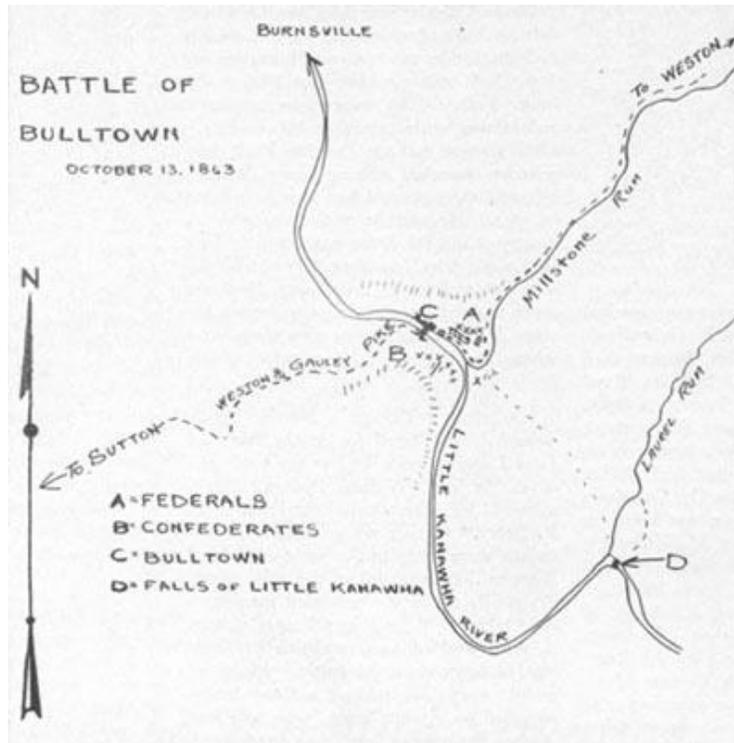


ON THIS DAY IN WEST VIRGINIA HISTORY OCTOBER 13



On October 13, 1863, Union troops under Captain William H. Mattingly defeated a Confederate force led by Colonel William L. Jackson at the Battle of Bulltown.

CSO: SS.8.22, ELA.8.1

Investigate the Document: (*Official Records Series I, Volume 29, Part 1, p. 481; Weston Democrat April 22, 1927*)

1. How many men does Captain Mattingly estimate took part in Colonel William Jackson's early morning attack?
2. What was Mattingly's response to the Confederate call for surrender?
3. What highly unusual pet did the Union troops have in their possession that the Confederates attempt to capture?
4. How does Thomas Bland describe Captain Mattingly's wound? Did he succumb to this wound during the skirmish at Bulltown?

Think Critically: Why was the fort at Bulltown of strategic importance to the Confederate Army? What is the legacy of the battle?

MY RECOLLECTIONS AND EXPERIENCES OF THE CIVIL WAR

Thomas Bland Camden, M. D.

Transcribed from Original Notes by Roy B. Cook

(Continued from Last Week)

The Battle of Bulltown

The Battle of Bulltown took place near the Bulltown Salt Works, on the Little Kanawha River, in Braxton county, on October 13, 1863. The Confederate forces, under Gen. W. L. Jackson ("Mudwall"), to distinguish him from his illustrious relative, "Stonewall"), Col. W. P. Thompson of Parkersburg, and others, attacked the Federal forces under Capt. W. H. Mattingly, also of Parkersburg. The word came to Weston by runners sent for aid, and relief for Mattingly's forces, and it turned out, the Federal Surgeon, Dr. Safford, of Parkersburg was on a leave of absence and there was no Surgeon there, I was urged by the Federal authorities at Weston to go to the battlefield and care for the wounded. I got Frank M. Chalfant, a noted druggist and Union man to accompany me, knowing that it would be a dangerous trip, as both forces had their scouts out and we had to go 27 miles on horseback, with medicines and instruments.

We started and got to the battlefield afternoon. The Confederates were retreating after fighting two days, and making many sorties to capture the Federals who were in a kind of breast works, composed of brush and fence on the hill north of Bulltown. The Federals had also log cabins near, which they occupied and fought from. In one the soldiers had a pet bear, and the Confederates knew of it, and tried several times to capture the cabin and the bear, and they told me it seemed like a "Prisoner's Base" frolic more than an actual fierce engagement. They never got the bear.

