

# ANDERSON ZOUAVE

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## JOHN J. PECK'S WILLIAMSBURG WAR TROPHY.

By John Tierney

At the battle of Williamsburg the men of Peck's brigade were no less heroic in reaching the battlefield as they were in the struggle for it. At Cheesecake Church the head of Peck's column of men, struggled past Casey's division, the wagons and men of which sat idly blocking the road. Having slogged through miles of mud they poured into the woods west of the Whittacker house on the Telegraph road and positioned themselves immediately in front of Fort Magruder. During the course of the battle it is said that a state flag of a Virginian regiment was captured by the brigade, however, this event has never been very well documented. Neither the IV Corps commander Brig.-General Erasmus D. Keyes, division commander Brig.-General Darius N. Couch or the brigade commander, Brig.-General John J. Peck record the capture of the flag and of the five regiments from the brigade that were engaged on May 5, 1862 only the 102nd Pennsylvania ever had a report of its conduct included in the *Official Records*. Just who captured the flag, where it was captured and who it was captured from seems to be unrecorded.

It is somewhat surprising that the *Official Records* only contains the report of Colonel Thomas A. Rowley of the 102nd Pennsylvania Infantry, because it is clear that Colonel James M. McCarter of the 93rd Pennsylvania also wrote a highly detailed report and Colonel Regis De Trobriand of the 55th New York Infantry, was to include a detailed description of the battle five years later in his history of the war, *Quatre ans de campagnes à l'Armée du Potomac*.<sup>1</sup> McCarter's account, which is written in the form of an official report, appears in the official history of the 93rd Pennsylvania, *Red, White and Blue Badge*, by Penrose G. Mark published in 1911.

Despite this number of official reports and personal accounts by corps, division, brigade and regiment commanders, nowhere is the capture of a Virginian regimental flag mentioned. In fact the first mention of a captured flag is in a letter from Gen. Peck's adjutant, Silas Titus, to the Congressional representative Hon. C. B. Sedgewick:

...I shall forward to your care, by express a Virginia State Flag, captured by this brigade, which Gen. Peck desired to have forwarded, by you, to the Mayor and Common Council of our city. It was done up to send direct, but you are at liberty to display it, and open the letter inside, and forward at your pleasure...<sup>2</sup>

A Confederate flag captured in battle must have been highly prized. It is unlikely that whomever captured it would have happily surrendered it, and the credit for its capture, to another regiment or to the brigade staff.

Given that neither Rowley, McCarter or De Trobriand mention the capture of the flag in their accounts and in the absence of reports from either Riker of the 62nd New York or Ballier of the 98th Pennsylvania, the possibility is left open that it was one of these last two regiments – the 62nd NY or the 98th PVI – that captured the flag. However, as the credit for the capture of the flag was given to the brigade it is much more likely that the flag's "capture" may have been a "find".

The field between Peck's front and Fort Magruder was a mess of entangled trees which had been felled by the confederates to form a defensive abatis. Unfortunately for the defenders of Williamsburg, this defense seemed to favour Peck's men more than it did themselves and there are reports of how the confederates, struggling through the abatis to attack Peck's front, provided excellent targets for the New Yorkers and Pennsylvanians hidden in the edge of the woods on the Telegraph road. Given the difficult ground, wounded and dead soldiers caught in this slash would have been far too exposed to have been retrieved by their comrades during the height of the battle. Should one of these have been carrying the Virginia flag then it would have been a simple thing to "capture" it in the evening when the Confederates had abandoned the

field. It is possible that Silas Titus himself may have picked up the flag as he rode over the field or that it may have been found by someone else the next day when Peck's regiments marched to Fort Magruder.

