On July 4, the day that Vicksburg surrendered, Ulysses S. Grant ordered William T. Sherman to move east from the Big Black River and drive Joseph E. Johnston’s forces away from Jackson, Mississippi. Captain Charles B. Haydon of the 2nd Michigan Infantry described a skirmish fought on July 11, five days before the Confederates evacuated the city.

**July 11** We were up at 3 a.m. I had very little supper & no breakfast. Our clothes are constantly wet with sweat & having no water to wash we are suffering terribly from sores, eruptions & a breaking out of the skin which makes one almost raw & feels as though he were in the fire.

A little before sunrise the 2d was deployed as skirmishers covering the front of our brigade and connecting with others on the right & we all slowly advanced. The skirmishers had orders to advance till they drew the fire of the rebel batteries if possible. We had gone but a little way when some Regts. to the right of us which seemed to be resting carelessly received a brisk fire which appeared to be pretty effective. They moved to the rear in very quick time, sent out skirmishers & advanced again. A few shots fell near but no one was struck. We moved forward across a very difficult ravine & gained good cover under a fence with an open field beyond.

Here we encountered a moderate but well directed fire from skirmishers at long range. The whistling of the balls animated the men greatly. Chas. Smith of my Co. recd a severe shot in the leg & some others of the Regt. were struck. We lay here abt an hour when an order came to advance at double quick. We had before us abt 100 rods of open field, then a narrow steep ravine through which runs a brook, then a hill, thick bushes, further on a corn field fence with rifle pits at a short distance.
Between us & the fence there were as we have since learned three Regts. of Infantry.

We crossed the open at a run & without much loss, the men full of fire, yelling like devils, Kearney’s name being uppermost in their cry. I never felt more eager. Their skirmishers flew before us. We sprang down into the ravine & up the other bank. I tumbled back once & did not get up as quick as most of the others. When I did I found a narrow terrace & another steep bank. The Co. had all halted at the bank & seemed waiting to see who should go up first. I swore a most substantial oath (being indignant at them for stopping) & then we all made a dash at the hill.

It was so steep that only three or four got up at first. The Rebs were about three rods off. I made abt half the distance to them when I was whirled around & laid on my back suddenly, very suddenly & in a manner which left no doubt in my mind that I was hit. All who came up with me shared the same fate.

When I first became conscious, which was very soon, I lay on my back wondering what was to come next. I tried to get up but could not stir so much as a finger, nor could I speak although I could see & hear all that was doing, the trees above & the bullets around. Our men had halted at the brink of the hill so that I lay between the fires. I tried two or three times to rise but finding I could not move I began to reflect on other matters. I now observed that my hands were laid across my breast & in fact that my whole position was that of the greater part of those killed in battle. I then began to question myself as to whether I were not really dead.

I soon discarded this idea but still felt certain that I must die very soon. My whole feeling became one of wonder & curiosity as to the change which I believed I was about to experience. I was in no pain bodily & no mental anxiety. After abt 2 minutes I heard Sergt. Keyser of my Co. cry out to the men “G-d d--n your souls are you going to leave the Capt. lying there?” A second after he with eminent danger to himself sprang forward & caught me by the arm. The instant he touched me I sprang to my feet. Just then the Regt. went past on a charge driving the enemy before them. I tried to give my Co. a word of encouragement but my throat was so full of blood that I strangled when I attempted to speak.
With the aid of the Sergt. I walked back to the brook & lay down partly in it. He gave me water to drink & poured it over me in large quantities. I soon got up again & with his aid walked back 50 to 60 rods & lay down again. I could speak pretty well now but still threw up large quantities of blood from the lungs. I was soon able to walk again & started but met some men with a stretcher who carried me to the field hospital. But for the aid of the Sergt. I should have fallen into the hands of the enemy as the Regt. being wholly unsupported was very soon compelled to fall back.

My Co. numbered for the fight 18 men & 2 officers. One man was killed & four wounded. Both officers were wounded, Lt. Montague receiving a severe flesh wound below the knee. The Regt. lost 58 killed & wounded. I never saw better fighting done but the want of support rendered it of little avail beyond the mere number of the enemy killed which was however very considerable.

On arriving at the Hospt. my wound was dressed, my chances of recovery discussed, some encouragement was given by the Surgeons & I resolved to get well. I was laid on a blanket under a tree & soon after ate a good dinner to make up for the want of breakfast. No very severe pain to day. The ball struck me in the right shoulder abt an inch below the collar bone & passed out just at the lower edge of the shoulder blade.