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Memiors of Service

With John Yates Beall

by

M. M. Baker

Edited by **D. S. Freeman**



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Memoirs of Service

WITH

John Gates Beall,

C. S. N.

BY

W. W. BAKER, OF CHESTERFIELD.

EDITED WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
DOUGLAS SOUTHALL FREEMAN, PH. D.

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By Douglas S. Freeman.



Yours very truly
W. W. Baker

INTRODUCTION.

While serving as one of the editors of the Richmond *Times-Dispatch*, the writer learned that his friend, the Honorable W. W. Baker, of Chesterfield County, had prepared a series of articles describing his adventures in the War Between the States. Mr. Baker's well known modesty had kept him from offering these articles for publication, and only the insistent demands of a few personal friends had ever induced him to write of his part in the war. After many interviews, Mr. Baker finally consented to permit me to publish his articles. This was done, with a result which no readers of the *Times-Dispatch* will ever forget. With a graceful simplicity and a modesty which added a charm to every line, Mr. Baker unfolded a story which moved every Southern heart. Most of us knew, in a general way, of Mr. Baker's connection with that Southern hero, John Yates Beall; and history told us, with substantial accuracy, the adventures of that famous guerrilla; but none knew the hairbreadth escapes, the daring, the fortitude and the suffering of Beall and his men.

A few of Mr. Baker's friends, who know that he would never advertise his own valor, decided after the articles had been printed to preserve them in permanent form as a contribution to Southern history and asked me to add a few words of explanation. I feel that this is really superfluous: Mr. Baker's story is sufficient in itself, yet, as he leaves untold as much as he tells, at least as far as he personally is concerned, a few words regarding the expedition in which Mr. Baker played a part, and a few words more regarding Mr. Baker himself, may not be inappropos.

John Yates Beall, who died a felon's death where he deserved a hero's grave, represented the flower of Virginia manhood. Born in 1839, he came of honorable stock; he was cultured, he was chivalrous; he had that spirit of genuine piety which gave to his military career all the ardor of a crusade. Under different circumstances, Beall might have lived and died a typical Virginia gentleman,—wedded to the home of his fathers, serving God in his daily walk, dealing justly with all men, exemplifying in his life all these virtues which are associated, in our minds, with the Old Dominion of ante bellum days. Such, indeed, had been his purpose and such seemed the necessities of life. When the illness of his father forced him to leave the University of Virginia, at the age of twenty, he came home and began active life as a planter. It was while here, in the storied valley of the Shenandoah, that he developed those characteristics which made him dear to the Southern people. Fiery, impetuous, an aristocrat in every nerve, he came under deep, spiritual conviction as a young man, and from that time until his death his will in all things was subjected to a Will Divine. To him, religion was a living, throbbing principle,—a principle that gave him grace to bear and to forbear, a principle that inspired him to lofty ideals and exalted deeds. His religion was like that of Jackson and like that of Jeremy Bentham combined. It made him inflexible in battle, unflinching in peace: it gave new strength to his sabre and new tenderness to his heart. It became, in short, the dominating principle of his life, and fanned into flame the truest impulses of his heart.

When the war began, Beall of course threw in his strength to the support of his native State. No other course suggested itself to him; nothing else was ever dreamed of. Yet it was not until he had served some time, and had been

incapacitated for land duty, that he began that career which made his name a terror to the Federals. His determination to begin irregular warfare and to harass the enemy in every way possible came as the result of a cool and patriotic determination. He knew that in the field, or even at sea, where he fought with the regular forces, he was but one of thousands who were ready to give their blood or their lives for Southern independence. To die in such a way was but a small thing in his eyes,—a sacrifice and a service small in comparison with his devotion to the cause. On the other hand, he knew that by daring where others hesitated, by fighting where others felt helpless, he might give his life as a worthy sacrifice. Few men in the Confederacy would admit for a moment that it was possible to capture a Federal gunboat on the Chesapeake with a handful of men; none would dare suggest that a company of intrepid spirits could release the famished thousands at Johnson's Island; yet Beall believed that these things could be done and counted them a proper service for his mother State. This and this alone is the explanation of the career upon which he entered in 1862. He had no other motive than that of service and no other incentive than that of patriotism. He was not blood thirsty; he was not craving notoriety; he was merely seeking to do the utmost to end the war and to save his State. When the officers of the Northern government, smarting under the disgrace of the defeats administered them by Beall, denounced him as a pirate, and put him and his associates beyond the pale of honorable warfare, they belied as brave a spirit as the Confederacy produced and added new glory to Beall and his band.

To protest that Beall and the men who served with him were pirates and not entitled to the honors of war is a sophistry which history refutes in a thousand instances. Beall

was a commissioned officer of the Confederate government; he was acting under orders of the Navy Department; he was on detached duty, as were a hundred other gallant officers. If this service were piracy, then Bullock and Clay and Morgan and Mosby and every partisan, every diplomatic agent and every foreign representative of the Government was a pirate.

A grateful South, which has learned to place Lee's men on the monument with Lee, and Pickett's Virginians and Carolinians on the same pedestal with their leader, will not forget that Beall's men deserve no less praise than he. If he planned, they executed; if he led, they followed; if he had honor from victory and death from defeat, they deserve no less honor from victory and had no less danger of death from defeat. If Beall had been successful in his attempt to release the prisoners at Johnson's Island, he would probably have received all the glory. Had he desired it his men might have been forgotten; but when he was captured in the Chesapeake, his men wore shackles like his own and were threatened with the same grim death. Every man, therefore, who followed Beall deserves to be remembered, and among these our friend, Mr. W. W. Baker, will hold no small place.

The contribution which Mr. Baker makes, in this narrative, to the history of Beall's command is of first importance, in that he sheds new light on an obscure chapter of Southern history. Little enough has been written of Beall in a general way, and still less of his raids in the Chesapeake. His published memoirs and the accounts of his trial, to which reference is made in the text, deal almost exclusively with the ill-fated raid on Lake Erie; there are few reports and no private memoirs of the early work of Beall's party. Mr. Baker, who shared in the most thrilling of these experiences,

details the daily life of the men, characterizes Beall in simple but powerful terms, and gives, in brief, the first and only adequate picture yet drawn of an expedition which deserves to rank with the most daring deeds of Mosby or of Morgan.

One of the most interesting chapters in the history of the Confederates is that written after Appomattox. It is not the story of Political Reconstruction, harrowing, pathetic, heroic as that is; it is not the story of Industrial Transformation, vital as that is in the life of the South today; it is the story of the individual struggle men had after the war in earning their living, in making their way against the injustice of a hostile Federal Administration, and in adjusting themselves, one by one, to a new and trying social order. Sociologists who tell this story in the future, guided by principles of which we now know little, will see this struggle and find in it much to inspire them. Most of the men who came back from Appomattox and from other fields of sorrow were young men. All who were to have a part in making the South were young, for men past thirty, who came back from the war to contend alone with a hopeless labor force, a denuded country, and a biting poverty, seldom regained their old position and seldom were able to rise. The pathetic spectacle of famous Generals fruitlessly tilling a poor farm or following a small mercantile life is proof of this. All depended on the boys. To be sure, most of them had been snatched from school or from college, illy prepared for intellectual careers; but however equipped, their minds were those which must make fortunes for themselves and greatness for the South. How they did it, how they surmounted obstacles and repaired their

broken fortunes, how they struggled to make life worth living and home worth having, how they rose and toiled, and finally succeeded is no less heroic than the tale of their military prowess.

Mr. Baker was one of these boys, and those of us who know him best see in the story of his life the secret of how many of his peers won not only a place for themselves in the business world, but new honors for Virginia and new hopes for her children.

Mr. Baker went into this struggle after the war determined to win success. The experience of his campaign with Beall and the stern discipline of his prison life strengthened and matured those characteristics which he had inherited from a long line of worthy ancestors and gave him an advantage which adverse circumstances never overcame. Born in 1844, the son of Anne Elizabeth Howard, a daughter of the famous Howard family of Maryland, and of John Daniel Baker, Esquire, of Chesterfield County, W. W. Baker was descended from a family which had lived in Chesterfield and Powhatan for five generations, and which had by its sterling qualities of manhood achieved a proverbial reputation for probity and worth. All that was lasting and all that was ambitious in this stock asserted itself in Mr. Baker when he returned home after the war and took up his life work. In business he quickly succeeded, and his popularity there soon brought him into public life. His first public position was that of justice of the peace, which he received by appointment of Governor Gilbert C. Walker. This was an important position in a county, situated, as was Chesterfield, in the midst of the Black Belt, and to its duties Mr. Baker gave himself without reserve. When his term expired he was re-elected by the people and received this proof of their confidence, as often and as long as

he would accept of the post. After serving as supervisor of Midlothian district and as school trustee, Mr. Baker's friends insisted upon naming him for the House of Delegates in 1883 and prevailed upon him at a personal sacrifice to continue through the long regular and extra sessions of that and the succeeding troubled year. During this first term of service in the General Assembly of the State, Mr. Baker left his mark on the statute books of the Commonwealth. In addition to an important bill requiring the clerks of court to certify that bonds of special commissioners had been given before issuing decrees for the sale of property, Mr. Baker introduced and pushed to passage the first act ever placed on the statute books to prevent the running of freight trains on Sunday. This latter measure, important in itself, opened the way for future legislation and may truly be said to be at the basis of that admirable code of laws which gave to the Commonwealth a Christian Sabbath.

Family and personal matters compelled Mr. Baker to retire from the Assembly in 1884, and it was not until 1899 that he was again able to take his place as the representative of his county in that body. In the meantime, by earnest application to business, Mr. Baker amassed a competence, and, when he returned to public life, he was in a position to give himself more freely to the service of the State. From that time until the present year he has not failed of re-election to the General Assembly, and during all of their sessions his record has been one of constructive legislation. Of the many laws passed at the instance of Mr. Baker, perhaps the most important was that enacted by the General Assembly of 1908 reorganizing the State Board of Health.