The flag as described in the *Syracuse Daily Courier and Union* was not inscribed with the name of a regiment or a regimental number and so its loss was probably not going to be admitted to if it could be avoided:

...The flag is a blue field, with a white oval centre, on which is painted the Virginia coat of arms — with a figure of the Goddess of Liberty, (rampant) spear in hand, treading on the prostrate form of a tyrant, (couchant) and the well known motto, *sic semper tyrannis* — "thus always with tyrants" — underneath. The flag is composed of a very good material of bunting, and the stitching of the white in the centre indicates that sewing machines are not unknown there. It is six feet long by five wide, fixed to a pole mounted by a sharp steel spear, and looks as though it might have seen considerable service. The word "Virginia" appears above the centre figures, and the motto immediately beneath them. The lower edge of the flag is trimmed with what was once intended for yellow fringe, and taken as a whole it is by no means uncouth in its appearance, excepting as it be, comes so from the cause in which it was made to figure. It is the Virginia State flag before the breaking out of the rebellion, ere the "Mother of Presidents" was granted a divorce by Jeff Davis from her alliance to the Union.<sup>3</sup>

Looking at the order of battle and the official reports shows that the flag could have belonged to a number of Virginian regiments. The 1st, 7th and 11th Virginia of Ambrose P. Hill's brigade and the 8th, 19th and 28th of George E. Pickett's brigade, both of James Longstreet's Second division, among others, all faced Peck's brigade and it may have come from any of them, however, none of them record losing a flag to Peck.

It would be expected that along with the capture of the flag would be attached the story of how the prize was won, but, in this case, what was tacked to the pole was a simple slip of paper with the inscription:— "Captured by Peck's brigade, at the battle of Williamsburg, May 5th, 1862." So if it is presumed that the flag was found, Silas Titus' claim that the flag was "captured" may seem somewhat insincere.

The flag, having been captured, left the battlefield of Williamsburg, but contrary to Titus' assurances to congressman Sedgewick that it would be delivered to him, it seems that it was delivered instead to Titus' son in Syracuse, NY. A report in the *Syracuse Daily Courier and Union* says that the flag was then delivered to the office of the Mayor of Syracuse on Friday May 16, 1862 to be presented to the Common Council. However, the newspaper report adds some bizarre and unsettling details to the story:

Accompanying this was another trophy of the war, in the shape of a rubber blanket, in which was enveloped the headless trunk of a rebel soldier, and lettered with the name of the unfortunate Secesher, "E. L. Harden, Chester, S. C." — A note accompanying the blanket from Major Titus to his son in this city, stated that the blanket was found covering the body of the rebel, whose head had taken some other direction, no one knew where. The flag arrived here enveloped in the blanket, which was tied with strips or bandages, smeared with the warm blood of the fallen foe!<sup>5</sup>

On first reading this, it is easy to imagine that the headless corpse of E. L. Harden of the 6th South Carolina Infantry was wrapped in the blanket along with the flag and delivered to the Mayor's office. It seems that all the awkwardly worded passage was meant to say was that when the rubber blanket was found it was covering the body of Private Harden and that his body was no doubt buried on the field with other comrades.

The flag was presented to the Syracuse Common Council by the Mayor on May 19, 1862 and Alderman Clark offered the following resolution:

Resolved, That the Common Council accept the flag token by the Brigade of Gen. John J. Peck, at the battle of Williamsburg, and presented by him to the city, and that the thanks of the Council be and are hereby presented to Gen. Peck, with the assurance that his gallant and meritorious services



Silas Titus – the “wiry little adjutant” and a favourite son of Syracuse, NY.

upon that occasion are fully appreciated by his fellow citizens at home. Adopted.<sup>6</sup>

Accepting the flag, however, did not mean keeping the flag it seems. Somehow the flag left the possession of the Common Council of Syracuse and made it back into the hands of Silas Titus, which, perhaps, strengthens the argument that it was he who originally found it. In 1895 the following dramatic article was syndicated in numerous newspapers across the country.

Syracuse July 24 — Col. Silas Titus of the 12th New-York Volunteers is lying on his death-bed in this city. This morning he placed in the hands of his son a Rebel flag captured from a Virginia regiment at the storming of Fort McGregor [Fort Magruder] in 1862 and said “My son. It has ever been my fondest wish to restore this flag to the hands of the officers of the brave regiment from which it was captured. My condition, however, precludes the possibility of my doing so, and to your hands I confide it with the sacred injunction that you seek the officers of the regiment and restore to them the emblem. Say to them that I would have done so personally had I been able but that from my death-bed I send back to them the flag with my heartiest good wishes and fraternal feeling.”<sup>7</sup>

Perhaps Silas did intend to return the flag, but his carefully considered final words give the impression that he may not have known who to return it to and was thankful that his imminent death was going to pass the responsibility on to someone younger. However, Silas Titus did not die, but, it seems, the story of the captured flag did.

