

BALTIMORE BATTERY, LIGHT ARTILLERY, "ALEXANDER'S."



THE Baltimore Battery of Light Artillery was organized in the summer of 1862 by Captain Frederick W. Alexander, of Baltimore, under the call of President Lincoln for 300,000 men to serve for three years, or during the war. It was mustered into the service of the United States by Colonel Benjamin L. Beall, United States Army, in its camp in Baltimore.

Within one month it was ordered to Monocacy Junction and assigned to the Maryland Brigade, then commanded by Brigadier General John R. Kenly, U. S. A. Marching to Williamsport, Md., it formed part of the force composing the defenses of the Upper Potomac.

The Maryland Brigade then consisted of the First, Fourth, Sixth, Seventh and Eighth Regiments of Infantry, Maryland Volunteers, and Alexander's Battery.

The battery remained at Williamsport until early in December, when it was ordered to take post with the brigade on Maryland Heights. During its stay at Williamsport the brigade of General Wade Hampton, C. S. A., was holding the high ground on the Virginia side. Here occurred the capture by Lieutenant MacMachen, First Maryland Cavalry, of a picket of six men of Hampton's Brigade, just as a flag of truce had returned to the Virginia from the Maryland shore, occasioning a correspondence between General's Kenly and Hampton as to the terms of the truce. Here also occurred the bursting of an experimental cast-iron breech-loading field gun, the invention of Captain Alexander, by which a well known little drummer boy of the Eighth Maryland was killed and several men severely wounded.

About the middle of December the battery arrived at Maryland Heights and went into winter quarters, brigaded with the Maryland Brigade, the 17th Indiana Battery, First Maryland Cavalry (Companies H and I) and the 6th N. Y. Heavy Artillery, constituting the First Brigade, First Division, Eighth Army Corps. Anticipating the movement of Hooker's Army of the Potomac, Major General Schenck telegraphed to General Kenly: "Send in advance, immediately, Captain Alexander's Battery to report for temporary duty to General Milroy."

Accordingly the battery arrived at Berryville, April 27, 1863, and relieved two sections of Battery B, First West Virginia Light Artillery.

Milroy's troops constituted the outposts in the Shenandoah Valley, and were kept constantly employed in active reconnoissance until the advance of Lee's Army, of Northern Virginia, which opened the Gettysburg Campaign.

The first information of Lee's advance was received at Berryville, on Friday after-