

Head Quarters 1st Division, 1st A. C.

November 5th, 1863.

To the

Gov. of Pennsylvania,

Sir:

In noticing in the papers to-day an account of the proposition for a National Cemetery at Gettysburg, for the men that fell there in July last, I am reminded that I have neglected a duty which I owe to one of your Regiments---the 56th. That Regiment is in the 2d Brigade of this Division; and was, at that time, under my command. It was my fortune to be in the advance on the morning of July 1st. When we came upon the ground in front of the enemy, Col. Hofmann's Regiment,---being the second in the column,---got into position a moment sooner than the others, the enemy now advancing in line of battle within easy musket range. The atmosphere being a little thick, I took out my glass to examine the enemy. Being a few paces in rear of Col. Hofmann, he turned to me and inquired, "is that the enemy?" My reply was "yes." Turning to his men, he commanded, "Ready,---Right-Oblique,---Aim,---Fire!" and the battle of Gettysburg was opened. The fire was followed by other Regiments instantly, still that battle on the soil of Pennsylvania was opened by her own sons, and it is just that it should become a matter of history. When Col. Hofmann gave the command "aim," I doubted whether the enemy was near enough to have the fire effective, and asked him if he was within range; not hearing my question, fired, and I received my reply in a shower of Rebel bullets, by which many of the Col's. men were killed and wounded. My own horse, and those of two of my staff, were wounded at the same time.

I desire to say to your Excellency, that the 56th is one of the very best Regiments in the service.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

L. Cutler,

Brigadier General.