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A  
Grandfather's  
Off Cold  
Tales  
of the  
Civil War







A GRANDFATHER'S  
OFT TOLD TALES  
OF THE CIVIL WAR



1861-1865

By ALLEN D. ALBERT

Private, Company D, Forty-fifth Pennsylvania  
Veteran Volunteer Infantry

GRIT PUBLISHING COMPANY  
WILLIAMSPORT, PA.



ALLEN D. ALBERT  
As a Soldier Boy in the Civil War



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In 1912

















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Gift  
Mrs. A. D. Allent  
Ja. 14. '14



TO MY GRANDCHILDREN

THIS BOOKLET IS DEDICATED

in the hope that the incidents herein narrated may picture  
to them some of the realities of the  
Civil War of 1861-1865



## WHY?

WHEN my children were at home their mother frequently urged me to make out a list of the battles in which I participated, and to record on paper some of my army experiences. The children seconded this request, but not until now, when my grandchildren have become old enough to be interested in the great war between the North and the South, have I thought the time opportune to jot down a few incidents of my military life. This is not a history of my regiment, or a detailed history of my army experiences, but a short account of those incidents of which I have spoken most often in telling my children of my life in the army during the Civil War.

When I volunteered to fight for the flag which traitors were striving to dishonor and a Southern oligarchy was determined to destroy the Union of States, I was a boy, not yet eighteen years old, and was a student preparing to enter Gettysburg College, Gettysburg, Pa., in the autumn of 1862.

In the spring of that year, moved by the patriotism imbibed in home and school, by the love of glory and the spirit of adventure natural to youth, I cast aside my books and enlisted to fight for home and country.

That my grandchildren may know what I did, where I battled and may be able to realize somewhat of the realities of war, I have written this booklet.

ALLEN D. ALBERT.

1727 Kilbourne Place, N. W.,  
Washington, D. C.

June 1st, 1913.



A GRANDFATHER'S OFT TOLD  
TALES OF THE CIVIL WAR



## A GRANDFATHER'S OFT TOLD TALES OF THE CIVIL WAR

**A**S you read the history of the Forty-fifth Pennsylvania Veteran Volunteer Infantry you may wonder why your grandfather became a soldier boy.

My father was fond of history and from my earliest days told us historical stories and created in me a liking for military affairs, so that, when as a reward for work well done he allowed me to choose some book, I invariably selected the story of some military hero, and in this way became the possessor of that historical romance—Abbott's *Life of Napoleon Bonaparte*. In addition to father's teaching, my sister was an omnivorous reader of historical novels and I read the books she brought into the home—Charles O'Malley, Jack Hinton, etc., with the result that I dreamt of becoming a military hero.

I was a student in Turbotville Academy when political events hastened a civil war which blazed forth April 19, 1861. My schoolmates one by one enlisted in some volunteer organization and went off to be "soldier boys." I asked my father's consent to enlist, but he refused, adding that I might go when the Government needed more men.

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On a visit to my sister, who lived near Solona, Pa., in the early spring of 1862, I saw the posters of Captain Austin Curtin of Company D, Forty-fifth Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry, calling for recruits to join his company in South Carolina. I concluded the Government did need more men, but dubious whether father would even then consent I ran away and joined Captain Curtin at Lock Haven, Pa. But before I did this, to determine whether I could endure the test of a long march, I walked from Nittany Mountain, near Salona, to Williamsport, Pa., a distance of thirty-five miles, almost twice the distance we ever marched in one day as soldiers.



## THE FIRST YEAR

**W**ITH the captain I went by rail to Camp Curtin at Harrisburg, Pa., where I was sworn into the service of the United States, March 29, 1862, my age at that time being seventeen years and six months. I was uniformed and supplied with knapsack and haversack.

When I sat down on a rough board seat at a rough board table to my first meal furnished by Uncle Sam I was given a tin cup of black coffee and a thick slice of bread. I looked up and down the long table and in wonder asked, "Where is the butter?" A roar of laughter answered the question, and I was informed by a half dozen soldiers that butter was unknown in the army ration.

A night or two later a fire occurred in Harrisburg and a number of us broke guard and went down town. As we were returning someone suggested that we form a company and being such a large body we would overawe the guard and enter the camp thus escaping arrest and punishment. While trudging along we were stopped by an authoritative "Halt." We stopped short and the voice said, "Who are you?" Our spokesman said, "We are soldiers and were down town to see the fire." The owner of the voice—Colonel Sol Meredith—demanded our passes, which, of course, we did not have. "Forward, March," and this one man in authority marched forty or more of us into the guard house, where we were kept for twenty-four hours on bread and water.

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That was the only time I was ever under arrest.

Shortly after, Captain Curtin took his recruits to New York, where we embarked on board the steamer *Cosmopolitan* and sailed away to Hilton Head Island, S. C. This was my first voyage by sea and I made it without being seasick.

We arrived there in April and I, for the first time, saw growing palmetto trees; the dewberries were ripe and vegetation much different from the climate of Pennsylvania.