Realizing from the tragedies in his own family that the State should do something to prevent the needless loss of life from preventable disease, Mr. Baker drafted, on broad,

liberal lines, a bill which revolutionized health work in Virginia and marked an epoch in the history of Southern hygiene. Under the provision of this act the State Board of Health was given \$40,000 a year and was required to choose an executive officer and a staff of assistants to be organized into a State Department of Health. In addition, this Act required the State Board of Health to investigate climatic conditions in Virginia and to establish a Sanatorium for the open air treatment of tuberculosis. In pursuance of this Act the State Department of Health was duly organized, with Dr. Ennion G. Williams, of Richmond, as Commissioner and was put in operation in July, 1908. By the time the Assembly met in 1910 the Health Department had won its place and justified its creation. It had carried out the provision of the original Act; it had established, equipped and had operated the Catawba Sanatorium where many cases of incipient tuberculosis were treated and cured and had gained for itself a wide field of usefulness. In the Assembly of 1910 Mr. Baker found himself by no means the sole champion of the new work and he was able to muster enough votes to insure not only the continuance of the State Board of Health, but the appropriation of a large sum for the enlargement of the Catawba Sanatorium and the passage of several epoch-making health laws.

During the same session of Assembly, Mr. Baker fathered the bill giving State aid to the Industrial Home and School for Incurable Girls. This foundation met a long felt need in the State and gave to many unfortunate girls the means of escape from a life of shame and the assurance of a training that would fit them for honorable usefulness. The Home has already been opened and its friends have reason to believe that it will be as successful in its sphere as the Health Department has been in a different field.

Mr. Baker has not been content to serve the State exclusively as a legislator. Indeed his work as an administrator has been no less successful, especially in his conduct of Virginia's interests in the great Industrial Expositions of recent years. Appointed Commissioner for Chesterfield to the Richmond Expositions of 1888, 1889 and 1890, he early won reputation as an expert in such matters and was appointed Commissioner for Virginia to the St. Louis Exposition of 1904. Much of the fame won by Virginia's exhibit at that time was due to Mr. Baker's unselfish and patriotic services. So great was his success in this work, that when the General Assembly appropriated a large sum for the Jamestown Exposition of 1907, Mr. Baker, without a dissenting voice, was named one of the commission entrusted with the expenditure, and was most active in discharging his duties. In the same way, his administrative ability led the Assembly to appoint him on all of the three committees of recent years which have been entrusted with the largest State building contracts,—the enlargement of the State Penitentiary, the remodeling of the Capitol and the addition of a new wing to the State Library building.

Nor have Mr. Baker's public services ended here. Nothing that has concerned the interests of the State has been foreign to him. Prominent in the councils of the Baptist Church, he has been frequently the moderator of the Middle District Association, and has been a Trustee of Richmond College for many years. He is also President of the Virginia Anti-Tuberculosis Association and occupies many other places of importance in charitable and philanthropic organizations. In a word, his entire career has been a credit to his splendid ancestry and another proof that those who passed through the discipline of the war between the States

did not fall under the discipline of daily life, but won success in peace as they had attained honor in battle.

Only a word need be added regarding the method pursued in publishing this narrative. Mr. Baker's account is substantially the same as that originally published in *The Times-Dispatch*, with only a few typographical and grammatical corrections; the appendices are those selected by him and verified by the editor from the *Official Records of the War of the Rebellion*. These have been arranged and supplied by the editor with a few footnotes and references which may be helpful to anyone desiring to learn more of the "Terror of the Chesapeake."

D. S. F.

CONTENTS

	<i>Page.</i>
CHAPTER I. The Beginning of Our Expedition . . .	15
CHAPTER II. The Capture of the <i>Alliance</i>	19
CHAPTER III. A Very Close Shave	24
CHAPTER IV. Cornered and Captured	29
CHAPTER V. In Federal Shackles	33
CHAPTER VI. Edmondson's Escape	37
CHAPTER VII. Fort Monroe and Point Lookout	41
CHAPTER VIII. The Evacuation and Appomattox . . .	45
CHAPTER IX. The End of Captain Beall	47
APPENDICES	52

CHAPTER I.

THE BEGINNING OF OUR EXPEDITION.

I was born in Chesterfield county, Va., October 20, 1844, and attended a school taught by Rev. D. B. Winfree for three years. When ten years old I lost my mother. After marrying again, my father moved to Danville, Va. Instead of attending school as he desired, I persuaded him to allow me to be apprenticed to Messrs. Abner Anderson and L. M. Shumaker, editors of the *Danville Register*, to learn the printing business. My father becoming dissatisfied with Danville, removed to Dobson, N. C., when I obtained consent to be transferred to Messrs. Boner & Allspaugh, of the *Western Sentinel*, of Winston, N. C. After two years, when my father again removed to Richmond, Va., I came to the *Richmond Enquirer*, then owned by Tyler and Allegre, and there finished the required five years as apprentice at the printing business.

While serving as apprentice, after my work was done in the composing room, I generally "loafed" and kept busy reading in the editorial room, in which there was an excellent library. Whenever the editors, John Mitchell and George C. Stedman, wanted any errand run, I was always on hand to serve them, and hence became very intimate with both. In return they gave me all the assistance asked in my reading, of which I was very fond. In fact, Mr. Stedman appeared as solicitous of my welfare as if I had been his son, and was always anxious to aid me in any way that presented itself to him. I obtained permission from Mr. Allegre, and served for a time in Capt. Cyrus Bossieux's company, Twenty-fifth Virginia Battalion, but my services were needed on the *Enquirer*, and I was again assigned to them.

Seeing all my young friends joining the army, I became

anxious to again become a soldier, and talked the matter over with Mr. Stedman, who stated to me that he was also contemplating leaving the *Enquirer* and joining some arm of the service, and requested me not to take any action until he had determined what to do, as he wanted me to go with him.

It was during the summer of 1863 that Mr. Stedman stated to me that he had about arranged to join in an enterprise and wanted me to go with him. This I at once consented to do, after securing permission from Mr. Allegre.

The only information I secured from Mr. Stedman was that we would enlist in the volunteer Confederate Navy, and that our ultimate destination would be the China seas, as it was proposed by the commanding officer to at once proceed to capture a good sea-worthy gunboat from the Federals somewhere on the Chesapeake or Atlantic, and to proceed as soon as possible to the South Atlantic for the purpose of intercepting shipping from China to the United States. It was about August 1, 1863, that Mr. Stedman informed me that he was ready for us to join the new expedition. I was then introduced to Acting Master John Y. Beall and Acting Master Edward McGuire. We called them Captain Beall and Lieutenant McGuire, and they were so denominated ever after. Mr. Stedman and myself enlisted in their command, which was composed of Captain John Y. Beall, Lieutenant Edward McGuire, Sailing Masters George C. Stedman, of the *Richmond Enquirer*, McFarland, of the *Richmond Whig*, Edmondson, of Maryland and Privates Willie Beall, Robert Annan, E. Mell Stratton, of Richmond, Fitzgerald of Norfolk, Severn Churn and Thomas, Accomac county; Crouch, Etter, Rankin, three other expert sailors, whose names I have forgotten, and myself. We made up what was commonly known during the war as "Beall's Party."

We left Richmond on the York River Railroad about September 1, 1863, leaving the train at Tunstall's station, and thence via Piping Tree Ferry to Mathews Courthouse. After reaching that point, Captain Beall arranged with a number of the citizens to entertain his command while in Mathews. We were treated as members of the families by Messrs. Sands Smith, Thomas Smith, Colonel Tabb, and Messrs. Ransom and Brooks. In fact, all the citizens in the neighborhood of Horn Harbor and Winter Harbor were as hospitable as was possible to be, and we were always cordially welcomed to their homes. Nor did we fully realize the vengeance that would be visited upon them by the Federals as soon as it became known that they were friendly to the "notorious Beall and his party of pirates," as Captain Beall was known and named by the Yankees after the incidents to be recorded were known by them.

On September 18 Captain Beall again set out from Horn Harbor, Mathews county. His party numbered eighteen, and was divided, as near as I remember, in our two gallant little lifeboats, both of which were fitted with masts, sails and a full supply of oars. One was painted white and named "The Swan," and the other black, and named "The Raven." Captain Beall commanded "The Swan," and with him were McFarland, Edmondson, Willie Beall, Robert Annan, Etter, Thomas, Sweeney and one other whom I have forgotten. Lieut. Ed. McGuire commanded "The Raven," and with him were Geo. C. Stedman, E. Mell Stratton, Severn Churn, Crouch, Rankin, W. W. Baker, Fitzgerald and another, whose name I cannot now recall.

We sailed across the Chesapeake during the night of the 18th and reached Devil's Ditch, Northampton county, about the break of day on the 19th, passing and avoiding many vessels and steamers on the trip. After resting all day we

again set sail the night of the 19th, and proceeded to Raccoon Island, near Cape Charles. We passed within about 600 yards of Smith's Island lighthouse about 9 o'clock the next morning, beautiful bright day. Captain Beall had visited the island about three weeks before, and after destroying the fixtures and cutting the cable from Fort Monroe to Washington, had brought away to Richmond twenty-five barrels of the best sperm oil, which was very valuable to the government at that time.

In consequence of this raid, the Yankees had placed a battery of three guns on the island to defend it against any further raids on the part of Captain Beall. This we did not know at the time, and had it not been that Captain Beall had other work laid out, he would again have paid the lighthouse a visit. We were afterwards informed by citizens who were on the island at the time we passed that they discussed the probability of an attack from us, and had about arrived at the conclusion that they would evacuate the island on account of our apparent overwhelming force. They thought the eighteen of us were about 100. And ever after, when mentioned in the reports sent to Washington, although sometimes there were not more than sixteen of us with Captain Beall, and never over eighteen, it was made to appear that his force consisted of from 40 to 100 men.

