

COMMUNICATIONS PERTAINING TO HENRY C. FLESHER

Transcribed by David Armstrong.

By telegraph from Beverly Jan 28, 1863

Brig Gen A Moor

Comdg. Northern Brigade

I left here on the morning of the 20th last a 7 AM and marched to Hermors at Mingo where I halted for about 1 hour and fed and then pushed forward to the bridge across Greenbrier River, arriving at that place at 3AM Wednesday. I remained at the bridge till after daylight. The snow having fallen to the depth of two and a half feet I consulted with my officers when it was determined to push forward to Cockley Town which we entered about 11 o'clock, taking everything by surprise, but unfortunately the company of Rebel cavalry had been out for several days scouting. I captured four prisoners and eight horses and immediatly gathered up my command and returned to Gibson's where owing to the severe indecency of the weather I was compelled to find shelter for my men, it being impossible to bivouac. The enemy pursued and attacked my rear, and killed two enlisted men, capturing Lt. Rowan and nine privates of Capt. Bowen's company, three of Co. G, 2nd Regt Va. V. I., and two men of Co. A, 1st Va. Cav. Owing to the excessive fatigue of my force I was unable to make pursuit, the greater number of my horses having become barefooted. Lt. Rowan has been exchanged for Lt. McNeel of the Confederate Army. I returned as far as it was practicable for me to do so after going to Cockley Town and used all prudence to prevent an attack on my rear, having detailed having detailed a rear guard of thirty men which I remained with until after 8PM. Lt. Rowan placed out guards and made all the defense he could. The enemy who made the attack on me being as I am informed about 70 under Col. Fountain. I have made arrangements to have my men released, and expect them to return in a few days released unconditionally. Considering the unfavorable state of the weather the march and exposure has been unprecedented during the war. The horses have been turned over to the quartermaster, and those fit for cavalry have been used to replace those given out.

(signed)

Henry C. Flesher

Maj. 2nd Va. V. I. Comdg. Expedition

Headquarters Northern Brigade Buckhannon, Va Jan 28 1863

Sir:

I have the honor to report that as I heard from reliable authority that a force of from 50 to 60 rebels with horses were organized at the levels of Pocahontas about 30 of them arrived, the rest expecting arms from Staunton, and the report being confirmed by Maj. Henry C. Flesher, 2nd Va. V. I. I, stationed at Beverly. and Major Flesher desiring to command an expedition to capture them, I could aid him with 50 men, he having 60 mounted men at Beverly, being convinced of success without the least risk. I sent Capt. Bowen, 3rd Regt. Va. V. Cav. with 50 men and a good guide (a Mr. Sexton) to Major Flesher, with instructions how to proceed. The expedition under command of Maj. Flesher left Beverly on the 20th last, and returned on the 23rd at dark. Major Flesher in his report to me passes over the affair rather lightly. The officers of the expedition complain bitterly of the incapacity, and even worse than incapacity of Major Flesher. After taking four prisoners at Cockletown the expedition received information that the rebels were about 1 mile further ahead, accordingly pursued and shortly came upon a sort of camp where they found the Rebels in huts. Some of Capt. Bowen's men had already engaged them, the officers of the expedition imploring Major Flesher to let them charge and make short work, but Major Flesher hesitated and ordered the expedition to return. The prisoners taken even teasing the men by saying that they had not the courage to attack, although two to one. Instead of sending the prisoners to the front, as I had ordered, Major Flesher marched them with the rear guard, stationing one sick Lieutenant and 16 men two miles in rear of the main body for the night. The rebels easily cut off the rear guard, killing two and taking the rest prisoners. One escaped and gave the alarm to the main body, the few rebels of course retreated before they came up. No one knew what had become of Major Flesher. The whole command is indignant at his conduct. My opinion is that he ought to be dismissed the service. I transmit herewith a copy of Maj. Flesher's report.

Very Respectfully,

Your most obt. servant

(signed) A. Mocr Brig. Gen Comdg.

Major G. M. Bascom

A. A. Genl.

HCF REC: F 5 Cav Henry C. Flesher 1st Lt. Co H 2 Va Inf Company Muster Out Roll:

Henry C. Flesher joined June 10, 1861 at Ironton, Ohio for 3 years. Traveled to Wheeling, Va. 1st Lt. Capt McNally's Co., 2 Va. Volunteers joined and enrolled June 28, 1861 at Wheeling WV for 3 years. Major Flesher was notified by order of Maj. Gen. Cox that his resignation would be accepted or else he must stand trial by general court martial. The Major never was before a board of examiners but his incapacity to command troops or even to carry out written instructions was demonstrated on January 22, 1863 by allowing himself to be disgracefully surprised by a handful of rebel recruits which he was ordered and ought to have captured the day before.

Resignation approved A. Moor Brig. Gen USV

Head Quarters Milroy's brigade

Camp near Woodville, Va

Aug 5 1862

His excellency

Gov F. H. Pierpont

Sir:

I write to you on behalf of my two brothers now in respectively in the 1st & 2nd Va Cavalry (one Robt P 1st Va Cavalry the other William H. 2 Va Cavalry) they have been serving I the last year as privates in their respective regiments. So you have two new regiments to recruit for general service. Can I ask of you to commission one or both of them 2nd Lt for recruiting for the new regiment. We are three brothers all entered service at the same time at the first call of the President for troops to assert the supremacy of the laws. I understand from both of the captains that they are good soldiers. I have always been ready for duty. Hoping to hear from you favorably as regard to my request

I am sir very respectfully your obdt Ser

Henry C. Flesher

Capt. 2 Regt Va Infantry