Silas recovered and moved to his son’s house in Brooklyn and died tragically on July 24, 1895 of shock two weeks after he was dragged from a fire in his son’s house by his daughter-in-law.

What happened to the flag? Did it ever get returned to the officers of the Virginian regiment from which it was captured? Did it remain with Silas Titus’ son? What became of private E. L. Harden’s bloody rubber blanket in which the flag was wrapped? Did anyone ever identify the regiment from which the flag was captured. These unanswered questions make the story of the captured Virginian flag a slightly less satisfying episode in the history of Peck’s brigade. It is ironic that Silas Titus, who wrote so many fine and detailed letters during the war left so little detail about Peck’s captured flag. Perhaps, in the end, he knew no more than he told us.

#### Notes

1. In 1889 De Trobriand’s book was translated by George K. Dauchy and published as *Four Years with the Army of the Potomac*.
2. The complete text of this letter may be found in the October 2007 issue of *Anderson Zouave* (vol. 2 no. 9).
3. *Syracuse Daily Courier and Union*, May 21, 1862.
4. *Syracuse Daily Courier and Union*, May 17, 1862.
5. *Syracuse Daily Courier and Union*, May 17, 1862.
6. *Syracuse Daily Courier and Union*, May 22, 1862.
7. *Buffalo Express*, July 25, 1895.

## PRESCOTT TRACY – THE FIRST ADJUTANT OF THE ANDERSON ZOUAVES

By John Tierney

The following order appeared on page 5 of the *New York Times* on May 25, 1861.

### ANDERSON ZOUAVES.

General Order.

May 25, 1861

This Regiment will form on the extreme right of the line, as ordered by the Union Defence Committee on 14th st., between 9th and 10th ave Captains will march their companies from stations and barracks as early as 1 o’clock P. M.-forming around Union-square at 2 o’clock precisely. By order

J. Lafayette Riker, Colonel.

Prescott Tracy, Adjutant.

It is the last line which is of interest here, for besides several references to Prescott Tracy in the New York papers there is no evidence that anyone by that name ever enlisted in the Anderson Zouaves let alone held the important rank regimental adjutant to Colonel Riker. In many ways the colonel’s adjutant was one of the most important officers in the regiment handling all administrative details and paperwork, assigning much of the duty for officers and men and issuing orders on behalf of the commanding officer. So how is it that such an important member of the Anderson Zouaves staff appears nowhere in the regimental records. Perhaps the reference to Tracy was a misprint, however, the next day, on May 26, the *New York Times* once again listed Tracy as the Adjutant of the regiment placing him fourth in rank after Riker (Colonel), Tisdale (Lt. Colonel) and Dayton (Major). It appeared that Tracy was not to be an inconsequential member of Riker’s staff. Tracy must have impressed or had some ambition for another early newspaper article lists Tracy as the Major of the regiment.<sup>1</sup>

Despite the seemingly singular name “Prescott Tracy” the historical records show a surprising number of men with this name, or one very similar, enlisted with New York regiments in 1861 and 1862. A Prescott Tracey served as First Lieutenant of company “K” of the 5th New York – Duryee’s Zouaves while another Prescott Tracy enlisted as a private in company “G” of the 82nd New York Infantry.

Are all these men known as Prescott Tracy or Prescott Tracey the same individual? There is not enough evidence to be certain but what there is seems to indicate that they are and that Prescott Tracey of the 5th New York and Prescott Tracy of the 82nd New York are in fact the same person as Prescott Tracy, first adjutant of the Anderson Zouaves.

Looking back from the Civil War we find that Prescott Tracy was probably not a native New Yorker. Immigration records show that at the age of seven a Prescott Tracy arrived in New York aboard the ship, *Ship Europa* on August 6, 1839 having travelled from Liverpool in England. Arriving from Liverpool it is possible that Prescott may have been an Irish immigrant.

