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Presented to
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C. B. Grant
Commander

Nov. 3. 1898

War Papers

READ BEFORE THE

COMMANDERY OF THE STATE OF MICHIGAN

MILITARY ORDER

OF THE

LOYAL LEGION

OF THE

UNITED STATES.



VOLUME I.

From October 6, 1886, to April 6, 1893.



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1893.



CONTENTS.

1.	The Cavalry on the Gettysburg Campaign,	COMPANION L. S. TROWBRIDGE.
2.	My Experience as a Prisoner of War,	" FREDRIC W. SWIFT.
3.	Chickamauga,	" H. M. DUFFIELD.
4.	Michigan in the Opening of the War,	" W. H. WITHINGTON.
5.	Chancellorsville Campaign,	" S. E. PITTMAN.
6.	The Stoneman Raid of 1865,	" L. S. TROWBRIDGE.
7.	Recollections of the Bull Run Campaign,	" H. F. LYSTER.
8.	Personal Recollections of the Occupation of East Tennessee,	" O. M. POE.
9.	The Capture of Jeff. Davis,	" J. G. DICKINSON.
10.	My Experience as a Prisoner of War, and Escape,	" WM. B. McCREERY.
11.	The Michigan Cavalry Brigade in the Wilderness,	" J. H. KIDD.
12.	My Escape from Belle Isle,	" H. R. ABBOTT.
13.	Reminiscences of an Artillery Officer,	" A. F. R. ARNDT.
14.	Recollections of Stone's River,	" J. G. PARKHURST.
15.	A July Morning with the Rebel Ram "Arkansas,"	" S. B. COLEMAN.
16.	The Battle of Kernstown, March 23, 1862,	" G. K. JOHNSON.
17.	The Battle of Allatoona, October 5, 1864,	" WM. LUDLOW.
18.	Personal Experiences of Early Days of 1861,	" J. T. STERLING.
19.	The Origin of the Society of the Cincinnati,	" F. T. SIBLEY.
20.	Personal Recollections of Four Years in Dixie,	" J. T. PATTON.
21.	The Battle of Groveton, or Second Bull Run,	" GEO. C. HOPPER.
22.	"Jeb" Stuart's Hat,	" FORD H. ROGERS.
23.	On to Gettysburg,	" ZIBA B. GRAHAM.
24.	From the Rapidan to Atlanta,	" E. B. FENTON.
25.	Presentation of Portrait to Companion Poe,	" COUNCIL.

INTRODUCTORY ADDRESSES OF COMMANDERS AT ANNUAL BANQUETS OF THE COMMANDERY.

26.	April 13, 1885, (No Manuscript),	COMPANION L. S. TROWBRIDGE.
27.	May 5, 1886,	" ORLANDO M. POE.
28.	June 1, 1887,	" ORLANDO M. POE.
29.	May 2, 1888, (No Manuscript),	" RUSSELL A. ALGER.
30.	May 1, 1889,	" BYRON R. PIERCE.
31.	May 1, 1890,	" FREDRIC W. SWIFT.
32.	May 7, 1891,	" ISREAL C. SMITH.
33.	May 5, 1892,	" SAMUEL E. PITTMAN.
34.	May 4, 1893,	" WM. H. WITHINGTON.

EXPLANATORY.

The "War Papers" prepared and read before the Commanderies of the Loyal Legion are valuable contributions to the history of the War of the Rebellion.

Many of them may fall far short of the fine descriptive power of the historian, but they possess a far more important element, the *truthful* personal experiences of men who passed through the scenes of which they write.

It is the custom of some of the Commanderies to preserve the manuscript of their War Papers until a sufficient number have accumulated to form a volume, when they are published and sold by subscription.

The custom of the Michigan Commandery is to publish each paper, as soon as read, at the expense of the Commandery, and to supply each of our members with a copy. This gives to members who are unable to attend a meeting the benefit of the papers without waiting for several years for enough to complete a volume.

For the benefit of members who have preserved their numbers for binding the title page and contents of Volume I. have been prepared.

DETROIT, May 4, 1893.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "J. T. Patters". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "J".

Chairman of Council.

THE OPERATIONS
OF THE
CAVALRY
IN THE
Gettysburg Campaign.

A PAPER

PREPARED AND READ BEFORE MICHIGAN COMMANDERY

OF THE

MILITARY ORDER

OF THE

LOYAL LEGION OF THE UNITED STATES,

OCTOBER 6th, 1886.