After passing Smith's Island we sailed up the inner channel and captured the Yankee sloop *Mary Anne* and two fishing sloops. Being a little "fish hungry," Captain Beall allowed us to take as much fishing tackle as we wanted, and all of us spent the day fishing in the sand shoals, near Cobb's Island. After catching as many as we could manage, we returned to the *Mary Anne* and enjoyed one of the most elaborate fish suppers that I ever remember.

CHAPTER II.

THE CAPTURE OF THE *ALLIANCE*.

For the next two days and nights we sailed up the Atlantic, and about night of September 21 it began to blow almost a gale and rained in torrents. About 8 o'clock at night we sighted, lying at anchor in Wachapreague Inlet, a large vessel, schooner rigged, which Captain Beall at once gave orders to capture. Captain Beall arranged to board the vessel on the port side and directed Lieutenant McGuire to board on the starboard side. Lieutenant McGuire was standing in the bow of the boat, and as there was a severe wind blowing us towards the vessel and a heavy sea running at the time, and as dark as pitch, our boat, *The Raven*, was dashed against the side of the vessel with such force as to smash our tiller, and Lieutenant McGuire was thrown headlong into the sea. He regained the boat, which was carried by the rapid current then running around to the bow of the vessel, and thrown against the *Swan*, to which we made fast, and thus both Captain Beall and Lieutenant McGuire, with their men, boarded the vessel from the port side. The night was so dark and stormy that not a soul was found on deck, and Captain Beall directed Lieutenant McGuire and his crew to tackle the forecastle, and Captain Beall, with his crew, went aft to the cabins.

Up to this time we had no idea of the character of the vessel, not knowing whether it was a war or merchant vessel. It proved to be the handsome merchant schooner *Alliance*, Captain David Ireland, Staten Island, N. Y., bound from Philadelphia to Port Royal, S. C., laden with sutlers' stores to the value of \$18,000 gold. But little resistance

was made, and no one was injured. After taking charge of the ship Captain Beall went below and directed that samples of everything be brought on deck, and we then had a veritable feast of good things, as there appeared to be everything to eat, drink, smoke and wear aboard.

As the equinox continued all hands remained aboard the *Alliance*, and both anchors were cast to keep her steady. That night, however, we again took to the *Raven* and *Swan*, after leaving a guard aboard the *Alliance*, and captured three more vessels—the *Houseman*, *Samuel Pearsall*, and a third called the *Alexander*. After stripping them of all valuables, particularly their nautical instruments, of which the Confederacy was badly in need, we scuttled them and ran them out into the Atlantic. On September 24 all hands were brought aboard the *Alliance*, which Captain Beall decided he would try and save by running into the Chesapeake and into some of the rivers that were not too strictly guarded by the Yankee gunboats. The morning of the 24th was beautiful and sunshiny, and Captain Beall called Captain Ireland on deck and asked him if he was thoroughly acquainted with the channel from the inlet into the Atlantic. Captain Ireland with pride stated that he was well acquainted with every nook and corner of this coast.

Captain Beall replied: "Very well, Captain Ireland; this is a fine vessel with a most valuable cargo, of which our people in the South are sadly in need, therefore your crew will be placed under your command, and you will please run us as soon as possible out into Atlantic. I shall stand by you, and if you should allow us to run aground I shall be under the disagreeable necessity of shooting you. I am sure, however, that you realize the gravity of the situation and will not play us false." Captain Ireland, who was a brave man, and equal to any emergency, then called his

crew aft and soon had every sail set, and in a short time we were bowling along in the Atlantic.

When we reached Cobb's Island Captain Beall sent ashore and secured a pilot who was well acquainted with the bay, and particularly the Pianketank River, into which he had by this time determined to run the *Alliance*. All of the prisoners who would agree not to give information as to our whereabouts for three days were paroled, and those who refused, among the number Captain Ireland, his mate, purser and about ten others, were, after we reached Cape Charles, placed aboard the *Raven* and *Swan*. I was aboard the *Raven* with Lieutenant McGuire and Mr. Stedman as guard, and the *Swan* was placed in charge of Edmondson with two guards and the prisoners placed in our boats.

We sailed along with the *Alliance* until we reached Cheerystone Lighthouse, when we headed for Horn Harbor, and the *Alliance*, under Captain Beall, for the Pianketank River, Lieutenant McGuire at the tiller and Mr. Stedman and myself in the stern, with the prisoners in front.

During the night there came on a heavy blow, with waves running so high that at times our little craft was almost upon beam ends, and the heavy caps seas frequently half-filled her. When about half way across the Chesapeake the winds and waves became so high that Lieutenant McGuire told us, prisoners and all, that if the wind rose any higher that we could not possibly keep our boat afloat, and himself divested himself of his heavy boots that he might be as little encumbered as possible.

We kept the *Raven* and *Swan* as close together as possible in the event of either being swamped, but with the almost superhuman work of Captain Ireland and the other prisoners constantly bailing, we kept afloat, and about sunrise sailed into Horn Harbor. Captain Ireland remarked afterwards

that he had been on the sea for a number of years, but that trip was about the closest call he had ever had, and that a little more wind and none of us would have ever seen the land again.*

Just here it might not be amiss to mention an incident which occurred while on the *Alliance*. After Captain Beall had brought upon deck everything that we needed either in eatables or clothing, and given each of us all we wanted, he stated to us that he did not wish anything to be disturbed below decks, and that if we needed anything to ask him and he would see that we were supplied. He had always been so kind and gentle in his manner to each of us, frequently taking our places at the oars and cooking when we appeared tired, that none of us realized how stern he could be when his orders were disobeyed. But no sooner than we were allowed to go below than a spirit of curiosity seemed to get the best of five or six of us, and we commenced to break open boxes of cigars, trying to get something better than those we had been served with. Captain Beall heard of it and summoned us on deck, and stated that he had learned that his orders had been disobeyed, and directed that we be lined up against the rail of the vessel and searched, stating that if any evidence appeared that cigars or other things was found upon our person that he intended to shoot the man upon whom they were found. I unfortunately had my pockets filled with the best Havanas, as did several of the others. Realizing that we were in a tight place, we crowded back to the rail and as close together as we could get, and with our hands behind us emptied every pocket into the sea. I have thought that Captain Beall knew what we were doing, although he could not see our hands at work. At any rate when the search

*See Report of Guert Gansevoort, captain, U. S. N., to Maj. Gen. J. G. Foster, Sept. 28, 1863, Appendix I, p. 53.

was made we all were found to be innocent, and Captain Beall dismissed us with a fatherly caution not to again disobey him, and I can say that I am sure that in all the months after he never found real cause to complain.

CHAPTER III.

A VERY CLOSE SHAVE.

After reaching Mathews we carried the prisoners up to a church on the road not far east of Mathews Courthouse. We had been there but a short time before we heard cannon booming over on the Pianketank River, and in a few hours Captain Beall appeared with the other men and stated that as they entered the mouth of the river, they were chased by a Federal gunboat, and that the pilot becoming confused as to the channel, ran the *Alliance* aground. The gunboat coming as near as she could get continued shelling them, while they were loading as much of the cargo as was possible and were setting fire to the ship and pulling for the shore. Captain Beall saved several wagon loads of the cargo, along with all the nautical instruments, which along with the prisoners, we carried overland to Richmond. On reaching Richmond, Mell Stratton resigned, and some one else—I have forgotten the name—enlisted in his stead.

After about ten days' rest we again set out to Mathews, having left our little lifeboats hidden in Horn Harbor, near Mr. Sand Smith's. We remained in Mathews several days, arranging for an extended raid, in which Captain Beall hoped to capture a seaworthy gunboat, as he had been informed where one such sometimes stopped to secure supplies.

Captain Beall's operations now began to attract attention, and called down heavy denunciations upon him in the North, and while we were arranging for our next raid Brigadier-General Wister was sent down to Mathews and neighboring

counties for the special purpose of capturing Captain Beall and his party. General Wister's force for this purpose, I was informed, consisted of one regiment of negro infantry, two of white cavalry and one battalion of artillery, also three gunboats in North River, three in East River and two in the Piankatank River.

Information reached Captain Beall of the approach of this overwhelming land force. Edmondson was sent up to the field in front of Colonel Tabb's home to ascertain if the report was true. While waiting he fell asleep and narrowly escaped being captured, leaving his coat, upon which he had lain down to rest. Captain Beall then arranged for a hurried departure on his boats. After running out a short distance he ascertained that it would be impossible to pass the gunboats, which were on the lookout on the water, therefore he at once ordered the *Raven* and *Swan* to be run up to Mr. Sand Smith's, at the extreme end of Horn Harbor and near Mr. Smith's lawn. We all set to work with shovels and filled both boats with sand and sunk them.

While we were at this work, information was brought that the Yankees were resting in force in front of Colonel Tabb's, and that pickets were then being stationed at Mr. Thomas Smith's gate, and all along the roads between the Mobjack Bay and the Piankatank River, in three impenetrable lines. We finished filling and sinking the two boats about sunset, and were then told by Captain Beall that we would "have to get out of there" that night. Captain Beall then coolly proceeded to the home of Thomas Smith, about one-half mile distant, and accepted an invitation extended the whole party by Miss Lizzie Smith, the daughter of Tho^s. Smith, to come in and partake of supper that she had prepared for the whole party, although she knew that at the time the

Yankee pickets were stationed at her father's outer gate about one-fourth of a mile distant.

I remember that a part of the supper consisted of sweet potatoes, and shall never forget how hard they were to swallow, as I thought of those Yankees at the gate. After we had partaken of a hearty supper, and what to me appeared an awfully leisurely one, Captain Beall asked McFarland, of the Richmond Whig—who had seen service as an Indian scout, and who had a tread as soft as a kitten—if he thought he could locate all the different pickets. McFarland assured him he could. We were then ordered to follow Indian file in the footsteps of McFarland, and not to whisper or make the slightest noise. McFarland would go a distance in front and ascertain where the pickets were located, and return, and we would follow after him, crossing the picket lines, which were supposed to be about 100 yards apart.