The next time we hear from Prescott is 11 years later in the data from the 1850 US census which records him as being 17 years old living in New York and working as a clerk. It is interesting to note that, according to the census data, this is the only Prescott Tracy or Prescott Tracey living in New York in 1850.

Five years later a Prescott Tracey marries Catherine A. M. Brower in New York City on December 2, 1855. If this is the same Prescott as the 1839 immigrant from Great Britain and the Prescott in the 1850 census then his name has been spelled incorrectly in the records. If it is the same Prescott then at the time of his marriage he would have been 23 years old, however, his age is not recorded in the marriage record and so we can not be certain that this Tracey is in fact the same man but it seems most likely that he is as there are no other records around this date which would contradict such an assumption.

Prescott does not reappear in the historical record until late April 1861 when suddenly there appear to be two individuals going by the name.

On April 25, 1861 Prescott Tracey is said to have enlisted as First Lieutenant and received his commission in company “K” of the 5th New York - Duryee’s Zouaves on May 9, 1861, but, as it turns out, Tracey did not last long in this organisation resigning his commission

August 1, 1861. This period of less than three months with the 5th covers the period when Prescott Tracy was Adjutant and, possibly, Major of the 62nd. It would seem that this conflict would disqualify the Prescott Tracey of the 5th New York being the same person as the Adjutant of the 62nd New York. However, Joel Craig, a 5th New York researcher says that outside of the basic information about his date of enlistment there is very little known about First Lieutenant Prescott Tracey of the 5th New York.<sup>2</sup> It could be speculated that as Prescott Tracy does not appear on the regimental rolls of the 62nd New York that he may have been in some way on loan from the 5th New York and was in fact the same person who migrated to New York in 1839. As it stands a muster roll of the 5th New York taken on the very day that Tracey was supposed to have been commissioned as First Lieutenant of Company "K" does not record his name either in company "K" or in any other company of the regiment. To add further confusion to the issue is the record of William H. Hoyt who is meant to have been the First Lieutenant of Company "K" of the 5th New York at precisely the same time as Tracey was supposed to have been occupying that position. Looking at the enlistment records for these two is very interesting as aside from their names all other details are identical. Both Tracey and Hoyt enlisted in the 5th New York on April 25, 1861 as First Lieutenant. Both were commissioned on May 9, 1862 into Company "K". Both resigned their commission on August 1, 1861. Clearly, Company "K" of the 5th New York did not have two First Lieutenants at the same time and as Hoyt's name is the only one to appear on the regimental muster roll for May 9, 1862,<sup>3</sup> the inescapable conclusion must be that Prescott Tracey's inclusion in the ranks of the 5th New York must be an error. Possibly there has been some confusion caused by the fact that both the 62nd New York and the 5th New York were zouave regiments and Prescott Tracey who should have been noted as Adjutant of the Anderson Zouaves, which carries the rank of Lieutenant, was instead recorded as First Lieutenant of Company "K" of Duryee's Zouaves and the enlistment records of that company's actual First Lieutenant, William H. Hoyt, appended to Tracey's record.

As a clerk he would have had the requisite technical ability to be an adjutant and the fact that his tenure in the 5th was but a few months would conveniently explain his disappearance from the records of the 62nd around the same time. Perhaps Tracy (or Tracey) was assisting Riker to organise his regiment while he sought an appropriate person to act as the full-time regimental adjutant. In any case taking Prescott Tracey out of the 5th New York makes the hunt for Prescott Tracy of the 62nd New York somewhat easier, as it allows there to be but one Prescott Tracy living in New York and enlisting in New York regiments at this time.

There were another two individuals who seem to have occupied the position of Adjutant prior to Tracey. The first was the portly Joseph J. Yates who enlisted on the same day as John L. Riker as Adjutant but quickly moved into the post of regimental quartermaster. There are no known documents or orders which are countersigned by Yates or appear to have been issued by Yates as Adjutant. The other Adjutant is James Norris McLean, who enlisted on May 10, 1861 as Adjutant aged 41. McLean did not serve long being discharged on September 13, 1861 for reasons unknown. However, as his enlistment predates the references to Tracy in the *New York Times* he should have been recorded as the Adjutant of the regiment at the time that the above newspaper clipping was published. Perhaps McLean was delayed from taking up his position as Adjutant and so his role may have been filled temporarily by the why Prescott Tracy which may explain why he does not appear on the Anderson Zouaves' roster.