BY COMPANION

GEN'L LUTHER S. TROWBRIDGE.

DETROIT, MICH. :
OSTLER PRINTING COMPANY,
1888.


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# Operations of the Cavalry

IN THE

## GETTYSBURG CAMPAIGN.

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To all those interested in the history of the late war, the story of the battle of Gettysburg has become very familiar. It has been written and re-written by many officers of the contending armies, and through the various accounts of it, it can be viewed from many different stand points, while one quite unfamiliar with its history, can, without difficulty on the field, trace the line of battle and mark the places of the hardest fighting by the many monuments which different northern states have erected to commemorate the noble heroism of their gallant sons.

Very little, however, has been written of the operations of the cavalry in that campaign, though those operations were of great importance, and doubtless had much to do with the result of that desperate battle. The gallant conduct of Buford's Division on the first of July, was so closely connected with the infantry fight, that it has received sufficient notice at the hands of the historian. Manoeuvred with great skill, and fighting with the most conspicuous courage, it succeeded in holding in check a large division of the

enemy's infantry, and furnishing, what was so much needed, time for the arrival and concentration of Meade's army in the strong position which it so successfully maintained. Surely no words of mine could add to the fame of Buford and his brave division.

A brief review of the operations of the other divisions of cavalry immediately preceding the battle, and culminating in the brilliant engagement on the right flank of our army on the 3d of July, may not be uninteresting or unprofitable.

The cavalry has been said to be the eyes of the army; and it was, perhaps, owing to a disregard of that truth that General Lee found himself face to face with the entire Army of the Potomac, when he supposed that he had only a portion of it to contend with. It has been said, with how much truth I know not, that General Lee would not have ordered the assault on the third day of the battle, had he known that General Meade had succeeded in bringing up his whole army.

When the invasion of the North was decided upon, General Lee had two things to be accomplished by his cavalry; first, to conceal, as by an impenetrable veil, the movements of his army; and secondly, to give him full, accurate and timely information of the movements of his antagonist. His cavalry was under the command of General Stuart, a bold, aggressive, and in many respects a brilliant officer, but more successful in planning and executing a dashing cavalry raid, than in the less exciting but more important work of closely watching his enemy. A suggestion, at least, of General Lee's plan was obtained by the bold and unexpected attack made by Pleasanton at Brandy Station, on the 9th of June. Information, gained by that attack, revealed to General Hooker the probability of a cheme for invading the North. That information was strongly confirmed by the brilliant engagements of the 17th, 19th and 21st of June, at Aldie and Upper-ville, in which the gallant divisions of Buford and Gregg

demonstrated that the Confederate cavalry could no longer justly claim any superiority over the Union cavalry. On the contrary, the brave boys in blue after many sharp contests had the proud satisfaction of seeing the Confederates driven from one position after another, until their whole force had been forced back more than six miles, and all the information which Pleasanton sought had been gained.

Lee's immediate objective point was Harrisburg, where he expected to accomplish so much in breaking up communication with Washington, by the destruction of the Pennsylvania and Northern Central Railroads, as to give him his choice between Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Washington as his next objective point. To us, at the present day, the whole scheme seems wild and unreasonable, only to be made successful by leaving out of the calculation the Army of the Potomac. But that army was not to be left out of the calculation, and at some time, at some point in his march General Lee was sure to meet it.

However such was his plan, and with that end in view General Early was ordered to York, Pa., and General Stuart was directed to place so much of his cavalry, as he should think best, as speedily as possible, in conjunction with that force which would constitute the right wing of the invading army.

