

LETTER FROM OUR ARMY IN NORTHERN VIRGINIA.

We are permitted to publish the following extracts from a private letter, received in this city yesterday, from a young soldier, a member of Gen. Wright's Brigade. It will be read with interest:

BYOUAC NEAR WINCHESTER, VA.,  
Oct. 14th, 1862.

*Dear Mother and Father:* Yesterday, our division (Anderson's) was reviewed by Major General Longstreet. It was the first affair of the kind that I ever beheld, and the show was to me truly a grand one. Ours is, I suppose, one of the largest divisions in the army, embracing as it does seven brigades. You cannot form a correct idea of the beauty of so many thousand men drawn up in line of battle, until you once see it. After all things were ready, Gen. Longstreet, Gen. Wilcox, and their several staffs, rode along our lines uncovered, and were saluted with "present arms" from the men, and the most enchanting music from the various bands that it was ever my pleasure to listen to. After this, the whole line, for more than a mile in extent, was broken into column of companies, and marched by the General, who had taken his position on an eminence from whence he could see the whole column as it moved up and down the valley.

General Longstreet is a fine looking man, with dark hair, and long, flowing, sandy colored whiskers; he is rather fat and short, to fill out the fanciful idea of what a fine soldier must be; but one can, by a single glance, see genius stamped upon his countenance, and without knowing why, feel as though he was entitled to respect. The whole affair was carried through correctly, and the marching reflected great credit upon our officers and men.

A day or two since, we received the intelligence of our defeat at Corinth. I was sorry to hear it, but the successes of the Army of Northern Virginia will, no doubt, counterbalance our loss in the West, and leave a good deal in our favor. I can understand why it was we lost the battle, it was not on account of want of bravery in those who entered the battle, but because of the great extent of straggling. It was nearly the same at Sharpsburg; if we had had all of our stragglers in that battle we would have cleaned the Yankee army completely out. Our successes will never reach the standard they might, or ought to, until our rulers adopt some plan by which straggling from the ranks can be effectually prevented. And, to my mind, the only way to prevent it, to such a ruinous extent, is to shoot those who are caught skulking to the rear during an engagement. I do not advocate such a plan if anything else will suffice; but the evil should be rooted up at any cost.

I can give you nothing concerning the movements of our army; though, as far as I know, it is centered around this point, waiting for something to turn up. I must now close. Captain Doughty and all others are well. Small pox has made its appearance in the army—one case is reported in our brigade, 8d Georgia.

Your affectionate son,  
P.

Another private letter received here, states that two English noblemen were present at the review above alluded to, but their names were not ascertained.

letter was published in the Daily Constitutional at Augusta, Georgia on 25 October 1862. It was claimed to have been written by a member Gen. Wright's Brigade.

Bivouac near Winchester, Virginia

October 14, 1862

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Your affectionate son, — F.

# Bio of Francis Marion Hight

Francis (“Frank”) Marion Hight enlisted in Co. D in 1861 but by February 1862 was the 1st Sergeant of Co. C. In June 1862, he was elected 2nd Lt. He resigned from the company due to disability in April 1863. Frank was the son of William M. Hight (1813-1865) and Emily T. Hight (1815-1863). Frank worked as a book keeper before the war and his father was a machinist and contractor. The family owned 11 slaves in 1860.

published in the Baltimore Clipper on 23 December 1865: “Military Justice-Sentence of a Criminal. By the finding and sentence of a military commission in session at Augusta, Ga., Frank Hight was condemned to death for the wilful murder of Alexander Heasley, Captain Co. E, 33rd U. S. Colored Infantry. Hight was tried jointly with Charles Watkins and Joshua Jones Doughty, citizens of Augusta for the same offense but the two later were acquitted. In reviewing the findings, Major General Steadman approves the action of the court in acquitting Doughty but inasmuch as Charles Watkins, whose guilt, the evidence, in the opinion of General Steadman, clearly establishes, has been acquitted, the sentence in the case of Hight is modified [from hanging] to imprisonment to the penitentiary at Auburn, New York, for a term of fifteen years.

# Info on murder victim Capt. Alexander Heasley

Born some time in the 1840s he served in the Co. B, 100th Pennsylvania. After the war he resigned from the 33rd USCT on 20 July 1865 to take a position in the Freeman's Bureau in Augusta. Turns out that Heasley's murder had to do with "a beautiful mulatto woman" (as she was described by the Northern press) named Sarah Jane Blakeley—the lover of Frank Hight. When Blakeley fell in love with her and wanted to marry her, Frank was so outraged that he and two other men went to the woman's house, found Blakeley, and shot and stabbed him to death. Alexander passed away on 30 of August 1865

Photo of Capt. Alexander Heasley (184-1865) of Co. E, 33rd USCT (formerly a corporal in Co. B, 100th Pennsylvania), was killed on 30 August 1865 in Augusta, Georgia. His Find-A-Grave biography says he was killed by “a bushwhacker.”

