

was given. With General Barlow at the head of the division, the regiment stepped off, moved through a finger of woods and began to advance toward the rebel works.¹¹

In the fading evening light, the 111th moved over fields swept with shell and canister. One of the first to fall was Sergeant Allen Hoxie of Company I. Writing to Hoxie's family days after the battle, Colonel MacDougall described the sergeant as being "shot through the body in the left side just above the hip bone and passing entirely through his body."¹² In the last letter he wrote to his mother, Hoxie expressed his desire to see the day when the "blackest of all crimes — slavery" is eradicated and the Union preserved. Yet he ended his letter with these words: "I hope to see them, but if I do not, I have sisters and brothers and dear friends who will see and enjoy them ... I will thee good by."¹³

Small arms fire was soon added to the artillery already cutting through the New Yorkers' ranks, their line of advance marked by a path of dead and wounded. Company F was particularly hard hit. Sergeants Edward Van Derveer and Artemus Stewart were killed while Sergeant Richard Warren was hit in the leg. In Company K, Second Lieutenant Samuel Bradley fell to the ground wounded.¹⁴

In a letter written after the battle, Sergeant Warren informed his sister of his wound: "My leg is getting along very well the wound is healing up very fast but it leaves my foot very numb so that I have no use in it at all and when it hangs down there is such a rush of blood in it that it makes it very painful. I am satisfied that I got off as lucky as I did some poor fellows got a great deal worse wounds than I did some of them had both legs taken off and some their arms."¹⁵ Despite his wish to return to the regiment, Warren would sit out the rest of the war in a Washington hospital.

Moving at the double, the 111th passed through a number of ravines and came to a fence line. Here the line seemed to momentarily falter before the men scrambled over the fence and resumed the charge. They pressed on with a yell and rushed right up to the Confederate works. Not to be denied, they swarmed over the earth and log battlements, forcing the defenders out at the point of the bayonet. Officers and sergeants forced their men into some semblance of a line and ordered them to commence firing. They sent volley after volley into the retreating enemy, but when it became apparent that no further advance on the fortifications west of Harrison's Creek was possible, Captain Husk ordered his men to take up a position along the rebel works.¹⁶

Capturing a portion of the Confederate entrenchments near the Hare house had cost the regiment dearly. Fifteen men were killed outright, another 35 were wounded, and one man was reported as missing. The regiment had suffered almost 50 percent casualties. Captain Lockwood's Company F seemed to have borne the brunt of the casualties with four men killed and eight wounded.¹⁷

The men spent the night fortifying their trenches, replenishing their ammunition, and skirmishing with the rebels, who were less than a quarter of a mile away. Heavy firing continued unabated all during the night, the rebels making several attempts to retake the works they lost during the day. As the crackle of musketry and pounding of artillery filled the air, a little piece of home arrived in camp in the form of mail. With the army constantly on the go since leaving the trenches around Old Cold Harbor, it had been some time since the New Yorkers received news from home. The letters were distributed and for a while the horrors of war faded away, replaced with thoughts of family and friends.¹⁸

Sunrise on the morning of June 17 brought the men of the 111th back to reality. Captain Husk was directed to advance what was left of his regiment along with the rest of