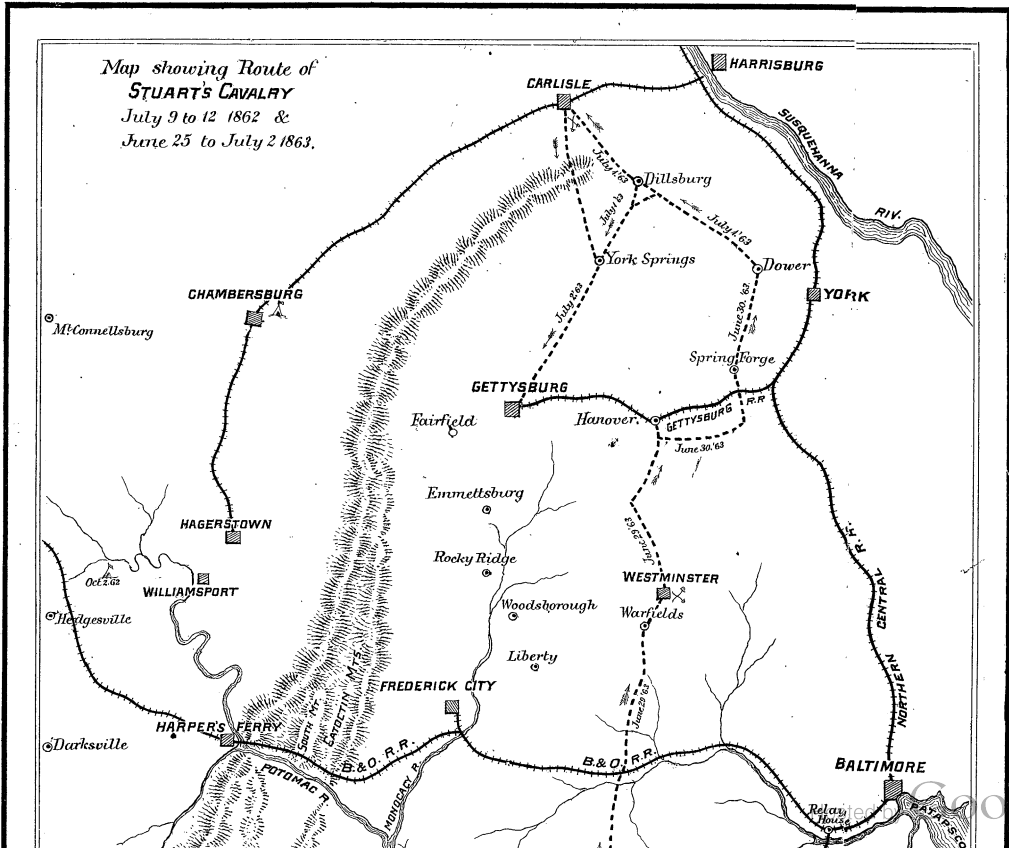
To accomplish this, two plans were open to him; one, to pass along the flank of the army and cross the Potomac at Shepherdstown and Williamsport. That would seem to most military critics to have been the proper route, as he could then have kept constant watch on the movements of his enemy and maintained uninterrupted communication with his chief. But General Stuart conceived a more brilliant, if successful, and certainly much more hazardous plan, which was to pass around the rear of the Army of the Potomac. If this route afforded greater expedition in connecting with

Early, and the tempting chance of capturing a train or some detached portions of the army, it also exposed him to the danger of being cut off from communication with his chief, and furnishing him with the information which it was of the highest importance for him to have—a result which actually did occur through the quick movements and splendid fighting of the Union cavalry. Leaving Jones's and Robertson's brigades with the main army, he took with him the three brigades of Hampton and the two Lees for this perilous undertaking.

Doubtless he thought the brigades of Jones and Robertson with that of Jenkins, numbering altogether nearly 4,000 men, would be amply sufficient to keep Lee advised of all the movements of the Army of the Potomac. Perhaps they should have been, and it may be that it was not so much the absence of the three brigades of Hampton and the two Lees, as that of Stuart himself, that so disturbed General Lee. Certain it is that the absence of that officer was very sorely felt and greatly criticised. It has even been said that there was talk of a court martial for his disobedience of orders, but that General Lee refused to order the court because, as he said, Stuart was allowed a discretion under his orders, and could not be tried for exercising that discretion.

A glance at the map will show the extent of Stuart's march around the Army of the Potomac. The fighting of the 17th, 19th and 21st of June had been in the Luray Valley from Aldie to Upperville, between thirty and forty miles in a northwesterly direction from Fairfax Court House. After those fights he concentrated his three brigades for the contemplated movement at Salem, a small village west of Thoroughfare Gap, on the night of the 24th of June. About one o'clock on the morning of the 25th he started on his expedition, moving in a southeasterly direction. When he reached the Warrenton Pike, thinking he had passed the rear of the

Map showing Route of  
**STUART'S CAVALRY**  
 July 9 to 12 1862 &  
 June 25 to July 2 1863.