Just after we had crossed the first line on the road from Colonel Tabb's to Thomas Smith's, Edmondson insisted that he be allowed to crawl up into the field where the main force of the Yankees was encamped, and get the coat that he had left that afternoon.

Captain Beall consenting, we all laid down about five feet from the road, by the side of a ditch, and in a minute or two a Yankee relief guard came tramping by. I thought that my heart would punch a hole in the ground, it beat so fiercely as the Yankees moved up so quietly that it was impossible for us to move without being seen by them. We had to stay there and quietly hope that they would not see us. I am very glad to record they apparently did not. In a short time Edmondson returned with his coat, and we resumed our silent march, with McFarland always in front locating the line of pickets. Under his skillful leadership

we successfully passed through all three lines of pickets, and by sunrise were securely resting in Dragon Swamp.

It now becomes my painful privilege to record one of the saddest events of my connection with the service under Captain Beall. After remaining for two or three days in Dragon Swamp, Captain Beall learned that the large force of infantry, cavalry, artillery and gunboats had returned to Fort Monroe and that the coast was again clear. We then learned that General Wister had made a thorough search for us the morning after our departure, and was deeply chagrined because of the failure of his expedition and was greatly incensed against the citizens because they had not aided him.

The morning after we left a squadron of cavalry rode rapidly down into Sands Smith's yard and in some way insulted Mr. Smith, who was a man to whom fear was unknown. Mr. Smith was so enraged at what was said to him that he ran into the house and secured his double-barreled shotgun and shot dead the first man that had insulted him, and was upon the point of pulling another from his saddle when the others of the squadron rode up and felled him with their sabres. Mr. Smith was injured but slightly, and was then bound. The Yankees pulled his buggy out of the carriage house, tied Mr. Smith to the seat behind the buggy (the seat then used to carry trunks upon), and told him that they would reserve punishment until he could be taken before the whole command. There were seven or eight daughters of Mr. Smith then in the dwelling and with tears they begged to bid farewell to their old father, but were ruthlessly pushed aside and not allowed to speak to him.

Mr. Smith was then taken up between Colonel Tabb's and Mathews Courthouse and there hung upon a tree on the roadside, and while still hanging his body was riddled

with bullets. When Captain Beall heard of it the next day he was overwhelmed with grief, and I am sure that if he had ever caught the men connected with that raid they would have suffered as much or more, if possible, than our old friend and hero, Sands Smith.

CHAPTER IV.

CORNERED AND CAPTURED.

After this tragedy Captain Beall was more anxious than ever to do all the injury that was possible to the Federals, and at once began preparations to capture the gunboats, on which he hoped to make the Yankees feel the force of his anger at the murder of Sands Smith. It was about November 10th that Captain Beall and Lieutenant McGuire set out with our party and again crossed the Chesapeake Bay in the *Raven* and *Swan*. We first captured a schooner, in which Captain Beall proposed to conceal his men until night, when he planned to capture a gunboat lying at anchor near Chesconnessex, Accomac county. After consultation with his advisers, Captain Beall, thinking that our boats which were the best ships' tenders and were so much larger and handsomer than those used as tenders for schooners, might attract notice, determined to have them hidden in some of the nearby coves, and ordered Edmondson to take a crew and carry them into some cove out of sight and then to come to the schooner at 8 o'clock the next night. Edmondson took command of them, and with Fitzgerald, Thomas, Crouch, Churn and myself, sailed away from the schooner and into what appeared in the dark a most excellent hiding place. Edmondson and all the others except Fitzgerald and myself left the boats and went over into the island and laid down to sleep.

Fitzgerald and myself remained in the boats and were soon fast asleep. The next morning when we awakened the sun was shining brightly, and we could see that a great mistake had been made as to our being hidden. For, while

it had appeared to have been a most secluded spot in the night, we soon found that if any one were to sail by the mouth of the inlet our boats could be seen. However, Edmondson, who was in command, thought that there would be still greater danger of our capture if we attempted to go into any other inlet. He therefore directed Fitzgerald and myself to remain in the boats, and he himself and the rest of the party again crept over into the island, which was densely covered with sage brush, and fell asleep.

About 12 o'clock a fisherman passing by the mouth of the inlet sailed in and up to our boats and inquired who we were. I do not remember whether it was Fitzgerald or myself that told him that we were with a party from Baltimore who had run down on a hunting trip, and were resting until the tide rose, when we expected to sail up the bay and spend the night near the gunboat. We were afraid to shoot the fellow, as any firing would have attracted many of the hundreds of fishing smacks that appeared to be near the mouth of the inlet, and we hoped that he would be satisfied with our statement, as he told us he was fishing in one of the many smacks that lay outside. If he had come near enough we could have pulled him into our boat and kept him, but he kept some distance away while talking to us. He wished us all luck on our hunting trip and sailed out of the inlet. We saw him sail in the direction of the fishing smacks and concluded that we had seen the last of him and again laid down in the boat. It subsequently transpired that after sailing to the fishing smack he then sailed for the gunboat we had hoped to capture—one that was lying at a wharf about two miles north of us.

At any rate, on awakening at 5 o'clock, Fitzgerald saw two boats coming towards the mouth of the inlet, and in a few minutes there appeared right upon us two large barges of

well-armed Yankees with guns cocked and ready to fire upon us. I shall never forget that Fitzgerald turned to me and said: "Baker, this is a hot thing, ain't it?" at which time the Yankee barge was alongside. The lieutenant in command called out, "Surrender," and asked what command we belonged to. Either Fitzgerald or myself, I have forgotten which, stated to him that we were members of Captain Beall's command. The Yankees then jumped to the island, and commenced firing at random. They hoped, of course, to find the others, who made a desperate effort to run as soon as they were awakened by the shots. All were caught, however, in a short time, and we were then carried by this force, composed of about thirty officers and men, to the gunboat, the *Swan* and *Raven* being towed behind.

Captain Beall could have escaped, but waited so long to see what had become of the detachment sent out to hide the boats that he was surrounded and captured. When we reached the gunboats, we were told that we should be treated as pirates, and that we would be lodged in jail to be tried as such at once. After reaching the gunboat, I was terribly hungry, not having eaten anything since morning, and seeing a small boat moored by the side of the gunboat, I walked up to the lieutenant in command and said: "Lieutenant, I am nearly starved; I wish you would let me get over into that boat and get some oysters." He appeared at first to be terribly angry, but in a moment he turned to me and said, "All right, get over there, you little rascal, and help yourself." In a short time, we were taken ashore and marched to Drummondtown jail and remained there over night. The next day we were taken on the gunboat and went up the bay.*

*For Federal Reports of the capture of Beall and his men, see Appendix II., pp. 55-57.

Captain Beall and party were all placed in a large cabin on the main deck. There was a large door that opened out upon the forward deck, at which were posted two sentinels, and in front on deck was a stack of muskets, which appeared to belong to the relief guard. Seeing this, Captain Beall quietly told all the officers and men that if they would at a certain signal jump upon the two sentinels at the door and take their muskets that he could easily reach the stack of muskets before the balance of the guard could be under arms. I think that Mr. Stedman and Lieutenant McGuire agreed with Captain Beall that this could be done; but there were others who insisted that it was entirely too hazardous, as we had no idea how many men were on the upper deck.

Captain Beall was terribly enraged when a majority of the party refused to join him, and did not hesitate to tell us, his teeth gritting, that we were a set of dastardly cowards. It was but a short time, however, before he apologized, especially after he found out that the conditions appearing so favorable were simply a trap set, in the hope that he would do just what he suggested. There was a full company of infantry on the upper deck, whose men were waiting for us to rush out that they might shoot down every man and thereby have done with Captain Beall and his party without any trouble or trial.

CHAPTER V.

IN FEDERAL SHACKLES.

We were landed at Fort McHenry, Baltimore, at night, and next day were carried to a building in which was located the provost marshal's office. This building had been used at one time as a stable, but had been converted into a prison, in which were confined deserters from the Federal army. The first day we were taken into the garret story, and were treated very kindly. The next day we were taken to the provost marshal's office and there duly registered. As we were being carried back into our upstairs quarters, some fellow of the many Yankee deserters—who were being held in the yard which had been built around our prison, and who naturally lined up as far as the guard would allow when we came out of the provost marshal's office—slapped me in a familiar manner on the back and greeted me effusively. I then noticed that each one of us received a slap, and that the hand had been chalked.

After being in our quarters a few minutes, I was called by a Yankee sergeant, and told that I would have to be initiated into the mysteries of the prison. As I came down with him he said, "Don't make any resistance, or they will go through you and take that ring off, but if you do not resist they will have no excuse to rob you." I found, on reaching the ground, about twenty-five men around and holding a blanket, into which I was told to jump. This I did at once, and with a hip and hurrah, I was three time pitched up as high (I thought) as a church steeple. Some of our men

resisted and were set on and robbed of all their little store of money and other valuables.

An incident happened at this time which, while it gave me much pleasure, has always been an unknown puzzle. The second day after arriving at the fort, the sergeant of the guard came into our room and called "W. W. Baker." I answered, "Here," and was given a large willow basket, which contained all kinds of fruits, cakes, jellies and tobacco, both chewing and smoking. This, he remarked, has just been brought to the fort by a lady. The card had been torn off, and to this day I have never been able to learn the name of my benefactor, to whom I so much desired to make my grateful acknowledgments, for the basket contained a royal feast for us, which the whole party enjoyed. I learned that other baskets were sent to me, but General Lockwood would not permit them to be sent into the fort.

On the next day the sergeant came into our room and called out: "Here, you pirates; all of you are wanted down in the provost marshal's office."