Capt. Mattingly was wounded by a large musket ball, shot from across the river at least a half mile away, striking his leg and broke the thigh bone. I cut the flattened ball out where it was lodged just under the skin, and dressed the wound, and put his leg in a long board splint I made. The bone was shattered and pieces came out from time to time, and always gave him trouble and caused amnesia. I met him after the war at his home in Parkersburg, and he was very grateful for my aid, and

services to him and his men. The firing could be heard as the Federals followed the retreating Confederates on towards Salt Lick Bridge, four or five miles away, I believe, with no casualties.

After dressing Mattingly's leg and the firing receded, I was taken down to the Salt Works where Col. McLaughlin's home was, where I found three or four wounded Confederates left there. One man was shot in the knee joint, just where the surgeons and surgery would say amputation of the leg was imperative, but as it was a "hot time" and firing going on, I did not seem to have time for extensive surgery, so I put his limb in splints and trusted to nature for good results, and I dressed the wounds of others, which were not so serious, and got away as soon as I could, and rather to my surprise all of these grave injuries got so well that the wounded Confederate soldiers were brought through Weston as prisoners afterwards.

And just here I want to add that I learned a valuable experience and lesson of the wonderful conservative and healing power of nature, for I fear if it had not been lively about there, I might have done some serious cutting, but as I remarked, I learned a conservative lesson in surgery, which has aided me as well as a patient or two, who were ready for the operating table for amputation of a leg, that was saved and had a good limb, by my advice.

One Confederate soldier was shot from a distance of nearly a half mile. The femoral artery was cut and he bled to death, and could have been saved, if surgical aid had been given. He was a young man named Ben Schoonova, whose father lived on Sand Fork. One of his sisters, a little girl of six or eight years of age, got her arm crushed in a cane mill, and I went there, sixteen miles from Weston. I got there at midnight, and amputated the arm by a tallow dip candle, and without chloroform. She recovered nicely. I have often seen the enclosed grave of Ben on the hillside near the road. After dressing the wounded, I was called to see Moses Cunningham, a noted character who lived within gunshot of the bat-

tlefield. He was a great and loud-mouthed Southerner, especially when drinking, and while the fight was going on, he hurrahed for Jeff Davis, and a soldier shot him in the back between the hips, and I dressed his wound and he recovered, and became more careful in his cheering, although he lost an eye by being "gouged" by a soldier in a fight afterwards.

As the firing continued and reports came in of fighting still going on, and how a Confederate on a white horse rode out on the road and emptied his carbine at the Federals at Salt Lick Bridge, who was supposed to have been Capt. John Sprigg, a brave soldier who lived near Sutton, and I did not know but they would return, Chalfant and I thought it wise for us to return home, and we got home safely. As I was urged to go to the battlefield by the Federal Captain of the Post at Weston, as there was no army surgeon there, Dr. Safford having come to Parkersburg, I sent my bill to the Department at Washington, I think for \$100, which was very reasonable. They sent me \$10, and I have always thought someone doctored my bill and got the rest. Capt. Mattingly had heard of the transaction and when I met him in Parkersburg sometime afterwards, he added another \$10.

Next Week—The Witcher Raid and Close of the War)

WASHINGTON LETTER

WASHINGTON, April 20.—Young America is inspecting the nation's capital this week. Approximately fifty thousand high school seniors are examining the machinery of the government and taking a close-up of high officials during the Easter vacation period. Interest in government affairs has increased to such an extent that school authorities recommend the annual pilgrimage and allow proper credits in school work. Unfortunately the handshaking activities of President Coolidge have been restricted by his medical advisers, but the voters of tomorrow frequently catch a glimpse of the first citizen which is something to write home to the folks.