Army of the Potomac, he turned up that road towards Centerville, but on approaching Haymarket he found the road which he expected to take occupied by Hancock's corps. He was thus obliged to retrace his steps, abandon his contemplated movement and cross the Potomac at Shepherdstown or make a still wider detour to get around the Army of the Potomac. He chose the latter. Withdrawing from Hancock, he again took his southeasterly course. Passing through Bristoe Station and Brentsville, he crossed the upper waters of the Occoquan, then turning to the northeast, he again crossed the Occoquan at Wolf Run Shoals, passed through Fairfax Court House to Hunter's Mill within a few miles of the Chain Bridge at Georgetown, then turning to the northwest he passed through Drainesville, and on the 28th of June crossed the Potomac at Rowser's Ford. The next day he captured a train of 125 wagons at Rockville,—a capture which proved a very expensive one for him through his obstinacy in determining to hold on to them at all hazards. The delay occasioned by them was instrumental, at least, in enabling Kilpatrick to interpose his division of cavalry between Stuart and Lee's main army; and by bold, aggressive, and splendid fighting, Kilpatrick forced him into a long, circuitous march, reaching as far as Carlisle, before he could get into communication again with his chief.

With Stuart cut off from the main body of the Confederate army, and fairly occupied with his favorite employment,—a cavalry raid,—let us turn our attention to the Union Cavalry.

Stahl's division of cavalry had been engaged in outpost duty at Fairfax Court House during the spring and early summer of 1863. On the 17th of June, while the guns of Gregg, proclaiming a spirited fight at Aldie, were distinctly heard at Fairfax Court House, Stahl's division suddenly broke camp. As the booming of the guns at Aldie came rolling

down the Little River Pike, it was thought by the rank and file they were going to join their comrades at Aldie. Instead of that however, that division made an extended reconnoissance to Warrenton and Sulphur Springs, detachments being sent on various roads, covering a wide extent of territory. It was doubtless deemed important by the commander of the Army of the Potomac to know whether Lee's army had gone down the Shenandoah Valley, or whether there was still danger of its advancing through Manassas and Thoroughfare Gaps and along the Warrenton Pike upon the old battle field of Bull Run. If that information was the object of the expedition, it was fully gained; for scarcely an armed rebel was seen during the whole march. Thus the last possible doubt of the plans of General Lee was dispelled, and it became plainly evident that his movement meant an invasion of the North.

After returning from that expedition, the Michigan Brigade, then composed of the 5th, 6th and 7th regiments of cavalry, was sent to Frederick, Md., and from there to Gettysburg. On the 28th of June it was in Gettysburg, and there learned of the passage of Early's troops through that place toward York. Returning to Emmitsburg, it learned of the changes in the army. Hooker had been relieved, and Meade placed in command. Stahl's division had been added to the cavalry corps; Stahl had been relieved, and Kilpatrick assigned to its command. Copeland had been relieved of the command of the Michigan Brigade, to which the 1st Michigan had been added, and Custer, just promoted to be Brigadier General, had been assigned to its command. Farnsworth, who also had just been made a Brigadier-General, was assigned to the command of the other brigade.