On reaching the office we were lined up and our names called, and we were told that General Lockwood had directed him to place us in irons and in solitary confinement.* Captain Beall protested vigorously, and used some very plain language in denunciation of the provost marshal and his "cohorts," but the provost marshal did not resent what was said, and only replied that he was very sorry that this disagreeable duty had been imposed upon him, but that Captain Beall knew that as a subordinate officer he was compelled to carry out General Lockwood's orders.

Captain Beall and Lieutenant McGuire were shackled with irons on both ankles, as were all the rest, except Crouch,

*Genl. Lockwood acted under orders of Maj.-Genl. Schenck, commanding at Baltimore. See the first of this order, Appendix III., p. 59.

Thomas and myself, and, as we three had on heavy boots, no shackles could be found large enough to lock over our boots. Hence we were told to stand aside until all the rest were shackled. I was congratulating myself that we would be permitted to go without any irons, when the officer in charge said: "Sergeant, take these three men up to the blacksmith shop and have a ball and chain riveted upon each."

On reaching the yard the sergeant turned to me and said: "Take up that ball and chain and come on," pointing to a sixty-pound cannon ball to which a two-foot chain was attached. I shouldered it, and by the time I reached the blacksmith shop I was nearly broken down. When the sergeant was not looking I slipped it under the work bench, and seeing one that weighed only about twenty-five pounds with a six-foot chain to it, I pulled that out and sat on it.

Crouch was first ironed with a forty-pound ball, and then the blacksmith turned to me, and I said to him with my best smile. "Put this one on me." He replied, "Well, as you appear to be the smallest of the lot I will give you this." He then pulled out the big ball with short chain, and riveted it on Thomas, who, ever after, had to put a leather string in the links of chain and drag it along on the floor, while I could sling mine across my shoulder and walk without any trouble.

We were then taken back to the building from whence we came and put in a room on the ground floor, in which were stalls for horses. Two sentinels were placed at the one door leading out. In this room were confined about ten Yankee deserters, who were undergoing punishment in irons for desertion. The building was inclosed by a high board fence, with about an acre of land as a yard, into which, during the day, the Yankees who had been caught in Baltimore without leave of absence were daily brought and kept until forwarded

to their commands. Captain Beall, Lieutenant McGuire, Stedman and McFarland were confined in the attic above us. After being in irons a few days, we noticed that Edmondson was taken lessons from one of the Yankee deserters how to make a wooden key to unlock the shackles, and it was not long before all who were in shackles could take them off at night, and the next morning, before the sergeant came in to inspect, would have them on again. But we who had our chains riveted on had to keep ours on, as there was no way to get them off and on again.

CHAPTER VI.

EDMONDSON'S ESCAPE.

After about ten days Edmondson, who was a stranger to fear, determined to escape and go to Richmond and inform the Confederate government of our treatment.

He had noticed that several of the Yankees in the yard had been permitted by the sentinel at the door to come in and converse with their friends who were in irons undergoing punishment for desertion. When the time came we noticed that all those who were daily kept in the yard were allowed to go out again and were carried into another building to be kept for the night. Without making known his intention to any one but Crouch, just as the guard was taking the outside Yankees from the yard and into the other building for the night, Edmondson, dressed as a citizen, rushed up to the two guards at the door and said in a cool manner, "Well, let me out."

They replied, "Who are you?" and he answered, "I am a member of the Twenty-seventh New York, and you let me in a while ago to see one of my regiment who is confined in here in irons, and if you don't let me out in a hurry I will report you to the provost marshal for letting me in." Upon this they pushed him out in the yard, saying to him, "Don't you come in here again."

Edmondson was then carried to another building which was simply guarded on the outside. While the Yankees were having a high old time singing and dancing, he jumped out of the window to the ground unseen by the guards who were enjoying the fun the men were having on the inside. He then crawled down toward the Baltimore Bay, expecting to swim

over the bay into Canton, but just as he was near the water, he was discovered by a sentinel and hailed, "Who comes there?"

As the night was very dark he commenced to root and grunt like a hog, and backed again out of sight of the sentinel, who thought he was one of the many hogs that were then kept in the fort. Edmondson then crawled on hands and knees towards the wall of the fort, and noticed that the sentinels on top of the wall would walk towards each other and, after a word, would then turn back to back and march to the end of their respective beats. When he saw them leave each other, he made a jump, caught the top of the wall, sprang over and rapidly made his way into Baltimore.

Just as he reached the city—it was Sunday night—a large crowd of people were coming out of one of the churches, and he mingled with the crowd until he was enabled to get through the most densely populated part of the city. He then took the road to Frederick, his first stop, where he secured food, and, resting for a day, he crossed the Potomac, and got to Richmond without any particular trouble.

He reported to the Navy Department that Captain Beall and party were held in irons in Fort McHenry, to be treated as pirates. The next morning after Edmondson's escape, the sergeant came in about 9 o'clock to inspect and call the roll. In calling the roll, when he reached the name "G. Edmondson," I answered "Here," and the sergeant, looking over to where I stood, and not having seen Edmondson, he called "G. Edmondson," looking me full in the face. I did not answer the second time, and then there was a royal row.

We were all summoned to the provost marshal's office and questioned as to the escape, and all answered except Crouch and another member of our party whose name I have forgotten. Both of these would not answer, were bucked and

gagged and punished in the most cruel manner to make them tell of the manner of his escape, but as they could not or would not, they were again returned to our prison. When General Lockwood learned of Edmondson's escape he ordered us to be confined in the small cell built in the wall of the inside fort. This had only contained one door, and, I think, one window. Captain Beall, Lieutenant McGuire, Stedman and McFarland were also brought in with us. The room was so small that we were packed in like sardines in a box. It was then that we learned that Lieutenant McGuire had made an attempt to escape at the same time by bribing the sentinel who guarded his door. He gave the sentinel \$10 in green backs and a silver watch, but as he walked down the steps to what he thought a slight chance for liberty, he was met by a corporal and five men with fixed bayonets and marched back into his quarters and again ironed.

When we were all put in the cell together and our irons were examined, all of us realized that escape was then impossible, and soon began to feel satisfied and at home.

We were treated with the utmost courtesy by the officers of the fort, who often spoke regretfully of our being shot or hung. They manifested a degree of sorrow for us which we greatly appreciated, and supplied us with an abundance of the best food. We never had anything left over, for as soon as all had eaten we would put the balance in the stove and burn it, for fear that they would curtail our rations. While we were all in this cell, General Lockwood paid us a visit, accompanied by his brilliant staff, and gave Captain Beall a lecture, saying "that he would soon have a court convened and try you and your band of pirates."

Captain Beall replied in a most dignified manner that he was satisfied that the Confederate Government was fully equal to protecting our rights, and did not desire any favors

from the Yankee government. After we had been in irons for about forty days, Lieutenant Starr, who was a regular army officer in the fort, came in one morning and appeared very much pleased as he gave us a copy of the *Baltimore Sun*. This contained an article headed "Retaliation," copied from the *Richmond Whig*, reading as follows:

"Information having been received by the government that Acting Master John Y. Beall and Edward McGuire, of the Confederate Navy, with sixteen men, are now confined in irons in Fort McHenry, to be treated as pirates, Commissioner of Exchange Robert Ould has directed that Lieutenant Commander Porter and Ensign Williams, with sixteen marines, be confined in irons in Charleston, S. C., to be held as hostages for the good treatment of Captain Beall and his command."*

When this was read out I turned to Lieutenant Starr, who seemed well pleased and said: "Now Lieutenant, you all fellows can hang us, but those Yankees will surely swing in Charleston."

Whether accidentally or not, it transpired that Lieutenant-Commander Porter, who was held as hostage for Captain Beall, was a nephew of Colonel Porter, who was at the time in command of Fort McHenry. After the war I was informed by Dr. Hunter McGuire that when he learned that his brother and the rest of us were in irons he obtained permission from General Jackson to send a message to General Millroy, who was then in front of Jackson, that if we were hung Jackson would hang five for each one of us.

*See letter of Report Ould, Commissioner of Exchange, to Brig.-Genl. S. A. Meredith, Dec. 15, 1863, Appendix IV. p. 60.

CHAPTER VII.

FORT MONROE AND POINT LOOKOUT.

In a few days after we learned of our government's retaliation Lieutenant Starr came in and directed us all to be carried up to the blacksmith shop, where all the irons were cut off. We were then marched to Baltimore and placed aboard of a Norfolk steamer, and landed at Fortress Monroe, then under command of General B. F. Butler.* There we were confined for a few days in the cell on the right side of the main entrance. After some delay we were carried to Norfolk, and at the provost marshal's office, which was at a hotel on Main Street,—I think the Purcell House,—we were required to sign certificates stating that our irons had been taken off and that we were then treated as regular prisoners of war.

We were then confined for about two months in Fort Norfolk, about one mile east of the city. After we had been in this fort about six weeks a fellow by the name of Coffin, who stated to us that he and his family had been most cruelly treated by the Yankees in Norfolk for expressing his sympathy for the South, was thrown into prison with us that he might fully enjoy his Southern sympathies.

He was then placed in the same room with us, and discussed with us many methods of escape. One afternoon we were informed that the next morning we must be prepared to move as we were about to be taken to Point Lookout and confined there. That night Captain Beall arranged an elaborate plan for our escape on the trip up the bay, and assigned each

*See Appendix V. p. 61, for Federal orders, directing the removal of the irons from Beall and his men.

of us a certain duty to perform. I remember he directed me to always stand by Robert Annan, and at a signal to be given by his dropping a handkerchief, about the time we would be off Newpoint Lighthouse I was to seize the guard next to me by the arms from behind and Annan, who was to be in front, was to take his musket.

We were all in high glee when we got aboard of the steamer, fully expecting to be free before night, but when we stopped at Fort Monroe we were all surprised to find that a company of regulars was marched aboard, in addition to the small guard under which we had left Fort Norfolk. We were then placed in the main cabin of the steamer and formed in a circle with a heavy guard all around us with fixed bayonets. It was then that we learned that Coffin had been placed in the fort with us as a spy, and had simply informed General Butler of Captain Beall's intention to attempt an escape, against which provision was made by placing us under double guard.

