17, 1862.

To the Hon. Secretary of War, Richmond, Virginia:—

Sir: On the night of the 10th instant the enemy commenced to throw three bridges over the Rappahannock, above Fredericksburg, and the third about a mile and a quarter below, near the mouth of the Deep Run, the plain on which Fredericksburg stands is so completely commanded by the hills of Stafford in possession of the enemy, that no effectual opposition could be offered to the construction of the bridges or the passage of the river without exposing our troops to the destructive fire of his numerous bat-

teries. Positions were, therefore, selected to oppose his advance after crossing. The narrowness of the Rappahannock, its winding course and deep bed, afforded opportunity for the construction of bridges at points beyond the reach of our artillery, and the banks had to be watched by skirmishers. The latter sheltering themselves behind the houses, drove back the working parties of the enemy at the bridges opposite the city, but at the lowest point of crossing, where no shelter could be had, our sharpshooters were themselves driven off, and the completion of the bridge was effected about noon on the 11th.

On the afternoon of that day the enemy's batteries opened upon the city, and by dark had so demolished the houses on the river bank as to deprive our skirmishers of shelter, and under cover of his guns he effected a lodgment in the town. The troops which had so gallantly held the position in the city under the severe cannonading during the day, resisting the advance of the enemy at every step, were withdrawn during the night, as were also those who, with equal tenacity, had maintained their post at the lowest bridge.

Under cover of darkness and of a dense fog on the 12th, a large force passed the river and took position on the right bank, protected by their heavy guns on the left. The morning of the 13th, his arrangements for attack being completed, about 9 o'clock, the movement veiled by a fog, he advanced boldly in large force against our right wing. General Jackson's corps occupied the right of our line, which rested on the railroad; Gen. Longstreet's the left, extending along the heights to the Rappahannock, above Fredericksburg. Gen. Stuart, with two brigades of cavalry, was posted on the extensive plain on our extreme right. As soon as the advance of the enemy was discovered through the fog, Gen. Stuart, with his accustomed promptness, moved up a section of his horse artillery which opened with effect upon his flank, and drew upon the gallant British a heavy fire, which he sustained indifferently for about two hours.

In the meantime the enemy was fiercely encountered by Gen. A. P. Hill's division, forming Gen. Jackson's right, and after an obstinate combat repulsed. During this attack, which was protracted and hotly contested, two of Gen. Hill's brigades were driven back upon our second line, Gen. Early, with part of his division, being ordered to his support, drove the enemy back from the point of woods he had seized, and pursued him into the plain until arrested by his artillery. The right of the enemy's column extending beyond Hill's front, encountered the right of Gen. Hood's, of Longstreet's corps. The enemy took possession of a small corps in front of Hood, but were quickly dispossessed and repulsed with loss.

During the attack on our right the enemy was crossing troops over his bridges at Fredericksburg and passing them in front of Longstreet's line. Soon after his repulse on our right, he commenced a series of attacks on our left with a view of obtaining possession of the Heights immediately overlooking the town. These repeated attacks were repulsed in gallant style by the Washington artillery, under Col. Walton, and a portion of McLaw's division, which occupied these heights. The last assault was made after dark, when Col. Alexander's battalion had relieved the Washington artillery, whose ammunition had been exhausted, and ended the contest for the day. The enemy was supported in his attack by the fire of strong batteries of artillery, on the right bank of the river, as well as by his numerous heavy batteries on the Stafford Heights.

Our loss during the operations since the movements of the enemy began, amounts to about 1,500 killed and wounded. Among the former, I regret to report the death of the patriotic soldier and statesman, Brig. Gen. Thomas B. R. Cobb, who fell upon our left; among the latter, that brave soldier and accomplished gentleman, Brig. Gen. Marcy Gregg, who was very seriously, and, it is feared, mortally wounded during the attack on our right. The enemy to-day has been apparently engaged in caring for his wounded and burying his dead.

His troops are visible in their first position, in line of battle, but, with the exception of some desultory cannonading and firing between skirmishers, he has not attempted to renew the attack. About five hundred and fifty prisoners were taken during the engagement, but the full extent of his loss is unknown. I have the honor to be, very respectfully, your obedient servant.