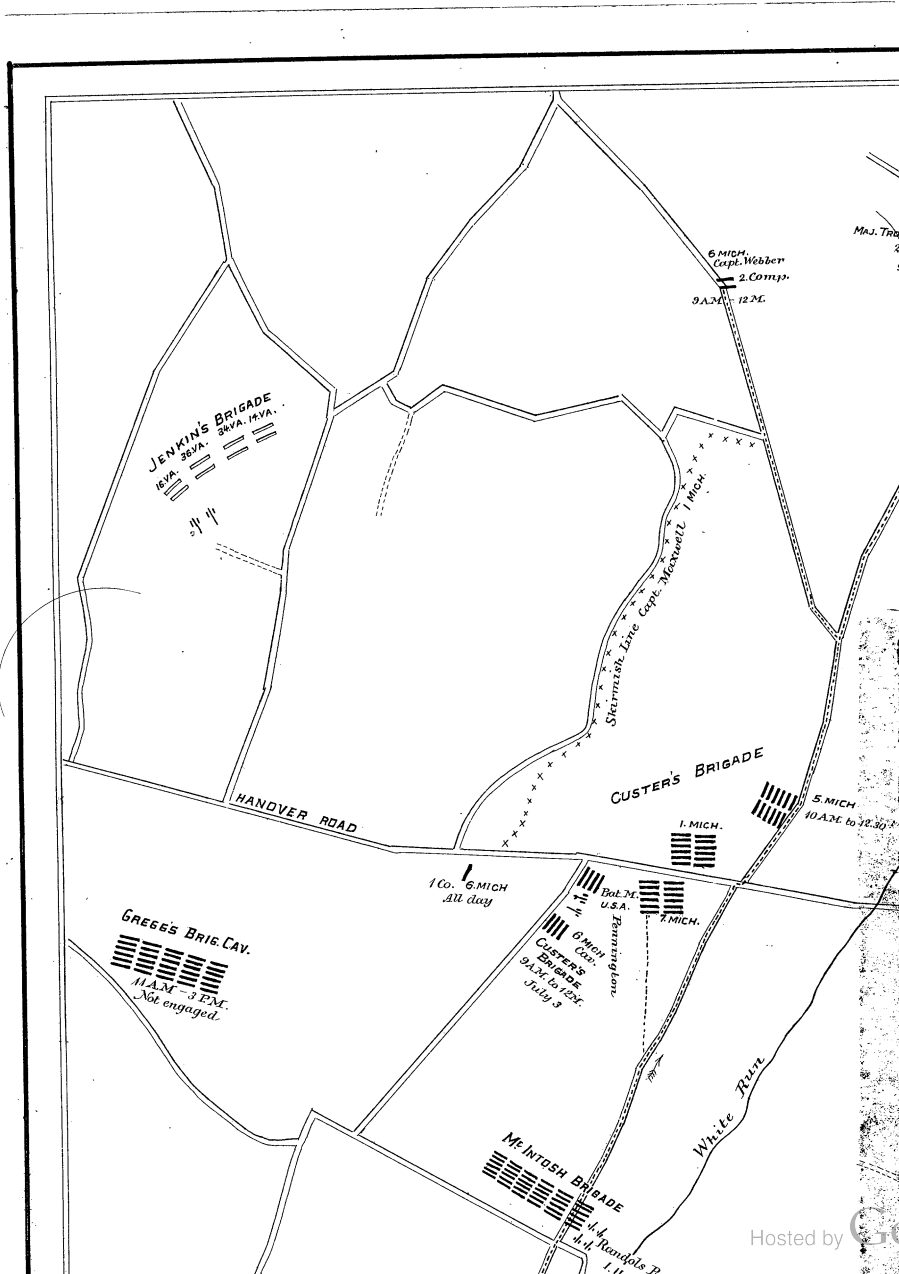
Meanwhile Stuart, dragging along his train of captured wagons, had stopped at Hood's Mills to destroy the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad and the telegraph line, thus giving Kilpat-



rick the opportunity which he wanted of throwing his division between Stuart and Lee. The night of June 29th Stuart rested at Westminster, where he found abundance of forage and provisions, his advance being thrown forward to Union Mills. The same night, Kilpatrick was at Littlestown, only seven miles distant, directly on Stuart's path. These forces came in collision the next day, and spirited engagements followed near Littlestown and at Hanover. In these engagements victory was on the side of the Union troops. Stuart was driven out of Hanover, and forced to make a wide detour, thus greatly prolonging his absence from his chief—an absence already being very sorely felt by General Lee.

While Kilpatrick is in hot pursuit after Stuart, forcing him farther and farther away from a junction with Lee's army, the concentration of the rebel army at Gettysburg is fully revealed to General Meade. Gregg, with the second cavalry division, who has been on the right flank of Meade's army, is hurriedly ordered to Gettysburg, which place he reaches on the 2nd of July, about noon. He takes position on the Hanover road, on the right flank of Meade's army. Kilpatrick comes upon Hampton's brigade on the evening of July 2nd, at Hunterstown, a small place about five miles north of Gettysburg, where a spirited little fight takes place, but without decisive results. Kilpatrick then moves to Two Taverns, about five miles from Gettysburg, on the Baltimore Pike, where, after an all-night's march, the tired men go into bivouac for a little rest early in the morning of the 3d, just as the booming cannon announce the opening of the fierce struggle for the possession of Culp's Hill.