We landed at Point Lookout about night, and were soon assigned to our new quarters. I had been placed in a large bell tent with about thirty strangers, and the others were placed wherever room could be found.

Stedman and McFarland, in consequence of their influence had been exchanged while we were at Fort Norfolk, and as soon as I reached Point Lookout, I received a letter from one of them stating that his sister in Frankfort Ky., had by his request sent me about \$30 in greenbacks and a new suit of clothing. This was sent in the care of Colonel Brady, who commanded the garrison at the Point. Colonel Brady gave me only about ten dollars to pay for articles to be bought at the sutler's, but never gave me over one dollar at the time, and the clothing I never saw.

After being at the Point about two months, I learned that about 500 sick prisoners were to be sent South to be exchanged, and being very anxious to see a young lady in whom I was deeply interested, I made up mind to try and get away with the sick. I went over to the hospital and had a conference with my friend, Dr. Emmet Stratton, who was a prisoner there at that time, but who had been assigned to duty as physician in the hospital.

I tried to get Dr. Stratton to pass me as one of the sick, but he said that he was afraid that he could not get the chief surgeon to pass me, I looked so healthy. Fortunately, however, while in irons, as I could not get my boot off during the two months in which the irons had been kept on, I had a very severe sore on my ankle. This had not made any progress towards a cure, but had become worse and turned into a kind of scurvy. I rubbed up this sore a good deal and spread the blood up on my leg so as to make it appear much worse, rolled up my pants and rushed to the surgeon who was examining the men as they were brought out, and said Doctor, "I don't know what is the matter with me, and if I stay here I will never get well; please let me go."

He turned around and in a gruff voice and asked, "What is the matter with you, sir?"

I replied, "Doctor, I don't know, but I'll never get well while here."

He said roughly, "Get over in that line," meaning the line of well men, which I by mistake failed to understand, and took my place tremblingly in the line of sick men. After I had gotten in the line I kept crawling up toward the front of the line, until I was nearly the head of the column, and was safely carried aboard the flag-of-truce steamer *New York*, and placed in charge of Major Mulford, Commissioner of Exchange.

We arrived at Fort Monroe the next morning, and I was surprised to find there hundreds of steamers lying all around the fort. We remained there one day and started for Varina, on the James River. About three o'clock the next day we reached City Point, where we stopped and anchored just opposite the Point. In a short time we were all surprised on looking down the river to see steamer after steamer rounding the point down the river, and soon a large transport with a regiment on deck came alongside, between us and the wharf at City Point, and stopped. I then heard a command given by a general, whom I afterwards learned was General B. F. Butler, to the regiment to "fire." The whole regiment fired upon our signal men, who were located in a building on the Point and were busy signalling to the signal line up the river. Boats were soon launched and detachments sent ashore and brought back a number of the Confederates who failed to make their escape.

The steamer then started forward and began to anchor on the Chesterfield side of the river near Bermuda Hundred, and by ten o'clock that night there appeared to be a city of steamers anchored near the point. Next morning a gunboat was started up the river ahead of the *New York*, and we following with flag of truce flying. As we passed the Hundred, we found that General Butler during the night had landed his whole army at that place. We continued up the river, and soon heard an explosion, which proved as we continued up the river to be the gunboat that had started in front of us. It had been blown into a thousand pieces by some of our torpedo men on shore.

We soon reached Varina, and were there met by Colonel Ould with the same number of Federal prisoners, and in short time we were placed in wagons and in a happy frame of mind reached good old Richmond.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE EVACUATION AND APPOMATTOX.

After receiving a furlough, I spent some days at my grandmother's in Chesterfield. Mr. Allegre, of the *Enquirer*, then sent for me, and placed me in charge of the printing and mailing of the *Enquirer* at night. He also had me placed on light duty with Major Carrington as clerk in the passport office, where I remained until the evacuation of Richmond by General Lee. The Sunday of the evacuation, I took charge of the passport office, with instructions from Colonel Carrington not to issue any passports to any one except by order of the Secretary of War, and remained in the office until about eight o'clock. After making out passes in my own name for every route out of Richmond by order of the Secretary of War, I went down and took charge of the work at the *Enquirer*. I asked Mr. Allegre, who was at that time post-master of Richmond, if he wanted me to have the paper printed, and he replied he didn't care a rap what I did, that I might print it, or not. Steam was up and I had the form brought down and placed on the press, and told Jim, the pressman, to "hold on" until I went out on the street, and I would come back and tell what to do.

When I reached Main Street, I found that several fires were burning and that the streets were filled with screaming men and women who were breaking into stores and carrying away in wagons and in their arms everything they could get hands on.

Continuing down Main Street, and turning into Pearl

Street, I found a very pandemonium. Stores of whiskies and brandies were being emptied in the streets, and men and women were drunk and apparently crazy. I went down to the Richmond and Danville depot, and found that the mob was breaking open boxes of blankets and provisions, and had set fire to the depot.

Just then I saw an engine with three or four box cars standing near the bridge. I ran back into the depot, gathered up an armful of bacon and climbed to the top of one of the box cars, which was filled with soldiers. The engine pulled out in a few minutes and we reached the 17-mile post about nine o'clock the next morning. I jumped down with my bacon and ran over to my grandmother's, about one-half mile distant and, after giving her my supply of bacon, walked over to a neighbor's to say good-bye to a young lady friend. I then walked up to Genito, and there overtook the 25th Va. Battalion. Joining them, I continued with them until the battle of Sailor's Creek, where after a severe battle nearly the whole brigade was captured, about ten of us getting away after we had been surrounded by General Sheridan's command. I again caught up with a part of General Lee's army at High Bridge, and then connected myself with a Texas regiment and continued with them until we reached Appomattox Courthouse. We had several slight skirmishes on our way, but no pitched battle after Sailor's Creek. I was paroled at Appomattox and returned via Howardsville to Chesterfield, in company of several of my friends who were so fortunate as to be able to return.

CHAPTER IX.

THE END OF CAPTAIN BEALL.

As soon as Capt. Beall was exchanged he set about organizing another party to attempt the capture of Johnson's Island, where at that time a large number of Confederate officers were confined. It appears that Secretary Seddon doubted his ability to enlist a sufficient number of men for that hazardous service, and hence Beall wrote the following letter to Colonel Holliday:

Box 1122, Richmond, Va., May 23, 1864.

Colonel Holliday:

Dear Sir:

I think you told me that if I could give the Secretary proof that I could raise fifteen men he would authorize me to form them into a company for the special service I had suggested.

The following named gentlemen have several times assured me that they would serve with me on such, and most of them have done so.

They are from the Eastern Shore and about Norfolk, and Missouri, Kentucky and Canada. Some are now in prison captured with me; others are in the Confederacy, and some on Eastern Shore:

Annan, Baker, Brown, Brock, Cobb, Crouse, Chinn, Doughty, Fitzgerald, Hudgins, Hamson, Morehead, Reed, Stedman, Thomas, Wheeler, McGrim, Kiedel (19). Several others have made similar promises whose names I can not recall, and communication now is so uncertain that I can not get their names. I entertain no doubt of my ability to get more men, provided we can get the privilege of re-

maining in this branch of service as long as such branch exists.

I hope you will (not) feel troubled by my sending you this, and requesting you to use it if you think it will (be) of any assistance to me.

Respectfully, J. Y. BEALL.

(Indorsement.)

Hon. J. A. Seddon,

May, 23, 1864.

Dear Sir:

I have known Mr. Beall, the writer of the within, from his earliest infancy, and have observed closely his bearing and conduct since the very beginning of the present war, and I beg leave to say to the Secretary, in the first place, that he may rely with the most implicit confidence, not only on assurance given within of his ability to raise the company of men referred to, but upon any and every other statement that Mr. B. makes on the subject or on any other subject.

I consider Mr. B. one of the most gallant and patriotic young gentlemen that Virginia has produced during the war, and that he is not less noted for intelligence and his loyalty to truth and honor.

I have the best reasons for speaking thus emphatically of Mr. B. and I do not hesitate to pledge my own reputation for the correctness of what I here avouch.

Respectfully, ANDREW HUNTER.*

*For full details of the trial and conviction of John Yates Beall, see J. H. McNeilly, *John Yates Beall*, (Confederate Veteran, 1899); see also *Trial of John Y. Beall, as a Spy and Guerrillero, by Military Commission*, (N. Y., 1865); *Memoir of John Yates Beall: his Life; Trial; Correspondence; Diary and Private Manuscript found among his Papers, including his own Private Account of his Raid on Lake Erie* (Montreal, 1865); see note of Beall's papers, in Freeman, *Calendar of Confederate Papers*, p. 186 (Richmond, 1908). For extracts from the *Official Records* see Appendix VI., pp. 63-69.

Fortified by this recommendation, Beall secured the necessary consent of Secretary Seddon, and made his plans accordingly. I felt highly honored that he deemed me worthy to accompany him and I arranged to go with him. Captain Beall learned, however, of an easy way to get through the lines of the enemy to Canada, and left several of us in Richmond because we could not be assembled in time to leave with him. He was joined in Canada by one of his old men, Bennett Burley, a Scotchman, with about the same number of men he had on the bay. Captain Beall and Burley captured the steamers *Philo Parsons* and *Island Queen*, plying between Detroit and Sandusky, intending to liberate the Confederate prisoners on Johnson Island. Failing in this, Captain Beall was captured and taken to New York, then under General Dix, was tried by court-martial, convicted as a spy, and hung on Governor's Island, New York.*

George C. Stedman, of our party, after being exchanged, was assigned to General Montgomery's staff, and refusing to surrender was, I was informed, literally hacked to pieces by the sabres of his enemies. Willie Beall also did not go with Captain Beall to Canada, having been left for the same reason as myself.

While Captain Beall was in prison and just before he was executed, he wrote a letter to Willie Beall, which the latter showed me.