I was assigned to Company D and supplied with a Harper's Ferry musket, cartridge and cap box. We were drilled every day and performed the duties of soldiers—guard mount, picket duty, bayonet exercises, etc.

Company D was camped on Pope's plantation. The driveway to the planter's house was bordered with oleanders in full bloom and our camp was in a grove of orange trees. We used the green oranges to pelt one another.

There were two villages of slave quarters on the plantation, and one of our recreations was to attend the daily evening prayer meeting of the negroes held in front of their quarters; after singing, praying and exhortations the ignorant darkies always had a dance.

Their so-called religious songs were very nonsensical. This is one stanza:

“Des (death) he am a little ting,  
He go from do' to do',  
Sometime he come on Saturday,  
Sometime de da befo'.”

One day I was doing picket duty on Lady's Island. An inlet of the sea (Atlantic Ocean), separated us from the main land, where in a large white house the rebels

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quartered their pickets. The inlet was fully a mile wide. One of their number came down to the beach for some purpose. I raised my gun to a high level and fired, and the rebel fell and was carried into the house by his comrades. This was the first rebel soldier I injured. It was not so much good marksmanship as chance that enabled me to hit him; we had been shooting at one another before this and our bullets fell short, splashing in the water close to the beach.

One day one of the pickets upon being relieved from duty was cleaning his gun and becoming provoked, swore fearfully. Upon being reproved by his comrades, with an oath, he said, "I was not born to die in South Carolina." No sooner said than he fell forward in a fit on the beach and died. Our chaplain, Rev. Gibson, at the burial, preached a forceful sermon on profanity and blasphemy.

Our officers required us to keep our guns and accoutrements scrupulously clean; the gun barrels were rubbed with sand paper until they shone like polished silver, and when not in use were oiled and placed carefully away in our tents. Corporal Samuel Roop, a Pennsylvania Dutchman, was very proud of his gun and brasses, which shone like a looking glass. One day when he was absent from camp on picket some one, to tease him, dipped his gun in the salt water of the inlet and returned it to its usual place. When Sam was provoked he would say, "By golly, gosh, darn!" So when he came back to camp and discovered that his gun was covered with rust he burst out with "By golly, gosh, darn, who did this." The boys had gathered around to have fun teasing him, and expressions like these greeted him—"Sam, don't swear like a baby, swear like a man." "Be a man, Sam, swear

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right," etc. He rose to the occasion. Swelling up with wrath and indignation, he vociferated, "By golly, gosh, darn, *damn!*" amid shrieks of laughter and howls of merriment from his tormentors.

In July, 1862, on board the steamer *Arago* we sailed away from Hilton Head Island, S. C., for Newport News, Va., where the Ninth Corps was organized with General Burnside in command. On this voyage I was slightly seasick.

From Newport News to Acquia Creek, Va., was our next move. We guarded the military railroad from that point to Fredericksburg, the regiment being quartered at Brookes Station, Va. Here, on August 10th, I took sick with intermittent fever, no doubt contracted in South Carolina, and on September 1, with the other sick, was sent to Washington, D. C., on a hospital boat and reached Clifbourne Hospital, just east of Rock Creek and north of Calvert Street, N. W., near the site of which my family now lives.

While in this hospital I received the ministering attentions of Sister Martha, a Catholic nun, who was an angel of mercy and goodness to me. I remained in the hospital for about three weeks, when at my own request I was transferred to Camp Convalescent, Alexandria, Va.

About October 20th I rejoined the regiment at Pleasant Valley, Md., where I witnessed some forms of severe punishment meted out to men for various offenses. One man had the left half of his head shaved; another had a barrel with the heads knocked out placed around him, the word "Thief" painted thereon, and was marched around camp. Others were bound to the wheels of the gun carriage—"Spread Eagle"—and others dragged a big cannon ball chained to their legs.





GENERAL A. E. BURNSIDE

## TALES OF THE CIVIL WAR

On October 26th, 1862, the army crossed the Potomac into Virginia on a pontoon bridge. A pontoon bridge is made of large flat bottomed boats anchored at both ends, with planks laid from boat to boat then covered with earth, or brush, to deaden the sounds of the crossing army. After crossing we marched through the rain to near Lovettsville, Va. The general issued an order that private property must be respected and we must not burn fences. As we needed hot coffee when chilled and rain-soaked our good Colonel Welsh said we might take the top rail of the fence for fuel. Of course, when we took the top rail the next rail in its turn became the top rail and thus we carried away the entire fence; we took straw for bedding from the farmer's stack, so the general's order became a nullity.

We marched on to Philomont, where we had a brush with the rebel cavalry under General Ashby.

We proceeded by way of Rectortown, Orleans and White Sulphur Springs, Va., to Warrentown Junction; near the springs it snowed (November 15), and as we halted at noon to make coffee, I spied a large persimmon tree loaded with fruit. I shinned up the tree and while eating the luscious persimmons General Burnside and his staff officers and orderlies rode up and asked me to shake down some fruit, which I did. They ate and ate, and before riding away courteously thanked me for my kindness.