R. E. LEE, General. Official: CHAS. MARSHALL, Major and Aide de Camp.

LEXINGTON, Ky., Dec. 22.—It is reported that Lexington, Kentucky, is soon to be visited again by the Confederates in large force. Floyd and Humphrey Marshall are said to have come through Pound Gap, from Western Virginia, and are advancing into the centre of the State. The town and vicinity are infested with John Morgan's guerrillas; four of them were caught by scouting parties.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 23.—The President has issued the following:— EXECUTIVE MANSION, WASHINGTON, Dec. 23, 1862.—To the Army of the Potomac.—I have just received your Commanding General's preliminary report of the battle of Fredericksburg. The attempt was not an error, nor the failure other than an accident. The courage with which you, on an open field, maintained the contest against an entrenched foe, and the consummate skill and success with which you crossed and re-crossed the river in the face of the enemy, show that you possess all the qualities of a great army, which will yet give victory to the cause of the country and of the popular government. Concluding with the mourners for the dead, sympathizing for the severely wounded, I congratulate you that the number of both is comparatively small. I tender to you, officers and soldiers, the thanks of the nation.

(Signed) ABRAHAM LINCOLN. The following has been received here:— Headquarters Department of North

Carolina, Dec. 20.—To Major General Halleck, Washington:—My expedition was a perfect success. I burned the road bridge at Goldsboro and at Olive, and tore up several miles of track of the Wilmington and Weldon road. We fought four engagements at South West Creek, Kingston, W. Hall and Goldsboro, and whipped the enemy handsomely each time.

(Signed) J. G. FOSTER, Brig. Gen. Commanding. The above Council met at Size's hotel, Unionville, on Saturday, the 20th inst. Members all present.—The Reeve in the chair.

The minutes of last meeting were read and approved. Mr. J. A. Bowman presented a petition from Thomas Amos and 9 others, praying for aid for an indigent person named Charles Irish, residing at Brown's Corners, on the 4th concession.

Mr. J. A. Bowman laid on the table returns from special School meetings held in Sections Nos. 11, 13 and 17. Mr. Marsh moved, seconded by Mr. J. A. Bowman, that the return from special meeting held in School Sections Nos. 11, 13 and 17, being opposed to any alterations in said Sections, be it resolved that no action be taken by this Council in regard to forming a School Section out of portions of the above mentioned School Sections.

Mr. Barker moved, seconded by Mr. Marsh, that the Clerk pay to Wm. Kester the amount due him for defalcations properly returned in the year 1858, and also pay the percentage due the said William Kester for collecting School Rates in Section No. 10, and retain such percentage from the Trustees of School Section No. 10, and of any sum that may come into the hands of said Clerk, as due and payable to said School Trustees.

Mr. Marsh introduced a By-law to fix the places for holding the Municipal Elections in the several wards of the township of Mackham, for the year 1863, and to appoint Returning Officers for the same, which was passed by the Council.

Mr. J. A. Bowman moved, seconded by Mr. Marsh, that Mr. A. H. Sumner be, and is hereby appointed Commissioner to build two bridges between lots 25 and 26, in the 5th con., in place of Mr. Angus McKinnon.

Mr. J. A. Bowman moved, seconded by Mr. Marsh, that the sum of \$1 per week be, and is hereby granted for the support of Charles Irish and his wife, an indigent and infirm couple, residing at Brown's Corners, on the 4th concession.

Mr. Marsh moved, seconded by Mr. Barker, that the Treasurer be, and is hereby instructed to pay over to Wm. B. Phipps, Treasurer of the Lancaster Relief Committee, Toronto, the amount collected from the several School Sections of this township, for the relief of the distressed poor in Britain, and \$25 for Manchester operatives, specially subscribed by Mr. David Cash.

The Council then adjourned sine die. Whitechurch Council. The above Council met at Mr. William Brown's Hall, Bogartown, on Wednesday, the 17th inst.

Members all present. The Reeve in the chair. Minutes of last meeting read, approved, and signed by the Reeve. Petition from Alexander Sangster and 33 others, praying for a Tavern License to be granted to Ed. Conner, on the 10th con. of this township, was received and read.

Also a communication from Wilson, Patterson & Beatty, in the case with the Northern Railway Company, to the effect that the final division of the Court is further deferred to the February term. The Clerk presented the following bills and accounts, viz:—

E. Jackson, for printing and stationery, \$40 95  
Chestnut & Co. for stationery, 2 45  
Canada Gazette, for advertising Special Account, 5 00  
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Also a communication from J. Lerkin Robinson, in reference to excess of taxes on part of lot 63, in the 1st con. of this township, for 1855, amounting to \$3 07. Also from the Clerk of Uxbridge, relating to an appropriation on the Town line east of this Township.

