

107th New York

Col. R. B. Van Valkenburg

850 Men

7 Killed - 51 Wounded

About 6 am on the 17th of September 1862, the 107th N.Y. followed the 2nd Mass., 3rd Wis., and the 27th Ind. in column by companies closed in mass as far as the Jos. Poffenberger lane, when it was marched directly to the left and deployed in line in the cornfield immediately west of the Poffenberger woods. Led by Gordon, in person, it then moved by the left flank, skirting the south edge of the woods, went across the Smoketown road and came to a front about 7:45 or 8:00 am, immediately in rear of Sam Poffenberger's lane (some say in front) facing about south, and Gordon gave the stereotyped orders that the position should be held at all hazards. In front was an open ploughed field (some say partially ploughed), in which there were two large ledges of rocks, partly overgrown with small bushes. While in this position the regiment was not exposed to fire, but an occasional shell went through the tree tops. There was no enemy in sight in the East Woods, and nothing in the intervening field, except scattered wounded men slowly going to the rear. Before it, but to the right, was seen a small body of men coming out of the East woods, and slowly moving to the

right and rear of the 107th indicating that it had been relieved.

The enemy in front having given away by the charge of Greene's Division, Gordon coming from the right swinging his hat, ordered the 107th to advance. It went double-quick across the plowed field to south of the Smoketown road, one company through the 10 acre corn north of the road, suffering considerable loss from shell, one of which raked Co. G. diagonally, killing and wounding 13 men. No opposition was encountered at the East woods, The regiment, with wild cheers, pushing through them and reaching the Smoketown road, and fence on the west side of the East woods, the right companies making a left half wheel climbing over the fence into the Smoketown road, facing about S or S.W., the three (probably four) right companies out of the woods (say 100 mark) and the left wing was carried forward. The alignment was now corrected and the men laid do down, but a number of them were killed and wounded by shell.

While here the 34th N.Y. came along and went on to the Dunkard Church, and Sedgwick make his charge into the West woods. The regiment lay in the Smoketown road about an hour, when it was ordered by Gordon to fall back entirely into the East Woods and rejoin the brigade, and the regiment rose and instead of left facing and retiring by the left, right-faced and countermarched to the right, going back through the beaten wheel tracks leading into Sam Poffenberger's lane, moving by fours right in front

When half way through the woods, some General, (French some say) rode up and ordered the regiment back to the support of Cothran's Battery, which was in the open field in front of the Dunkard Church and west of the East Woods, the regiment, still marching by fours then meandered out into the open meadow, moved along the edge of the woods, halted, fronted, dressed on the center in good shape, just inside the woods, advanced in line of battle to the rear of the battery and laid down, the left near the Smoketown road, the right directly in rear of a big pile of stone or mound covered by a small growth of trees. The line was not more than 50 yards from the woods. The battery was then engaged and it was about 10 am Some of the 107th think they took the place of a demoralized Penna. regt.

Cothran's Battery M, 1st N.Y. Lt. Artry has six 10 pounder parrott mans and was about 100 yards in front of the East woods in a meadow or clover field south of Miller's cornfield and when the 107th came up was firing rapidly into the enemy on the turnpike to the north of the church.

Fox says:

"While we were lying on the ground among the caissons, horses, I noticed a vain attempt made by a frantic officer to form a second line on the colors of a Penna. Regiment. Col. Knipe in his report states that he succeeded in inducing the 107th N.Y. to go to Cothran's support, but this is not true, and the regiment was in position behind the battery before Knipe made his attempt to form a line behind us, a line

which disappeared in an astonishing manner as fast as it was formed, leaving soon a clear space between us and the woods in our rear."

Van Valkenburg says that while supporting the battery, Gen. Greene ordered two companies to be sent into the West woods. Capt. Colby Co. I., and Capt. Morgan Co. E., were detailed for the duty but up on advancing they found the Hagerstown Pike and West Woods teeming with the enemy.

Fox says:

"During all this time the 107th did not encounter any musketry neither did it fire a shot. Once when a charge was made on Cothran, the regiment rose, fixed bayonets, and stood awhile in line behind the guns, but did not advance. The enemy fell back either on account of too much canister or the appearance of the large line of the 107th.

The regiment supported Cothran until 3:00 pm (Van Valkenberg says 3:30), when both battery and regiment were relieved by Slocum and went to the rear.

It bivouacked in the East Woods just back of them and near Sam Poffenbergers.

Officers commanding the right companies contend that they were in front of

Cothran's guns and that some of their men were killed and wounded by them, but I am of the opinion that they were mistaken and that they were in rear of Cothran but in front of another battery (Knap's or Frank's) that was in the right rear of Cothran. Fox says that he distinctly remembers seeing a battery of brass guns in that quarter.

Thos G. Smith thinks 6 companies were on the left of the Smoketown road and that the rest of the regiment was behind the guns and to the right in front of them.

The above information was obtained from the official records of "The Battle of Antietam" located at the Visitor Center at the Battle of Antietam in Sharpsburg, Maryland.

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