A few weeks after leaving Pleasant Valley, Md., found us encamped, November 19th, on the north bank of the Rappahannock River, opposite Fredericksburg, Va. Here we built winter quarters: We dug a "cellar" about eighteen inches deep, six feet wide and ten feet long, cut down small pine trees, notched the logs near the end and made the structure about five feet high, put sticks



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and mud between the logs, and covered the top with our tents. We covered the floor thick with pine boughs, dug a shallow ditch around our hut and our winter quarters were complete and comfortable.

On December 11th, our army crossed the Rappahannock on pontoon bridges. We effected a crossing in the face of the enemy by running a battery of artillery to the bank of the river and driving the Mississippi sharpshooters from the houses on the opposite side with a hot fire of shot and shell. Then details of men from the Fiftieth New York Engineers were rowed across and they soon constructed the bridge. After we crossed I went to the street along the bank and many tall Mississippians lay dead in the street and in the yards of the houses.

This was the only place I ever saw men fishing for tobacco. The rebels had thrown cases of tobacco off the wharf into the river, first knocking off the wooden covering, expecting the water to spoil the plug tobacco. Someone told us what had been done. Our boys obtained some boat hooks and quickly raised the tobacco to the surface, then lifted it by hand onto the wharf, pulled off the outer plugs, threw them away, and found that the inner layers were perfectly dry.

Our troops charged up Maryes Heights, but were repulsed by the rebels; our corps was in reserve all day, December 13th. We lay in the street and in the fields, the batteries on both sides shooting over us. The spectacle at night of bursting shells and sheets of flame from the cannon was an awful and horribly grand sight.

Our forces lost 12,000 men killed and wounded.

The next night we retreated across the river and again occupied our winter quarters.



## SECOND YEAR

**G**ENERAL BURNSIDE planned another attack on General Lee's position, but when in January, 1863, the army was put in motion a thaw came on and the wagons and artillery became fast in the mire; once more we went back to our winter quarters. This is called "The Stuck in the Mud" march.

By reason of these failures General Burnside was relieved from the command of the Army of the Potomac and with the Ninth Corps was sent to Kentucky, where we arrived March 28, 1863.

Our journey to Kentucky from in front of Fredericksburg, Va., was by boat from Acquia Creek to Newport News, where we camped for a month making preparations for our long journey west, then by boat to Locust Point, Baltimore, Md.

Company D and Company C were detailed to unload our stores from the boat to the wharf and then onto a train of cars. Our sutler had his goods on the boat and he opened two jugs of whisky and furnished drinks free to the soldiers who would unload and reload his goods. The result was that almost the entire detail became drunk; myself and one other comrade declined to drink.

Among the regimental and commissary stores was a mound of about a thousand loaves of bread over which my comrade and myself were placed as guards. When a half drunken sergeant stationed us to watch the stores of food all night, he said, "If a single loaf of bread is

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missing in the morning, I will put you both under arrest." I asked, "How many loaves in that pile?" He muttered, "I know." My comrade and I filled our haversacks with bread, sugar and other food and stood our wearisome watch all night. We were relieved in the morning and no census of the bread was taken.

As soon as the tents, baggage and commissary supplies were loaded on the ironclad box cars of the Baltimore and Ohio road the train pulled out and after riding all night we arrived at daylight at Martinsburg, Va., where we found breakfast awaiting us. The food given us was a big hunk of boiled "fat back," grease dripping from it, a hunk of baker's bread and a pint of strong black coffee.

After breakfast we journeyed on, passing through twenty-two tunnels, arriving next day at Parkersburg, W. Va. We were placed on board a steamboat and floated down the Ohio to Covington, Ky. From here we proceeded to Paris, Ky., in the heart of the celebrated "Blue Grass" region. This is a limestone section just as beautiful and fertile as the Cumberland or Shenandoah Valleys.

The people were very hospitable, and as food was cheap we lived well, in fact we were doing "Sunday soldiering," a sort of a dress parade existence.

Colonel Welsh had drilled us to go through the manual of arms by the tap of the drum, not a command being uttered. There were 204 taps, and the people came by the thousands to see the regiment (a thousand men), drill in the manual of arms. At Houstonville, Ky., the kind hearted people gave a picnic to the privates and non-commissioned officers on May 22, 1863.

Our good times were abruptly interrupted by General John Morgan, a noted rebel cavalry commander, who at-

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tacked us at "Jim"town, Ky., (so called by the people instead of Jamestown, its true name), but he was over-matched and retreated back beyond the Cumberland River.

At this time we were ordered to Mississippi to assist General Grant at Vicksburg. We marched to Lebanon, Ky., thence by rail to Louisville, Ky., Seymour, Ind., and Centralia and Cairo, Ill. Our passage through Indiana and Illinois was made memorable by the treatment we received; the loyal citizens—men, women and children—greeted us with cheers, and waving of flags, and gave us baskets of good things to eat, and we feasted on the fat of the land.