Also from Michael Fretz, in regard to taxes paid to the Sheriff, on lot 21, in the 9th con. in the years 1852, 1854 and 1858—the patent not having been issued. On motion of Mr. Macklem, seconded by Mr. Wheeler, the bills presented by the Clerk and that of taxes by J. Lerkin Robinson, were ordered to be paid.

On motion of Mr. Silvester, seconded by Mr. McCormack, the application of Michael Fretz was laid over for the purpose of examining the Rolls in reference thereto. The Reeve brought in a By-law to appoint the place for holding the Annual Township Meeting, and read a first time in blank.

Council in committee.—Mr. Silvester in the chair. The blank for the plan was filled with Wm. Brown's Hall, Bogartown. Committee rose and reported the By-law amended.—Report adopted.

The By-law was read a third time and passed. On motion of Mr. Macklem, the Reeve left the chair for one hour, for dinner. AFTERNOON SESSION. Council resumed.

On motion of Mr. Silvester, seconded by Mr. McCormack, the Clerk was directed to inform the Township Clerk of Uxbridge, that owing to the lateness of the season the proposition for an appropriation of the Town-line east, opposite lots 10 and 11, could not at present be entertained.

On motion of Mr. Wheeler, seconded by Mr. McCormack, the prayer of the petition of Conner was granted, and Peter and John Conner accepted as

the proceeding involves a principle of a much more important character, which in view of future agencies, they or their successors would do well to consider fully. It is nothing less, in fact, than an assumption on the part of the Council, of the right to annul the decisions of a magistrate. Let the opinion once gain currency that the Council can annul the decisions of a magistrate, they are set aside or mitigate the punishment inflicted by a justice of the Peace, and the authority of the latter will soon cease to be respected, or will be set at defiance altogether. A matter is brought before the legally appointed tribunal, the defence is heard, and the question is decided in accordance with the law affecting the case. If the convicted party should feel aggrieved, he has the right of appeal to a higher court; but certainly a Township Council has no right to constitute itself a Court of Appeal in doubtful cases. There is no doubt that Wallace pleaded ignorance of the law before Mr. Wadsworth, but that gentleman did not consider it a sufficient defence. It must not be forgotten, too, that in giving testimony before a magistrate, witnesses are examined on oath; while the Council receives merely a verbal statement from one of the parties, without that guarantee of veracity which an oath is supposed to give.

When a man takes out a license to sell spirituous liquors, it is certainly his business to make himself acquainted with the law in reference to taverns. Any prudent man would naturally be expected to take this precaution. If he neglects to do so, however, and breaks the law in consequence of his own carelessness, the fault is his own, and he cannot reasonably consider himself hardily dealt with if he is made to suffer the penalty attached to his offence. Hundreds of cases may occur, in which the plea of ignorance might be set up, with as much show of reason, as in this instance; yet it would be unwise and even dangerous to interfere with the operation of the law. We do not intend by these remarks to impute improper motives to any member of the Council, but we wish to point out the great evil of establishing a precedent, which may be productive of the most dangerous consequences in future.

Mr. Pierce, the Township Clerk deserves credit for the concise and explicit manner in which he has recorded the doings of the Council for some years past. We are aware that Mr. Pierce is always anxious to give all the information in his power to the public on municipal matters.

School Examination. THE usual half yearly examination took place on Monday last;—the time devoted to examination was so short, that many of the classes in the different departments could not be called up, which was a disappointment to many who take an interest in witnessing the progress made by the pupils. The classes that were examined in each department, acquitted themselves creditably, and gave evidence of the efficiency of the present staff of teachers. We would, however, suggest that, in future, a whole day be given to the examination of the Grammar School department alone, and that the next day be devoted to an examination of the pupils in the Junior Departments. We think the pupils would prefer this mode—and all the classes would be examined, and the parents would have a better opportunity of witnessing a more thorough examination.

