



DEATH BULLET –PENDERGAST, 2ND MASS CAV

On April 9, 1863 Colonel Charles R. Lowell found himself facing an unruly crowd of recruits preparing to muster into his regiment. The group consisted of Irish recruits, some of whom were intoxicated and were becoming belligerent. The situation grew ugly and suddenly sabers were drawn and the officers attacked. Colonel Lowell drew a pistol and fired, killing one of the assailants, William Pendergast.

Upon the sound of the gunshot, order was suddenly restored. A medical officer removed the bullet from Pendergast's body during an autopsy, keeping the bullet and writing the following note: Bullet recovered by me from the dead body of the ringleader of the revolting recruits of the 2nd Mass Cavalry who was shot by the Col. (Charles Russell Lowell) Apl. 9th, 1863. (see Harvard Memorial Biographies, 1866, Vol I, page 313 for an account of the affair.) The bullet entered the left chest striking the lower edge of the collar bone by which it was deflected, cutting the main artery. The impact of the bullet on the bone caused flattening seen in the middle." It is signed Ja. K. Oliver, M.O.

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