At Cairo we boarded a big steamboat and started our journey down the Mississippi River, and did not stop until we reached Memphis, Tenn., where we laid over and took possession of the city park for a week while the boat was cleaned and provisioned. We astonished the people with our fancy drills and our proficiency in arms.

I came near drowning at Memphis as one day I went down to the Mississippi River to bathe; the river is very deep and the current strong. A long raft of hewn logs was close to the bank. I undressed thereon and jumped into the water, where I swam and sported until glancing up I discovered that I had drifted down stream. I tried to swim back, but the current was too swift, so I turned and swam diagonally toward the raft, when another danger threatened—the water passed underneath the raft so quickly that it threatened to draw me under. I put all my strength into one spring from the surface of the water and landed on my bare abdomen on the raft, scraping the skin until it bled, but saving my life.

Leaving Memphis we steamed to the Yazoo River and landed at Snyders Bluff, Miss., in the rear of Grant's

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army, which had invested Vicksburg. Our duty was to protect the investing army from an attack by the rebels who were gathering in force under General Joseph Johnston at Jackson, Miss., and behind the Big Black River.

Vicksburg capitulated July 4, 1863, and immediately the Ninth Corps started in pursuit of Johnston's army. At the Big Black River he delayed our march by a strong resistance to our crossing. We gave fight and he retreated to Jackson. The night after we had crossed the river one of those fierce thunder storms common to Southern countries occurred. We were suffering for water to drink, and as the lightning flashed, the thunder crashed and the rain fell in torrents, some of the boys stood with heads thrown back and mouths wide open, others with tin cups extended to catch the rain for a drink. The lightning killed one soldier in the Thirty-Sixth Massachusetts Infantry.

The next day the sun came up hot and we marched rapidly after Johnston. Water was very scarce and we were so thirsty that despite the protests of the medical officers we drank from the muddy pools; on returning from Jackson these pools were covered with a green scum and the surgeons told us every drop of water was a drop of fever; some of the men disobeyed and were soon down with malarial fever.

We marched through fields of growing corn covering great areas. Jefferson Davis, the president of the Confederate States, had issued a proclamation advising the planters not to plant cotton, but to plant corn; some of these fields of corn were so large that it took us an hour to march through them following the planter's wagon road, and so high were the stalks of corn that a man on

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horseback could reach up to the ears which those of us on foot could not touch.

At Jackson, Johnston gave fight behind fortifications and held us back from the 10th to the 17th of July. On the 10th our army had a sharp fight with Johnston's army. As we were in line of battle in the woods on the outskirts of Jackson, I had several narrow escapes from being killed. A large live oak tree festooned with Spanish moss stood just within the rebel line. Some rebel sharpshooters hid themselves behind the tree and among the branches screened by the Spanish moss, they could see me, but for some time I could not make out whence the bullets came which zipped by my head and cut my clothing. Finally I located them and calling to my comrades near by to aim at a certain spot in the tree, we fired and down came a rifle, followed by a dead rebel. We killed another by firing on both sides of the tree trunk, a third I quieted by firing into a bush in which he had concealed himself. I was struck on the left groin by a spent rebel bullet which did not break the skin but raised a big black lump.

The men were in the trenches when the two company cooks came up with the coffee, but would not expose themselves to rebel bullets by going near enough to give the men their food. When I witnessed this I called them "shirks," "cowards," and other hard names, and taking a camp kettle of coffee in each hand, I walked over the crest of the hill down into the trenches and gave it to my comrades. The boys called me "good boy," "brave," and other terms of approbation. The rebels had shot at me but I was not hit. While the boys were drinking the coffee, I took one of their guns and kept blazing away at the "Johnnies," as we called the rebels. As soon as the

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kettles were empty, I picked them up and started to return them to the cooks; as I reached the crest of the hill (all this time the "Johnnies" were shooting at me), I stopped and in derision defiantly waved the kettles at them; this is when I was struck by a spent ball on the groin. As I doubled up with the force of the ball, the boys exclaimed, "Albert is hit, poor fellow."

We had a little red-headed tailor in our company by the name of Raeber who was a notorious coward. In the battle on the 10th he slunk behind and when arraigned by Colonel John I. Curtin, complained that his foot was so sore that he could not keep up; the colonel ordered Surgeon Christ to examine Raeber's foot. Slowly and laboriously Raeber took off his shoe and dirty sock with grunts of pain; the surgeon examined the foot and exclaimed, "There is nothing the matter with the foot." Raeber said, "Oh, it is the other foot!" The colonel drove the coward into his place in the ranks where he was jeered at by his comrades.

One night General Johnston evacuated Jackson, Miss., and ran away. We entered the city the next morning and a darkey told me where we would find a wine cellar. I helped myself to all the bottles of wine I could carry, drank some, and sold the rest at a dollar a bottle. The wine made me drowsy, so after I had left the city I lay down in the shade of some bushes and went to sleep. When I awoke the regiment had gone and I trudged after. I came to a planter's house in which some of our stragglers were pillaging. They so frightened the women that I took matters in my own hands, and ordered the stragglers away, threatening to shoot them. They swore that they would kill me, but when I refused to be scared they went off grumbling. The women of the house



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showed their thankfulness by giving me some cooked food.