After a few hours' rest, the division moves out, and takes the road to place itself on the left flank of the army, which was unprotected, Buford having been ordered to Westminster to protect the supply trains. Gregg, however, who is on the right, with the instinct of the true soldier,



nicipating serious trouble on that flank from Stuart's cavalry, sends a staff officer to Custer, and directs him to take position on the right flank. Sagacious soldier! most fortunate order! On that flank, this day, is to be made a desperate attempt to turn Meade's flank, which, if successful, may work dreadful mischief for the Army of the Potomac. Custer moves to the right, and takes position north of the Hanover road, about three and a half miles east of Gettysburg.

Stuart smarting, under the mild reproof of General Lee for allowing himself to be so long separated from the army, and anxious to do something to re-establish himself in the confidence of his chief, determines to force his way to the Baltimore Pike around the flank of Meade's army, where in the midst of the wagon trains and reserve artillery he expects to create such a panic as to insure the success of Pickett's fierce assault on the left center of the infantry line, and compel the Army of the Potomac to abandon its strong position on Cemetery Ridge.

In attempting this movement, Stuart had the four brigades of Hampton, Fitzhugh Lee, Chambliss and Jenkins, and the three batteries of Griffin, Breathed and McGregor. He doubtless thought his movement would be a surprise; but not not only had Gregg been informed by General Meade that a large body of the enemy's cavalry had been seen moving towards his left, but Custer had sent out scouting parties which gave him timely notice of the approach of the enemy. While endeavoring to conceal the movements of Chambliss's and Jenkin's brigades behind Cress's Ridge, Stuart pushed one of Griffin's guns to the edge of the woods where they were, and fired some random shots in different directions, himself directing the firing. It is difficult to understand Stuart's motive in this, unless it was a pre-arranged signal to inform General Lee that he had secured a

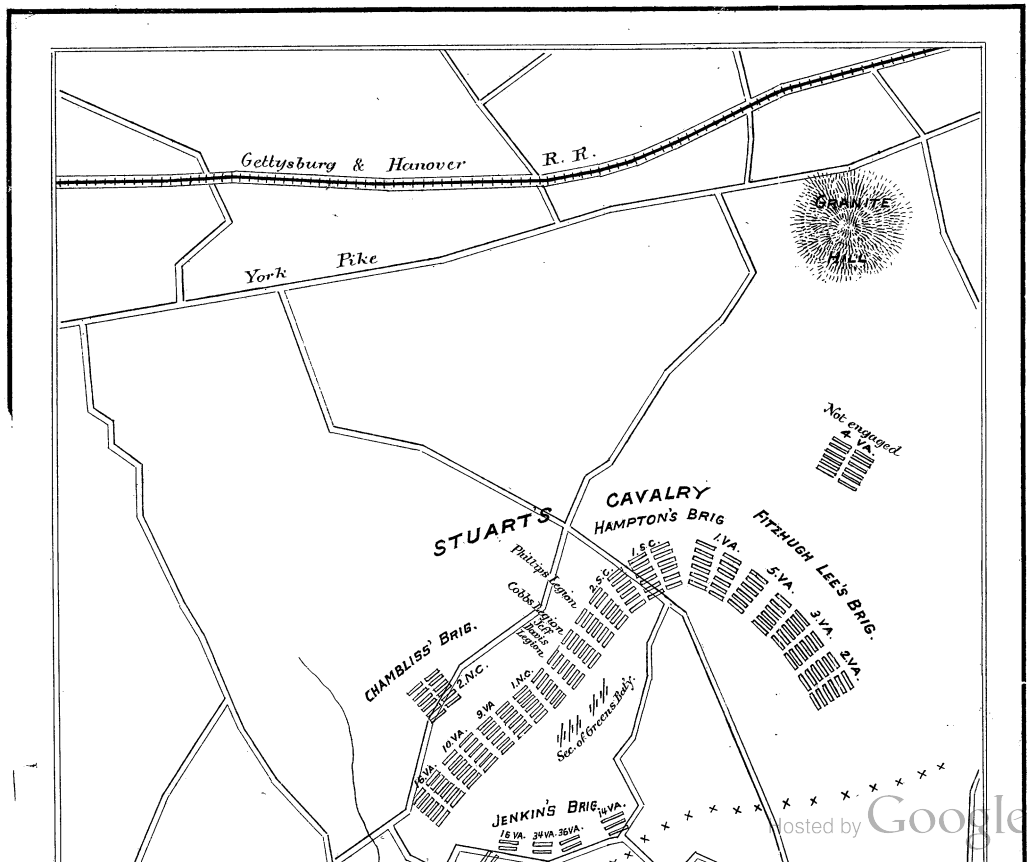
good position, and was ready for action. No other reason would seem to justify such a plain exposure of a movement which was evidently intended to be a surprise. Certainly there was much to inspire him with hope and confidence. Before him lay a beautiful undulating country, stretching for two or three miles to the Baltimore Pike. There was nothing apparently to oppose his march. Not a man of the enemy was to be seen through all those beautiful fields. Surely, success was within his grasp, and another hour would see his squadrons spreading panic and dismay in the rear of the Union army! Another bright wreath of glory was just within his reach. What a rude and sudden awakening from a blissful dream! The fire of Griffin's gun immediately brought an answering response from Pennington's three-inch rifles, the fire of which was so accurate and so rapid that Griffin was soon disabled, and he was forced to seek shelter. The opening of fire by Griffin's battery and the appearance about the same time of Hampton's and Lee's brigades in open ground farther to the left, disclosed the rebel position to General Gregg, who at once assumed the aggressive, and so impetuous was his attack that Stuart was soon obliged to abandon the thought of getting to the Baltimore Pike unobserved, and concentrating his whole force, and his utmost effort to avoid being disastrously driven from the field.