Perhaps it is the spring weather but the holiday spirit prevails in the official set. The gravity of the foreign situation is not forgotten nor is it unduly stressed. Dame rumor holds sway at each cabinet meeting and reports are circulated to the effect that wide differences of opinion have developed among the President's "official family". These tidings which

quickly find their way to the foreign offices of world powers are promptly denied in official quarters. Quarrels within the cabinet room are seldom revealed to the world because of the effect on our relations with other nations. It is said in well informed circles here that no action of major importance is taken without the consent of the President who usually calls in his advisers. Whatever discussion develops is kept a family secret. The first inside knowledge comes from memoirs of former cabinet members who generally state their own view of the situation for a price.

Just when everybody believed that the farm legislation was out of the way, the politician breathes life into the subject. Senator McNary, Republican, of Oregon, one of the authors of the vetoed measure, begins a tour of the country, ostensibly to ascertain the views of the farmers. Some unfeeling observers have classified the trip as a political scouting excursion. It is said that the scout has been directed to confer with actual farm operators instead of their self-constituted legislative spokesmen.

In other words, those interested in farm relief want to know what the farmer needs from the government and not what some of their professional exploiters claim. Official Washington is fully acquainted with the varieties of farmer agents, the real soil tillers and those whose activities have been described in Congress as "plowing up and down Pennsylvania Avenue", meaning the political paths of the capital.

If you have ever visited this city the first eye-sore you noted was the unsightly appearance of the buildings around the Capitol. After years of talking, it appears that the original plans of George Washington and his associate, Major L'Enfant, the French engineer, will be fulfilled. Appraisers have been named for the condemnation of land required for the Federal buildings which will replace the shacks along the "Avenue of the Presidents". Already appropriations have been made for the buildings, costing fifty millions in which to house governmental activities.

Little attention is devoted to the soft coal strike. However, the recent decision of the United States Supreme Court against organized labor in the construction field has created widespread discussion here. Opinion varies as to the effect on union activities but it is freely predicted that the subject will figure prominently in Congressional debate next winter. With a Presidential campaign in the offing, the question of legislation and organized labor is of great importance. The highest tribunal has ruled

against the boycott goods. It will be proposals for restriction followed by denouncing the anti-trust subjects are dangerous ties, and reports noted for their general
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dispatches came from White and Mosby, and that Mosby's men were talking among themselves about a big raid. I send this for what it is worth.

C. R. LOWELL, JR.,
Colonel, Second Massachusetts Cavalry.

Col. J. H. TAYLOR,
Assistant Adjutant-General.

OCTOBER 13, 1863.—Skirmish at Bulltown, W. Va.

Report of Capt. William H. Mattingly, Sixth West Virginia Infantry.

BULLTOWN,
October 13, 1863.

SIR: We were attacked this morning at 4.30 o'clock by Col. William L. Jackson, with about 1,000 men and two pieces of artillery. They charged our fortifications on the northeast side. We fell back to our main fortification. They pursued us until within a few yards of our fortifications when we poured it into them strong and repulsed them handsomely, with a loss of not less than 50 killed and wounded. They then sent us a flag of truce, ordering us to surrender. I told them to come and take us. They continued fighting until 4.30 o'clock this evening, when they retreated. We gave them 9 of their killed, who were in our line.

We have taken 1 lieutenant and 1 private, who are badly wounded. We captured 2 privates, but they are not wounded. Our casualties are myself, wounded (it is thought mortally) in the thigh, the bone being badly broken, early in the action. You will send by all possible dispatch a surgeon; send best that you can. Send re-enforcements and ammunition.

Rebels withdrew in the direction of Sutton. Prisoners say they were expecting General Jenkins to assist.

WM. H. MATTINGLY,
Captain, Commanding United States Forces.

Col. N. WILKINSON,
Brigade Commander, Clarksburg.

OCTOBER 13, 1863.—Scout from Great Bridge, Va., to Indiantown, N. C.

Report of Lieut. Col. William Lewis, Fifth Pennsylvania Cavalry.

GREAT BRIDGE, VA.,
October 13, 1863.

LIEUTENANT: I have the honor to report the following as the result of a scout by Maj. C. Klein and his battalion, co-operating with a detachment of the Ninety-sixth New York Volunteers commanded by Colonel Cullen.

The infantry skirmished the woods thoroughly along the entire route from Currituck Court-House to Captain Grandy's guerrilla