As already mentioned Prescott Tracey (if he was ever in fact a member of the 5th New York) did not remain in the 5th New York for very long resigning his commission on August 1, 1861. The following year another Prescott Tracy, the best documented of the three which we find in the records, enters the history of New York in the Civil War. Prescott Tracy on January 22, 1862 enlisted as a private in Co. "G" 82nd New York Infantry. Aged 30 at the time of his enlistment identifies this Prescott Tracy as the person who arrived in New York from Liverpool in 1839. Whether or not this is the same person who had resigned from the 5th New York a few months earlier or who had been the Adjutant of the 62nd for a short period in May 1862 is debatable. Joel Craig doubts that a former officer of the 5th would be likely to enlist as a private

in another New York regiment "unless he was totally incompetent... (as) officers and NCOs from the 5th were highly prized commodities."<sup>4</sup> However, after joining the 82nd Prescott Tracy was promoted quickly, first to sergeant a couple of months after his enlistment.<sup>5</sup>

As already stated above, the existence of the Prescott Tracey of the 5th New York is now so doubtful as to be able to be ignored, and so there is nothing to prevent the Prescott Tracy who enlisted in the 82nd New York from being the same Prescott Tracy which is recorded as the adjutant of the Anderson Zouaves in the *New York Times* on May 25 and May 26, 1861. By August 21, the *New York Times* was listing J. N. McLean as adjutant of the Anderson Zouaves and by October 15, 1862, John P. Scullen was appearing on the regimental muster roll as adjutant, and so Prescott Tracy must have resigned from the Anderson Zouaves some time before this.

Assuming that there is only one Prescott Tracy in New York and that he enlisted in both the 62nd and the 82nd New York we can now start to construct a reasonable biography.

Prescott Tracy was most likely born in Ireland around the beginning of 1832. At the age of seven his family left their home bound for New York aboard the immigrant ship *Europa*, arriving there on August 6, 1839.

From census records we know that Prescott Tracy and his family were living in the first district of the eighth ward of the City of New York in 1850. At the time the eighth ward was bounded by West Houston Street to the north, Broadway to the east, Canal Street to the south with the Hudson River to the west. The area is better known today as Soho. At this time the eighth ward was populated mainly by European immigrants and their first generation American born offspring. Prescott was part of an extended family in a large household which appears to have been composed of the Tracy family and several other female Irish immigrants. Prescott's father Samuel P. Tracey was a merchant and Prescott, who was 17 years old at the time was engaged as a Clerk.<sup>6</sup>

On December 2, 1855, at about the age of 23, Prescott married Catherine A. M. Brower. It is unknown where Prescott lived at this time and whether his union with Catherine produced any children.

It seems that in April or May of 1861, at the age of about 29 or 30, Prescott Tracy joined the Anderson Zouaves as part of Riker's staff. Perhaps due to his experience as a clerk Riker made Tracy his adjutant and his name is noted in the *New York Times* in this position.

For reasons unknown Tracy resigned his commission or was discharged and by the time the regiment left Riker's Island for Washington on August 21, 1861, Tracy had been replaced by James Norris McLean.

Undaunted, Tracy enlisted in Company "G", 82nd New York State Volunteers (A.K.A. Second Regiment New York State Militia) on January 22, 1862 as a Private. Within two months he was promoted to the rank of first sergeant. On October 20, 1862, Tracy was reported sick at Bolivar Va. and on October 30, he deserted and was later reduced to the rank of private. Tracy was eventually arrested in New York City and was returned to his regiment. Tracy was captured on June 22, 1864 in front of Petersburg and sent to the infamous Andersonville prison camp in Georgia, where he arrived around July 10, 1864. Tracy is said to have been six feet tall, with brown hair and blue eyes.<sup>7</sup>

Prescott Tracy of the 82nd also left behind a significant number of his own words. Having been captured and imprisoned in Andersonville Prescott, soon found himself "gainfully" employed by Dr. Joseph White as a clerk in what there was of a camp hospital at Andersonville. His elevated position allowed him a few meagre privileges within the prison and eventually resulted in his exchange and freedom on August 16, 1864. Fortunately Tracy's stay in Andersonville had not been a long one.