In an hour or two I overtook the regiment and the comrades were rejoiced to see me as it had been reported that I had died from drinking poisoned wine.

The next morning one of the Thirty-sixth Massachusetts boys and myself raided a hive of bees standing in an orchard which had been planted in corn. We seized the hive and ran through the corn and the bees lost us, but not until we were pretty badly stung. We knocked the hive to pieces and took the honey combs out; after eating all we could we sold the remainder to our comrades. That night we were very sick, stomach ache caused by eating too much honey.

The following day we tore up the railroad, piling up the ties and placing the rails on top, next setting fire to the ties; the heat warped the rails, rendering them unfit for use. This crippled transportation for the rebels after we left. The following two days we marched back to our camp at Milldale, Miss.; the dust was deep, water very scarce, the sun very hot, and in the evening myself and another short, sturdy Pennsylvania German were the only men of Company D who marched into camp, the others had given out and were scattered along the roadside.

This ended our doings in Mississippi, for on August 5th we took the boat and went up the river to Cairo, Ill., and by rail to Cincinnati, Ohio.

Our journey through Illinois and Indiana was a continuous triumphal procession—we were greeted as heroes and victors, and beautiful maidens and kind hearted matrons pressed us to eat their food and take their bouquets of flowers.

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We arrived at Cincinnati on August 12th, 1863, and immediately crossed over to Covington, Ky. On August 14th, Brigadier General Thomas Welsh died of congestive chills contracted during the Vicksburg campaign. He had made our regiment the fighting machine which it became and on many hard fought fields achieved the enviable record of being the leading regiment of the Ninth Army Corps.

From Covington we went by rail to Camp Dick Robinson, Ky, where we rested and recuperated. At this camp the regiment bought a fine horse which it presented to the Colonel, John I. Curtin. One evening at the close of dress parade, the regiment, much to the Colonel's surprise, was thrown into a hollow square around him and the other commissioned officers. A magnificent horse, saddled and bridled, was led up to Colonel Curtin, and in a few well chosen words presented to him. The Colonel took the reins and said, "Fellow soldiers," stammered and hesitated; again he said, "Gentlemen and comrades," but could get no further; with the remark, "Oh, damn it, I cannot make a speech," he rode away amid the cheers of the regiment which admired and respected its brave commander.

On September 10th we began a march of two hundred miles into East Tennessee via Cumberland Gap. Our way was among the hills and mountains of Eastern Kentucky, a wild, thinly settled section, its few inhabitants being called "poor white trash" by their more cultured and better-to-do neighbors of the Blue Grass region.

Here, for the first time, we were among clay-eaters and snuff-dippers. The women as well as the men used tobacco freely, smoking it in pipes and chewing both plug and leaf tobacco.



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One day we camped near a rude primitive still where the owner manufactured peach brandy. A mountain lass rode up with some garden "sass" for sale. I questioned her and she agreed to come on the morrow with twenty-five cents' worth of cooked string beans. She was as good as her promise and brought me about a gallon of string beans, cooked with a large piece of bacon. My tent-mates and I feasted for two days on that very delightful change in our diet of hard tack, salt pork and coffee.

Men, women and children all rode on horseback, the horses and mules being like their owners—a run-down stock, lank and bony.

In Cumberland Gap is a short stone pillar which marks where the States of Kentucky, Virginia and Tennessee corner. Many of the boys mounted the pillar and stretching out their arms and legs boasted that they were in three States at the same moment.

On October 10th we fought the battle of Blue Springs, Tenn., where I was shot in the right foot.

We charged the rebels posted behind a rail fence at the edge of a woods. A lieutenant of the Seventeenth Michigan Infantry, a beardless boy, received a flesh wound of the left cheek; in the front of his company, the blood running down on his new uniform, waving his sword and urging his men forward, he was the personification of a hero. As the rebels broke and fled we halted and fired at them until they were out of sight in the woods. We then reformed our line and passed through the woods to a large open field beyond; on the far side at the edge of another woods was the rebel line of battle supported by a battery of artillery. We advanced against them being received by volleys of musketry while the

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cannon belched forth grape and canister. The rebels uncovered a large force on our right flank and we were ordered to lie down until an attack by another of our regiments, upon the rebel left, would safeguard our flank.

One of my tent-mates, Mike Jobson, and I were farthest in advance against the enemy. We sought protection behind a small stump which made us a conspicuous mark, and the bullets buzzed around that stump like bees. Here I was wounded and when the rebels were driven back I passed to our rear and fortunately met an aide carrying dispatches to the railroad station, who, seeing my plight, dismounted and lifted me on his horse. An old darkey on foot was with him. To the darkey he handed my gun and cartridge box; in buckling on the cartridge box the darkey put it on wrong side up and all the cartridges were spilled on the ground. The officer led the horse and the darkey trailed behind; in this order we arrived at the station where I was lifted from the horse and was taken to the Mosheim Lutheran Church, which was filled with our wounded and sick. After my wound was dressed I went out into the graveyard and made a soldier's bed between two graves, where I slept all night. It was a clear frosty night, but the graves and my blankets kept me warm.