Volunteer Rifle Company. THE Young men on the 3rd con. of Whitechurch held a preliminary meeting for the purpose of organizing a Rifle Company on Friday evening last. Owing to the inclemency of the weather on that evening the attendance was not so large as it would have been.—After several of the speakers had explained the object and duties of the volunteers, about twenty gave in their names. Another meeting was to have been held this week, but with what success we have not heard.

Auction Sales. Monday, Dec. 29.—Credit Sale of Farm Stock, Implements, &c., on lot No. 11, 3rd Con, Vaughan, in the property of Mr. Henry Reid. Sale at 11 o'clock, by Mr. H. Smelson, Auctioneer. Wednesday.—Credit Sale of No. 44, at 10 o'clock. Received for which thanks.

Christmas Day. Yesterday, being Christmas day, the places of business in our town, were closed. Contrary to what we usually have at this season, we had no snow for Christmas, and consequently, very few driving parties were out.

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On motion of Mr. Wheeler, seconded by Mr. McCormack, the prayer of the petition of Conner was granted, and Peter and John Conner accepted as

the proceeding involves a principle of a much more important character, which in view of future agencies, they or their successors would do well to consider fully. It is nothing less, in fact, than an assumption on the part of the Council, of the right to annul the decisions of a magistrate. Let the opinion once gain currency that the Council can annul the decisions of a magistrate, they are set aside or mitigate the punishment inflicted by a justice of the Peace, and the authority of the latter will soon cease to be respected, or will be set at defiance altogether. A matter is brought before the legally appointed tribunal, the defence is heard, and the question is decided in accordance with the law affecting the case. If the convicted party should feel aggrieved, he has the right of appeal to a higher court; but certainly a Township Council has no right to constitute itself a Court of Appeal in doubtful cases. There is no doubt that Wallace pleaded ignorance of the law before Mr. Wadsworth, but that gentleman did not consider it a sufficient defence. It must not be forgotten, too, that in giving testimony before a magistrate, witnesses are examined on oath; while the Council receives merely a verbal statement from one of the parties, without that guarantee of veracity which an oath is supposed to give.

When a man takes out a license to sell spirituous liquors, it is certainly his business to make himself acquainted with the law in reference to taverns. Any prudent man would naturally be expected to take this precaution. If he neglects to do so, however, and breaks the law in consequence of his own carelessness, the fault is his own, and he cannot reasonably consider himself hardily dealt with if he is made to suffer the penalty attached to his offence. Hundreds of cases may occur, in which the plea of ignorance might be set up, with as much show of reason, as in this instance; yet it would be unwise and even dangerous to interfere with the operation of the law. We do not intend by these remarks to impute improper motives to any member of the Council, but we wish to point out the great evil of establishing a precedent, which may be productive of the most dangerous consequences in future.

Mr. Pierce, the Township Clerk deserves credit for the concise and explicit manner in which he has recorded the doings of the Council for some years past. We are aware that Mr. Pierce is always anxious to give all the information in his power to the public on municipal matters.

School Examination. THE usual half yearly examination took place on Monday last;—the time devoted to examination was so short, that many of the classes in the different departments could not be called up, which was a disappointment to many who take an interest in witnessing the progress made by the pupils. The classes that were examined in each department, acquitted themselves creditably, and gave evidence of the efficiency of the present staff of teachers. We would, however, suggest that, in future, a whole day be given to the examination of the Grammar School department alone, and that the next day be devoted to an examination of the pupils in the Junior Departments. We think the pupils would prefer this mode—and all the classes would be examined, and the parents would have a better opportunity of witnessing a more thorough examination.

Volunteer Rifle Company. THE Young men on the 3rd con. of Whitechurch held a preliminary meeting for the purpose of organizing a Rifle Company on Friday evening last. Owing to the inclemency of the weather on that evening the attendance was not so large as it would have been.—After several of the speakers had explained the object and duties of the volunteers, about twenty gave in their names. Another meeting was to have been held this week, but with what success we have not heard.

Auction Sales. Monday, Dec. 29.—Credit Sale of Farm Stock, Implements, &c., on lot No. 11, 3rd Con, Vaughan, in the property of Mr. Henry Reid. Sale at 11 o'clock, by Mr. H. Smelson, Auctioneer. Wednesday.—Credit Sale of No. 44, at 10 o'clock. Received for which thanks.

by Mr. Macklem, a further sum of \$10 was appropriated on the Town line south of the 8th con., and \$5.23 on the road in front of lot 13, on the 6th con.