A copy of this I append here:

"Fort Lafayette, Feb. 14, 1865.

"Dear Will:

"Ere this reaches you, you will most probably have heard

*For bibliography of this trial, see references under note to Andrew Hunter, preceding page.

of my death through the newspapers, that I was tried by a military commission, and hung by the enemy, and hung, I assert, unjustly. It is both useless and wrong to repine over the past. Hanging, it was asserted, was ignominious, but crime only can make dishonor. "Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord, and I will repay," therefore do not show unkindness to the prisoners—they are helpless. Remember me kindly to my friends. Say to them I am not aware of committing any crime against society. I die for my country. No thirst for blood or lucre animated me in my course. For I had refused when solicited to engage in enterprises which I deemed destructive but illegitimate, and but a few months ago I had but to have spoken, and I would have been red with the blood, and rich with the plunder of the foe. But my hands are clear of blood, unless it be spilt in conflict and not a cent enriches my pocket. Should you be spared through this strife stay with mother, and be a comfort to her old age. Endure the hardships of the campaign as a man. In my trunk and box you can get plenty of clothes. Give my love to mother, the girls, too. May God bless you all now and evermore, is my prayer and wish for you.

JOHN Y. BEALL."

When the war ended, I returned to my old home in Chesterfield county, and have ever since remained within one mile of the place where I was born, and have tried in an humble way to serve my neighbor and my Creator as unselfishly and as earnestly as my capacity would permit.

I have never since the war met any of my old comrades, but I sincerely trust that an all-wise Providence has watched over them and blessed them to the fullest extent of their capacity to enjoy.



W. W. BAKER IN 1864

From an ambrotype taken on his return from prison.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I.

[REPORT OF BEALL'S CAPTURE OF THE *Alliance*, ETC.]

U. S. Flagship Roanoke,
September 28, 1863.

General:

On receipt of your communication of September 24, inclosing a telegraphic dispatch from Captain Duvall, at Eastville, Va., reporting the presence of a rebel steamer at Sand Shoal Inlet on the 23rd inst., I required Lieutenant-Commander Gillis, commanding U. S. S. *Commodore Jones* at Yorktown, the senior naval officer in that vicinity, to take proper measures in the premises.

Under date of the 27th, he communicates to me the facts in relation to the movements of the enemy on which was founded the report of Captain Duvall. These facts are in substance as follows:

On the night of the 18th, a party of 25 men, under command of one Captain Beall, crossed the bay from Matthews county, in two small boats, and on the 19th, captured the schooner *Alliance*, David Ireland, master, loaded with sutlers' goods.

On the 21st, they seized the schooners *J. J. Houseman*, *Samuel Pearsall* and *Alexander*, took possession of their crews, and set sail on the vessels, lashing their helms.

One of these, the *Samuel Pearsall*, has been picked up and brought into Hampton Roads, and is now under charge of keepers from the U. S. S. *Mystic*. The *Alliance*, with the rebel party on board was discovered, on the 24th, by a blockader, on the bar at Milford Haven, and fired on,

when the *Alliance* was set on fire and abandoned by her captors.

Lieutenant-Commander Gillis expresses the belief that this party will be on their way toward Richmond within the next three days and that with a proper co-operating military force it can be broken up.

I would suggest that the military commandant at Yorktown be immediately authorized by telegraph to co-operate with the naval force in effecting this object, if, on his communicating with Lieutenant Commander Gillis, such an expedition shall seem likely to effect any desirable results. I have the honor to be, general, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

GUERT GANSEVOORT,
Captain and Senior Officer Present.

Maj. Gen. J. G. Foster.

APPENDIX II.

[PRELIMINARY REPORT OF MAJOR-GENERAL R. C. SCHENCK,
COVERING REPORTS OF BRIGADIER-GENERAL H. H.
LOCKWOOD.]

Baltimore, Md., Nov. 15, 1863, 9:15 P. M.

Col. J. C. Kelton, Assistant Adjutant-General,

The following telegrams just received.

Drummondtown, Va., November 15, 1863.

A small party of raiders landed on the Chesapeake shore yesterday, but before they could get into the interior they were met by an equal number of my coast guard, by whom they were all captured, after the firing of one or two volleys. They are a part of a larger party, under Captain Beall of the rebel navy, who are doubtless hovering about the coast somewhere; but my pickets and coast guard are on the alert and will come up with them, should they attempt a landing.

HENRY H. LOCKWOOD,
Brigadier-General.

Since the above was written, one of my coasting vessel fell in with the notorious Captain Beall himself, in command of another party and succeeded in capturing him with his whole party, numbering 3 commissioned officers and 6 men. I think this will put an end to these depredations.

HENRY H. LOCKWOOD,
Brigadier-General.

ROBERT C. SCHENCK,
Major-General.

[DETACHED REPORT OF BRIGADIER-GENERAL LOCKWOOD,
U. S. ARMY, OF THE CAPTURE OF ACTING MASTER
BEALL, C. S. NAVY AND PARTY.]

Headquarters, First Separate Brigade, Eighth Army Corps.
Drummondtown, Va., November 16, 1863.

Colonel:

I have the honor to forward the enclosed reports of the capture of John Y. Beall, master in the rebel navy, and his crew of 14 men, by Lieutenant John W. Conner and Sergeant Robert R. Christopher, of Company B, First Eastern Shore Maryland Volunteers, each of these officers commanding separate detachments, on the 14th and 15th of November.

This is a highly important capture. The officer in charge of the party is the same who commanded the attack against the gunboats on the Rappahannock River, which resulted in their capture, and admits that he was in charge of the party by whom the lighthouses on this shore were destroyed, and the Government transports captured on the Atlantic Coast. He further admits that the object of this raid was the capture of a steamer. The conduct of the officers before referred to is highly commendable. The party of rebels were captured in two detachments, one by Lieutenant Conner, the other by Sergeant Christopher; and each detachment, although much better armed than ours, was captured by an equal number of our men, which never could have been effected but by the bravery and determination of these officers.

I would therefore recommend that the Major-General commanding recognize the intrepidity and valuable service

manifested and rendered by these officers on this occasion by letter.

I would further call the attention of the Major-General commanding to the status of these prisoners. They are unable to show anything which, in my judgment, would entitle them to be considered or treated as prisoners of war. They are without orders and many of them without uniform. It appears by the shipping articles (of which I have obtained possession and which are herewith forwarded) that they are but partizans receiving no pay from the so-called Confederate States, and trusting entirely for remuneration for their services to the possession of such property, public or private, as they may chance to capture.

If, after deliberation, the Major-General commanding shall agree with me that these parties are not entitled to be considered and treated as prisoners of war, I would respectfully suggest that they be tried either by military commission or that they be sent back here for trial by the civil authorities of Accomac and Northampton counties, where the depredations have been committed, as is provided for in the Virginia Code, 1860. I am rather inclined to think the latter course would be the preferable one, inasmuch as some of the citizens seem to be considerably incensed against these raiders, and I think twelve men at least in the county of Accomac can be procured who will be disposed to deal with these fellows as their outrages deserve.

Further than this, a trial and conviction of these offenders by the civil authorities would have a great effect upon the political status of these counties, inasmuch as it would inflame the rebel authorities against them, and by that means a counter in action would be produced. As this is understood to be but one of three or four bands of

outlaws of the same character, it is highly important that a precedent in regard to them should be determined upon.

HENRY H. LOCKWOOD,
Brigadier-General Commanding.

LIEUTENANT-COLONEL W. H. CHESEBROUGH.,
Assistant Adjutant-General.

APPENDIX III.

[ORDER OF MAJOR-GENERAL SCHENCK, U. S. A., TO BRIGADIER GENERAL LOCKWOOD, U. S. A., REGARDING DISPOSITION OF ACTING MASTER BEALL, C. S. NAVY AND PARTY.]

Headquarters, Middle Department, Eighth Army Corps.
Baltimore, November 21, 1863.

General:

Your report with enclosed papers relating to the capture of John Y. Beall and his crew of 14 men, has been received.

The general commanding appreciates highly the bravery and sagacity of Lieutenant John W. Conner and Sergeant Robert C. Christopher, of the First Regiment, Eastern Shore Maryland Volunteers, who commanded the detachments that captured these prisoners, and of the men under their respective commands, and he directs that you commend these officers and men in general orders for their good conduct on that occasion.

As to the prisoners themselves they will be held for the present not as prisoners of war, but as pirates or marauding robbers, until the further pleasure of the Secretary of War, to whom the matter will be submitted, shall be known. Not being protected by commissions or any orders produced from the pretended rebel Government, they will probably be tried as pirates or robbers either in the United States court or the local court, unless ordered to trial by military commission.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

W. H. CHESEBROUGH,

Lieutenant Colonel and Assistant Adjutant-General.

BRIGADIER-GENERAL H. H. LOCKWOOD,
Commanding First Separate Brigade, Drummondtown, Va.

APPENDIX IV.

[ORDER FOR RETALIATORY MEASURES AGAINST FEDERAL PRISONERS. FOLLOWING INDIGNITIES TO BEALL AT FORT MCHENRY.]

Confederate States of America, War Department,
Richmond, Va., December 15, 1863.

Brigadier-General S. A. Meredith, Agent of Exchange,

Sir:

The Confederate Government has received authentic information that acting master John Y. Beall and Edward McGuire of the Confederate Navy, and fifteen regularly enlisted seamen of the same service are now closely confined in irons at Fort McHenry, awaiting trial as pirates. They were recently captured in Virginia. They were engaged in open warfare and are entitled in every respect to the treatment of prisoners of war.

With whatever regret retaliatory measures may be adopted, the course of your authorities leaves no other alternative. In the hope, therefore, of inducing your Government to accord to these parties the treatment due to prisoners of war, I inform you that Lieut. Commander Edward P. Williams and Ensign Benjamin H. Porter and fifteen seamen all of the U. S. Navy and prisoners in our hands, have been placed in close confinement in irons and held as hostages for their proper treatment.