The next day the wounded were placed on flat gondola cars and taken to Knoxville, Tenn., and put into a general hospital. We were besieged in Knoxville from November 17th to 29th by the rebels under General Longstreet, after which they retreated toward Virginia. We followed and had trouble with them and made them trouble at Rutledge, Tenn., and at Blaine's Cross Roads, Tenn. At the latter place we went into camp; the weather was so cold that frozen ears and toes were common. The rebels were be-

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tween us and our base of supplies at Nicholasville, Ky., from which place our supplies were hauled by wagon a distance of nearly two hundred miles, hence we could get no food through.

We sent our regimental wagons out into the country to gather corn. When the wagons came in at night the starving men gathered around and the ears of corn were thrown them in the same manner farmers throw corn to the pigs.

I had acquired an old-fashioned coffee mill. The coffee mill I had confiscated from a house when the folks were not looking.

Fryberger and I parched our corn then ground it in the coffee mill, making a coarse meal; from this we made corn pone.

Charley took a mean advantage of me; "Albert, will you grind all the corn I bring?" I answered that I would, expecting him to come back with three or four ears. Instead he went off after dark to brigade headquarters and watching his chance when the teamsters stood around the campfire, their eyes dazzled by the flames, he shouldered a bag of corn intended for the mules and stole silently away to our tent. This furnished our Christmas dinner in 1863; Charley supplied the corn, while I ground the corn and supplied the salt.

Salt was so scarce that a greater part of the time we had none, and eating new corn and sometimes fresh meat without salt occasioned diarrhoea and stomach troubles. One night I was detailed with others to stand guard over headquarters' supplies. I investigated the supplies and

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discovered a bag of salt. Informing the soldier whose beat adjoined mine of my find, he paced both beats while I filled my gauntlet gloves with salt, which I hid in a ravine close by. When we were relieved in the morning we were all searched for the missing food, but none was found. Later in the day I went quietly into the ravine, secured my great prize and conveyed it to our tent. Neither my tent-mate, Sergeant Fryberger, nor I suffered for the lack of corn or salt.





Mother 1865



Father 1865

## THIRD YEAR

**J**ANUARY 1, 1864, our regiment re-enlisted for three years more, or during the war. Scantly clothed, many with wornout shoes, with little food, the boys set their faces toward *home*, having been granted a thirty days' furlough. The ground was frozen and covered with snow. Many wearing moccasins made of hides of newly slaughtered beeves, the regiment started on a march of nearly two hundred miles over mountains, fording rivers and sleeping on the warm sides of trees or rocks, and in ten days reached food, clothing and a railroad, and were transported to Cincinnati, Ohio. The marks of bloody feet on the snow showed the heroism of the men of the Forty-fifth. At Pittsburgh, Pa., at one in the morning of February 6th, we were treated to a fine supper by the citizens, which contrasted vividly to the discreditable reception we received the next evening at Harrisburg, Pa. Here it was ascertained that as I had not served two years I was not entitled to the four hundred dollars bounty paid by the Government, but as I had come thus far a furlough for a month was allowed me.

While on furlough at my home, Turbotville, Pa., I was introduced to Miss Sarah Ann Faber, a niece by marriage to my sister, Mrs. Henry S. Faber. Miss Faber was a brunette, beautiful and sprightly. She played such havoc with my heart that she is to-day your grandmother. She has been a loving, faithful wife, a wise mother, an honored and beloved neighbor and "her children rise up and call her blessed."



## A GRANDFATHER'S OFT TOLD

After spending the time pleasantly with relatives and friends we returned to Harrisburg in March, 1864, and were equipped with Springfield rifles instead of our old muskets. We then went to Annapolis, Md., where the Ninth Corps was reorganized by the addition of a fourth division composed of negro soldiers.

Our ranks had been filled during our furlough with recruits who, being with old soldiers, soon became efficient.

We marched to Washington, D. C., and were reviewed by President Lincoln, April 25th,

During this review Company D was commanded by Lieutenant Evan R. Goodfellow. The reviewing party consisted of the President, cabinet officers and the generals of the Ninth Corps who occupied the balcony of the Willard Hotel on Pennsylvania Avenue. Our corps paraded in full strength some 30,000 strong and passed in review by company front. As we came to the reviewing stand, the command was "Present arms!" But our lieutenant, looking up and seeing General Burnside standing alongside of President Lincoln, commanded "Three cheers for General Burnside!" much to the amusement of the President and Burnside and to the consternation of the other lookers-on and the astonishment of the company.

From Washington the regiment marched to Fairfax Court House, Va., camping at Bristow Station, which place we left May 4th, and on May 5th made a forced march to the Wilderness, where a battle was raging. The Union Army was commanded by General Grant and the rebel or Confederate Army by General Robert E. Lee. We went into camp the evening of the 5th of May among the wilderness of trees and brush and we knew that the morrow meant a great battle.