At this time the Federal government had come under some criticism for not doing more to release the troops that had been imprisoned by the Confederate authorities in Andersonville. Prescott Tracy's exchange and release from Andersonville appears to have been a deliberate attempt by Washington, to get some intelligence of the conditions inside the stockade from an individual best qualified to report. Prescott appears to have been the man for the job. Having been a clerk since at least the age of 17, he was able to attain a position of privilege within the prison and it may have been this that led the Federal government to seek his exchange.



Upon his release from Andersonville, Tracey made a long statement on the conditions at Andersonville. This statement was subsequently used by both confederates and unionists to justify and condemn the treatment of prisoners in Andersonville. It appeared in the pages of the *New York Sunday Mercury* on September 11, 1864 as a fan to the moral outrage that was being expressed in the north against the human misery that the Southern authorities were allowing to rule Camp Sumter.

In September 1864 Prescott Tracy testified against the commander of the Andersonville prison, Captain Henry Wirz, at his war crimes trial in Washington. As a result of his trial and the testimony of Prescott Tracy, Wirz was found guilty and publicly executed December 10, 1865.

Tracy's military career did not finish with his freedom from Andersonville. While Tracy was imprisoned at Andersonville the veterans and recruits of the 82nd New York were transferred to the 59th New York. It seems that Tracy joined his new regiment sometime after his release from Andersonville and was mustered out at Petersburg Va. on June 27, 1865. A short time after this on November 7, 1865, Tracy enlisted one last time in the 4th Regiment U. S. Veteran Volunteer Infantry as First Lieutenant. Tracy was discharged from the regiment on March 8, 1866.

It is somewhat ironic that the attribute most valuable to Prescott Tracy as a military man was his experience as a clerk. It saw him become adjutant of the Anderson Zouaves and later was responsible for his early release and possibly for saving his life at Andersonville. Prescott Tracy is relatively well known for the role he played in the sentencing of Captain Henry Wirz, but what has remained unknown until now is that he began his military career with the 62nd New York State Volunteers – Anderson Zouaves.

#### Notes

1. New York State Military Museum and Veterans Research Centre Unit History Project <http://www.dmna.state.ny.us/historic/reghist/civil/infantry/62ndInf/62ndInfCWN.htm>
2. Personal email correspondence between Joel Craig and John Tierney December 21, 2005.
3. A record of the commissioned officers, non-commissioned officers, privates, of the regiments which were organized in the state of New York and called into the service of the United States to assist in suppressing the rebellion, caused by the secession of some of the southern states from the Union, A.D. 1861, as taken from the muster-in rolls on file in the adjutant-general's office, S. N. Y., Volume I, Albany, 1864, p. 130.
4. Personal email correspondence between Joel Craig and John Tierney December 21, 2005.
5. The article on the Wirz trial that appeared in the Albany Evening Journal on September 8, 1865, refers to Tracy as "Lieutenant Prescott Tracey"
6. Household list from 1850 Census, 690 1640.
7. Stypke, W. B. (Ed), 2002, *Writing and fighting the Civil War: Soldier Correspondence to the New York Sunday Mercury*, Kearny, NJ, p. 292.

### LETTER TO THE *NEW YORK SUNDAY MERCURY*.

The following letter was written by an unknown member of the Anderson Zouaves under the nom de plume of "Hudson" on July 14, 1862 and was published in the *New York Sunday Mercury* on July 20, 1862.

[Special Correspondence of the Sunday Mercury.]  
SIXTY-SECOND REGIMENT, N. Y. S. V. (ANDERSON  
ZOUAVES).

HARRISON'S LANDING, July 14.