Respectfully, your obedient servant,

Ro. OULD,
Agent of Exchange.

APPENDIX V.

[ORDER FOR REMOVAL OF IRONS FROM BEALL AND HIS MEN.]

War Department, Adjutant-General's Office,
Washington, January 11, 1864.

Major-General B. F. Butler, U. S. Volunteers,
Comdg. Dept. of Virginia and N. C., Fort Monroe, Va.,

Sir:

By direction of the Secretary of War, Brigadier-General Lockwood, commanding Middle Department, has this day been instructed to send to you in irons, Beall and his party, some fourteen in number, now held in confinement at Fort McHenry.

The Secretary directs that on receipt of Beall and his party you cause their irons to be removed preparatory to an investigation of their cases, which you will order, and that as soon as the irons are removed you immediately send notice of the fact to the rebel agent of exchange. Acknowledge receipt.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

E. D. TOWNSEND,
Assistant Adjutant-General.

Fort Monroe, Va., February 22, 1864.

General Ed. R. S. Canby:

Two officers are kept by the rebels prisoners in irons and in close confinement in alleged retaliation to two captains kept in prison by order of General Burnside, having been

tried by court-martial. I have addressed Mr. Ould on the subject by last flag of truce and expect an answer soon.

BENJ. F. BUTLER,
Major-General.

(Indorsement.)

February 22, 1864.

The two officers in irons in Richmond are army officers. They were placed in irons, as General Butler states, in retaliation for two officers supposed to be similarly held under General Burnside's orders.

The rebels are in error in supposing that two of their officers are in irons as they allege.

General Terry has been communicated with on the subject, and by telegraph states that fact as above.

The naval officers placed in irons on account of Beall's marauding party have been released from close confinement, I understand, but General Butler must know, and it would be well to inquire of him.

E. A. HITCHCOCK,
Major-General of Volunteers.

APPENDIX VI.

[DOCUMENTS RELATING TO THE TRIAL AND EXECUTION OF
JOHN YATES BEALL.]

[BEALL'S REQUEST FOR COUNSEL REFUSED.]

New York, January 17, 1865.

Hon. E. M. Stanton:

The court ordered for the trial of Captain Beall of the rebel service as a spy met at Fort Lafayette this morning. Will commence their proceedings on Friday, two days having been given to him for preparation. He asks that Roger A. Pryor, a fellow prisoner, may be allowed to act as his counsel. I think it would be best on every account that his request should be granted; but as Pryor is a prisoner of war your permission seems to me necessary to warrant his appearance before the court in that capacity. If the permission is not given he will probably ask the court to allow him to employ leading counsel from this city.

JOHN A. DIX,
Major General.

War Department, Washington City, January 19, 1865.

Major-General Dix, New York:

Under no circumstances can prisoners of war be allowed to act as counsel for a person accused of being a spy.

C. A. DANA,
Assistant Secretary of War.

[ACTION OF THE CONFEDERATE GOVERNMENT: LETTER OF
PRESIDENT JEFFERSON DAVIS, WITH ENCLOSURES.]

Richmond, Va., March 14, 1865.

The House of Representatives:

In response to your resolution of the 2d instant I herewith transmit for your information communications from the Secretary of the Navy and the Commissioner for the Exchange of Prisoners relative to the trial and execution of John Y. Beall, Acting master in the C. S. Navy, by the authorities of the United States.

JEFFERSON DAVIS.

(Enclosure No. 1)

Confederate States of America Navy Department,
Richmond, Va., March 4, 1865.

The President,
Sir:

I have the honor to state in response to the following resolution of the House of Representatives, referred by you to this Department.

“Resolved, That the President be respectfully requested to communicate to this House any information he may have with regard to the execution of John Y. Beall, of Jefferson County, Va., by the authorities of the Federal Government; and whether any and what action has been taken by this Government upon the subject.”

That the only information I have with regard to the execution of John Y. Beall is derived from the Federal newspapers, whose accounts of the event were occupied by the Richmond papers of the 27th ultimo.

Triplicate copies of Mr. Beall's appointment as an acting master in the Navy were furnished to the Department of State, upon request of the Secretary of State, so soon as his arrest was known here, and another copy was sent by me to the Hon. Jacob Thompson in Canada.

The printed slip herewith, from the Federal newspapers, purporting to give the details of the arrest, trial and conviction of Mr. Beall, is inclosed for further information.

I am, respectfully your obedient servant,

S. R. MALLORY,
Secretary of the Navy.

(Sub-enclosure)

Extract from a Federal newspaper:

"The following extract from the order of General Dix approving the findings and sentences of the court gives a succinct account of his attempt on the Northern frontier:

"The testimony shows that the accused, while holding a commission from the authorities at Richmond as acting master in the Navy of the insurgent states, embarked at Sandwich, Canada, on board the *Philo Parsons*, an unarmed steamer, while on one of her regular trips, carrying passengers and freight from Detroit, in the State of Michigan, to Sandusky, in the State of Ohio. The captain had been induced by Burley, one of the Confederates of the accused, to land at Sandwich, which was not one of the regular stopping places of the steamer, for the purpose of receiving them. Here the accused and two others took passage. At Malden, another Canadian port and one of the regular stopping places about twenty five more came on board. The accused was in citizens' dress showing no insignia of his rank or profession, embarking as an ordinary passenger

and representing himself to be on a pleasure trip to Kelley's Island, in Lake Erie, within the jurisdiction of the State of Ohio. After eight hours he and his associates, arming themselves with revolvers and handaxes brought surreptitiously on board, rose on the crew, took possession of the steamer, threw overboard part of the freight, and robbed the clerk of the money in his charge, putting all on board under duress. Later in the evening he and his party took possession of another unarmed steamer, the *Island Queen*, scuttled her and set her adrift on the Lake. These transactions occurred within the jurisdiction of the State of Ohio on the 19th day of September, 1864. On the 16th day of December, 1864, the accused was arrested near the Suspension Bridge over the Niagara River, within the State of New York. The testimony shows that he and two officers of the insurgent States, Colonel Martin and Lieutenant Headley, with two other Confederates, had made an unsuccessful attempt under the direction of the first named officer, to throw the passenger train coming from the west to Buffalo off the railroad track, for the purpose of robbing the express company. It is further shown that this was the third attempt in which the accused was concerned to accomplish the same object; that between two of these attempts the party including the accused, went to Canada and returned, and that they were on their way back to Canada on Lake Erie; the accused, though holding a commission from the insurgent authorities at Richmond in disguise, procuring information with the intention of using it, as he subsequently did, to inflict injury upon unarmed citizens of the United States and their private property.'

ARREST.

“Beall was arrested through information received on the Canadian border by John S. Young, chief of the Metropolitan Detective Police. Mr. Young also received at the same time information concerning one of the principal witnesses against the pirate, and the party being brought to New York, fully identified Beall by picking him out of a crowd in one of the rooms at police headquarters. The recognition by this witness was complete, he having instantly stepped up to Beall and called him by name, much to the discomfiture of the rebel captain. After this identification the prisoner was confined in one of the cells at police headquarters, but having attempted to corrupt one of the turnkeys by offering him \$3,000 in gold for a chance to escape, it was considered better to send him to Fort Lafayette.

TRIAL.

“The military commission which tried him was convened on board the steamer *Henry Burden* while she was conveying the pirate to the fort, but as he desired a week's delay to procure counsel and prepare for his trial it was granted him.

“He received the professional services of James T. Brady, Esq., and his trial was commenced on the 10th of February upon the following charges and specifications.*

“After a careful hearing the prisoner was found guilty of all the specifications, except of the third in the second charge and guilty of both charges. The court sentenced him to be hung, and General Dix approved the sentence,

* Omitted.

directing that it be carried into execution at Governor's Island on Saturday, the 18th of February."

(Enclosure No. 2.)

Richmond, March 11, 1865.

His Excellency, the President,

Sir:

In the matter of the accompanying resolution of the House of Representatives I have the honor to submit the following report:

The case of Acting Master John Y. Beall was never brought to the attention of this office by any communication, verbal or written, prior to his execution. The proceedings of the military commission which tried him were not published in the Northern papers until the 15th of February. The day for his execution has been fixed for the 18th of the same month, as if for the purpose of making any efforts in his behalf by his Government impossible. He was reprieved from the 18th to the 24th, though it seems to have been quietly, if not secretly, done. For some days after the 24th it was not known here whether or not he had been executed. On the 27th of February, I received a letter from him, of which the following is a copy, which was forwarded by order of General Dix after the unfortunate man had been put to death:

"Fort Columbus, February 21, 1865.

"Col. R. Ould, Commissioner of Exchange, Richmond, Va.

"Sir:

"The proceedings of a military commission in my case published in the New York papers of the 15th instant made you and my Government aware of my sentence and doom. A reprieve, on account of some informality, from the 18th

to 24th was granted. The authorities are possessed of the facts in my case. They know that I acted under orders. I appeal to my Government to use its utmost efforts to protect me, and if unable to prevent my murder to vindicate my reputation. I can only declare that I was no 'spy' or 'guerrilla,' and am a true Confederate.

Respectfully,

JOHN Y. BEALL,
Acting Master, C. S. Navy."

The cruelty of the enemy was so swift that no sufficient time intervened between a knowledge of the facts and the execution to enable any proceedings to be taken.

Respectfully, your obedient servant,

R. OULD.
Agent of Exchange.

[GENERAL U. S. GRANT'S REPORT OF INTENDED RETALIATION.]

City Point, Va., March 4, 1865.

Hon. E. M. Stanton,
Secretary of War:

Richmond papers of today do not contain a single item of information.

The Dispatch says:

We have no official intelligence from the seat of war in the South, and for two days not even a rumor. The Legislature of Virginia passed a joint resolution recommending the adoption of such steps as may be necessary in retaliation for the execution of Captain Beall.

U. S. GRANT,
Lieutenant-General.

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