## TALES OF THE CIVIL WAR

As we stood around the camp fires waiting until the coffee should boil we laughed and jested. One of the boys called out, "Albert, where do you wish to be wounded to-morrow?" I replied, "In the arm, then I can wear it in a sling, go home and be a hero among the girls and get good things to eat." Lo, and behold, the next day a bullet fired by a Florida rebel did the work, crashing through my left elbow and fracturing two ribs. Words spoken in jest are often fraught with momentous consequences. For example, the evening before the battle of Blue Springs we were waiting for coffee and chatting about the approaching fight when I was asked how I wanted to be wounded the next day. "Give me victory or slightly wounded in the heel." Sure enough my bravado wish was granted.

Long before daylight on the morning of the fateful sixth of May we were in motion and by daylight the rebel batteries opened on us but did us little damage as we were protected by the bank of a small creek. We next filed off some distance to the left, front faced and advanced to find the foe. Companies A and K, the flanking companies, were pushed forward as skirmishers to find the enemy's line of battle which was hidden in the woods. As the skirmishers exposed the rebels, they rushed forth driving the skirmishers back on our line; charging upon us and yelling, the Florida brigade delivered a volley which killed and wounded many of us. I was hit in the left arm and doubled up like a jack knife. Our men cheered and gave a counter charge, driving the Johnnies way back; but I was not doing active duty for I was down and out, having fainted from the shock. When I revived a New York soldier was pouring water in my face from his canteen. As the day was very hot

## A GRANDFATHER'S OFT TOLD

and the air sulphurous and smoky the warm water from his canteen was unpleasant. I said, "Go away and let me die in peace." He replied, "Nonsense, you are better than a half dozen dead men," and placing his hands under my shoulders raised me to my feet. Putting his arm around me he guided me along a path until we came to a spring of water, then he poured the cool water on my head and arm, gave me a drink which revived me so that I went off alone in the direction of our rear.

When I reached a road the ambulances were passing along with the wounded and one of the drivers made room for me alongside of him. We found our way to the Sixth Corps Field Hospital, where those worst wounded were placed full length on the ground; I sat down on my knapsack.

One of the attendants came around unofficially and glanced us over; he looked at my arm and side and remarked, "If you were where you would receive proper attention, that arm could be saved."

After a little while the medical director of the corps, in full uniform, accompanied by a large and brilliant staff, came along and examined the wounded soldiers; his usual order was, "Cut it off," or the one word, "Amputate." When he reached me he took hold of my hand and raised it upward and knew at once that the arm was shattered. "Amputation," he ordered. "No, sir," I quickly responded, remembering what the attendant had said. With a surprised look he said, "That arm is coming off." "No, it is not," was my retort. "Your death be upon your own head," he angrily replied. "On my own head," I acquiesced. Commanding his staff of surgeons to follow him he walked to other wounded men and I was left without attention. By and by the attendant returned, took my big bandana handkerchief, made





Presbyterian Church Fredericksburg, Va.

## TALES OF THE CIVIL WAR

a sling of it, and wetting the shattered arm said, "Keep your arm wet all the time with cold water, and when you get to the general hospital the people there will know what to do."

Just before dark my tent-mate, Charley Fryberger, brought in several hundred Confederate prisoners captured by our brigade. That night I slept on the bare ground with my knapsack for a pillow.

The next morning an ambulance train more than a mile long started off with the wounded and at dusk reached Fredericksburg, Va. Here we were placed in the Presbyterian Church, which was being used as a temporary hospital. We were given hardtack and hot coffee for our evening meal and our wounds were dressed.

As the darkness thickened attendants with candles passed from one wounded soldier to another ministering to his wants; at last the work was ended and the stillness broken only by groans of agony wrung from some painfully wounded soldier. The pews and floors in the auditorium and galleries were covered with the wounded. Here and there a dimly burning candle glimmered in the dark church. A soldier in the organ loft touched the keys of the organ and struck a few chords. Here a voice and there a command cried out, "Home, Sweet Home," and as the organist played and sang that dear old song, sobs were heard all over the church and men wept as thoughts of home and mother made busy memories of days never more to come.

In the morning through a driving rain, leaving behind those who had died during the night, our long ambulance train wended its way to Belle Plains, Va., on the Potomac, where we were placed on a steamboat and taken to Alexandria, Va.

## A GRANDFATHER'S OFT TOLD

I was sent to the Mansion House Hospital and the surgeons decided that my arm could be saved. I was given a bath and dressed in clean underclothing and put in a clean bed. But, alas, the room was inhabited by droves of bed bugs which made continued sleep impossible. In the morning I complained to the Volunteer Nurse, a patriotic New Hampshire woman, and she and others tried to exterminate the pests.

By this time I was so reduced in strength by the loss of blood through the wound and by excitement and shock that I could not eat. The dear old maid nurse went to the Sanitary supplies, procured canned chicken and made me broth, but my stomach refused it. Next she went to the market house, and with her own money bought strawberries which she prepared for me, but my appetite would not be tempted; when she saw that I was so weak that I could not eat she sat down and cried.