*Prospects of the Union Army—Grog Courage—Tribute to the first United States Chasseurs—Changes in the Anderson Zouaves of-ficers—Want of Civility at Adams Express Branch Office, etc., etc.*

After our seven days' hard fighting we have rested our weary bones at last. We have been on the fight and march ever since the 25th of June. We expected to spend the Fourth in Richmond. Our prospects are, however, brighter now than ever. Some may think this last battle a defeat, but those who were engaged in it do not think so. To them that survived it, it is a victory, and soon to tell the tale of the fall of the capital of the Southern Confederacy. Many a rebel in Richmond to-day can tell a terrible tale. Not on the face of the earth is there another army that could stand before such fearful odds; for they outnumbered us three to one, and before they went to fight they were made reckless but the use of liquor. There was proof enough of that. They were senseless with drink. They would walk up to the mouth of a cannon by regiments and brigades, but only to fall in tens and twenties. That is the way that Southern

chivalry fights. The army of the Potomac has more confidence at the present than ever they had in their noble leader, Little Mac. Also, they place confidence in General Keyes and other generals. The battles of White Oak Creek and Marvin Hills<sup>1</sup> were short, but desperate, and the enemy knows it well, for they were in for the largest share.

I wish to call your attention to the First Chasseurs. They about as good a regiment as there is in the service. They fought well at Williamsburg and Fair Oaks, and nobly did they do their duty at the above named battles.

There has been quite a change since the death of our gallant colonel (Riker) at the Battle of Fair Oaks. Lieutenant-Colonel D. J. Nevins<sup>2</sup> is now colonel, and Major Oscar V. Dayton (better known as little Put) is lieutenant-colonel,<sup>3</sup> but the title of major will always stick to him. Through the thickest of the fight little Put was always to be found at his post. I regret to say that he was wounded in the last battle, but a few days rest will find the little hero at his post. Captain Hubbell, of Company B, being senior captain, was promoted major. The courage and conduct of Captain Ackerman of Company A, cannot be surpassed in the volunteer service. I regret to say that he was wounded. We wish him luck and a speedy return to his command. All of the officers behaved in a like manner. As for the conduct of the regiment, it is not for me to say; its future conduct on the battle-field will speak for itself. Self-praise is no recommendation. One thing, there is many a rebel in Richmond to-day that will recommend their friends to stand clear of the A. Zs. So far we have been very lucky. In the battle of Williamsburg we did not loose over twelve, killed and wounded, and at the battle of Fair Oaks we lost seventeen, killed and wounded. Our loss at the last battle will not exceed fifty, killed, wounded, and missing. So we consider ourselves very lucky. We had the pleasure of seeing Uncle Abe the other day. The boys were glad to see him, and gave him three times three and a round of twenty-one howitzers, which the old gentleman seemed pleased to hear. Him and Little Mac rode over the camps together, loudly cheered wherever they went. There is something up. Look out Sesech – Uncle Abe's around. I would like to call your attention to the delivery-checks of Adams Express at this landing. There are men in this and other regiments that I know to have things shipped on that line eighteen and twenty days. And what is the consequence? When they present their receipts, everything but a civil answer. A soldier cannot get a pass every day to go to the express office, and the consequence is, that they have to return back to camp, no wiser or no better off than when he left it. I think that the proprietors of the office should be acquainted of these facts, and show a poor soldier half a sight. It is you and your paper that we of the army of the Potomac depend upon for our rights. You attend to our wants, and we will attend to Sesech.

I must close, hoping that my next letter will be written on the dome of the rebel capital.

Yours, HUDSON.

#### Notes

1. Battle of Malvern Hill.
2. David John Nevin. At the Battle of Malvern Hill Nevin was so ill that he took command of the regiment from the back of an ambulance.
3. This line originally read "Lieutenant-Colonel D. J. Nevins (better known as Little Put) is now colonel, and Major Oscar V. Dayton is lieutenant-colonel". It is clear from the content of this letter, and other letters by members of the Anderson Zouaves, that the reference to "Little Put" has been transposed from Dayton and applied to Nevin. This was probably a compositor error. This has been corrected in this transcription.

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