After a few days my dear old father and my brother, Luther, who had seen my name among the lists of wounded published in the newspapers hurried to Washington, D. C., and brother obtained my transfer to the Germantown General Hospital. Father bade me a loving good-bye and departed for our home. Brother took me to Germantown, Pa., and placed me in the hospital under the care of Dr. Leedom.

The next morning the surgeons examined me and held a consultation. All were in favor of amputating my arm except Dr. Leedom, who argued that if the surgeons at Alexandria could save my arm those in Germantown were able to do as much. As I was very weak, so weak that there was a possibility that I could not undergo the amputation, the consultation ended in Dr. Leedom having his way.



## TALES OF THE CIVIL WAR

After a few weeks when it was apparent that I would recover, Dr. Leedom would bring in his colleagues and crowd because his judgment had been vindicated, and someone would observe, "If he (the soldier) had not had the constitution of a young horse, he never would have pulled through."

Every noon, the doctor's mother, (a Quakeress), and her colored servant came into our room with specially prepared food for me and several others of the doctor's patients.

One day to the surprise of Dr. Leedom and myself poison appeared on both my hands; the doctor treated them and bandaged both. When his mother came to see me I was singing, much to her astonishment. The physician said the poison came from the skin of peaches which I handled. My recovery was rapid, though I had several backsets. Once gangrene appeared in the wound, at another time the wound became alive with maggots, and lastly erysipelas showed the whole length of the arm. However, Dr. Leedom was a skillful physician and successfully overcome all these ills.

At last, December 9, 1864, I was discharged as convalescent, though my wound did not heal shut for six weeks later. Altogether twenty-two small pieces of bone were taken from the shattered elbow.

I had had my wish granted, had been shot in the arm, carried it in a sling, was a hero among the girls, and was petted and feasted.

The sleighing during the winter of 1864-'65 was fine, and sleighing parties and sleigh rides with one's best girl made us gay and happy. So earnest were my attentions to your grandmother that she consented to become my wife, and on September 20, 1865, we were married.

## ALLEN D. ALBERT

Private, Company D, Forty-fifth Pennsylvania Veteran  
Volunteer Infantry

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Engagements in which he participated :

### BIG BATTLES

Fredericksburg.	Blue Springs.
Siege of Vicksburg.	Siege of Knoxville.
Jackson.	Wilderness.

### SKIRMISHES

Philemont.	Big Black River.
Jintown.	Halls X Roads.
Blaines X Roads.	



## What it Means to Have Been a Soldier in the Civil War

*By Nathan L. F. Bachman.*

**T**O the man who measures his worth in blood and scars, that flag means something—whether he wore Blue or Gray. It is something to have been a soldier—on either side. It is something to have marched all day long through rain and sleet, your knapsack and blankets on your back with spider and cup tied fast—your canteen filled and with rifle and forty rounds of cartridges in your box—just for ballast—with plenty of holes in your shoes just to let in the water—and plenty more to let it out—while the tough, red-clay mud hangs on to them with all the persistency of a bad reputation; “Forward march,” the whole day long, unless detailed to help lift a wagon or piece of artillery out of a mudhole—with bread and meat for breakfast, meat and bread for dinner, and for supper, the sweet but unsatisfactory memory of how good they tasted,—and when thus wearied and worn, to see a battery of flying artillery go wheeling and thundering into position right in front of your line, and then, when the very minutes seemed hours, to hear the command to fix bayonets and forward in the face of a perfect hell of shrapnel, under whose fierce heat your lines melt away. It is something to have stood on the field of conflict when bursting shells and leaden death hurtled through the air and comrades were dropping on every side in obedience to the enemy’s messenger of death; where the cries of the wounded welled up through the night and the pale moon, breaking through the rifted clouds, looked down upon faces paler than its own—faces across which had passed the ghastly shadow of an eternal eclipse. It is something to have seen the waving lines advancing to the charge—to catch the glittering

sunshine upon a forest of steel—to have seen all the sights and heard all the sounds of mortal strife—something sublime, yet terrible. It is something to have been a soldier inspired by duty unto daring and to death. But grandest of all and beyond description is the thrilling sight when riding into the enemy's ranks to have seen the flag you love and fight for, burst through the veil of smoke that wreathed it like a halo of glory—dazzling the vision as the vapory wreath is wafted aside—and to have heard the wild, exultant cheers of your comrades, all following where its eagle pointed the way—to death, perhaps, but certainly to victory and glory.

What a thrill of inspiration to deeds of daring there is in that shred of silk or bunting! What an incentive to valor is there in its mute appeal to do or die! “Bring the Flag back to the line!” shouted a timid commander at a moment when victory wavered in the balance. “Damn you, bring the line up to the Flag!” was the grand and glorious response. And it is such an experience, mutually shared, that has cemented into a sacred and inseparable union, as comrades and brothers all, the men who wore the Blue, and the men who wore the Gray, and above them floats the banner of their mutual choice to which their united defence is pledged—the Stars and Stripes.

















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