Early in the day, Custer had occupied the extreme right, the two brigades of Gregg's division being on the left, and connecting with the infantry line on Wolf's Hill. Custer received an order to join Kilpatrick on the flank beyond the Round Tops; but Gregg, appreciating the threatening character of Stuart's movements, took the responsibility of ordering him to remain. It is reported in several histories, and stoutly maintained by some officers of high rank, that Custer moved off the field in obedience to that order, and was

turned back by General Gregg whom he met as he was moving away. Such was not the case. Doubtless such an order was given, for Custer mentions it in his report, but it was countermanded by General Gregg before its execution was attempted. No regiment of that brigade left its position until the fight was over, except to go towards the enemy. McIntosh, who was sent to relieve Custer, formed still farther to the right, his right resting in a piece of woods on the Low Dutch road near where the present cavalry monument now stands. Custer had formed his brigade, the 6th and 7th, supporting the sections of Pennington's battery in different positions, the 1st in reserve mounted in column of squadrons, and the 5th, with their Spencer repeating rifles, dismounted and moved to the front of his center and left. The right of the 5th when deployed, rested about thirty rods nearly west of where the cavalry monument now stands, the line extending to the west with the left refused as to form a considerable angle with the right of the line.

McIntosh, wishing to know what was in his front, moved the 1st New Jersey toward the wooded crest, where Hampton and Lee had massed and concealed their forces. This movement brought out a strong skirmish line from the Rumel farm buildings, a short distance in front of the crest, which had been occupied by Witcher's battalion of Jenkins' brigade. The 5th Michigan was promptly moved forward to assist the 1st New Jersey, while Hampton ordered up his sharpshooters to strengthen his line, and for a long time the fight was maintained by these commands with great spirit. The writer was on the right of the 5th at the time, and has a very distinct recollection of the gallant advance of Hampton's men.

The ammunition of the 5th Michigan becoming exhausted, that regiment fell back to its horses, having suffered severely, and lost one of its most trusted officers in the death



of Major Ferry. This movement being interpreted as a breaking of the line, the enemy promptly followed up. To check their advance, the 7th Michigan was ordered to charge. By some unfortunate mistake, that regiment was led up to a high stake-and-rider fence, and no attempt being made to change direction, it was thrown against that fence in great confusion as squadron after squadron dashed headlong upon those in front. Meanwhile they were subjected to a severe fire from the dismounted men of the enemy, who were behind another fence a short distance in front, and were soon forced to retire in much confusion. As that regiment was retiring, it was charged by a mounted regiment of the enemy, which, however, retired without accomplishing any decisive results.

The 5th Michigan had now reached its horses. The 1st battalion being speedily mounted, Colonel Alger ordered it to charge the enemy. This was done with a will, and as those men dashed forward with a cheer, the dismounted men of the enemy in front broke and fled in great confusion. Back over the fields, past the Rummel buildings, past their guns, back into the woods where they had first been massed, those men fled. A detachment of the 2nd North Carolina, under Capt. Geary, however, maintained their ground behind a fence in the hollow of a little stream, and from that position poured a hot fire into the flank of that battalion as it passed.

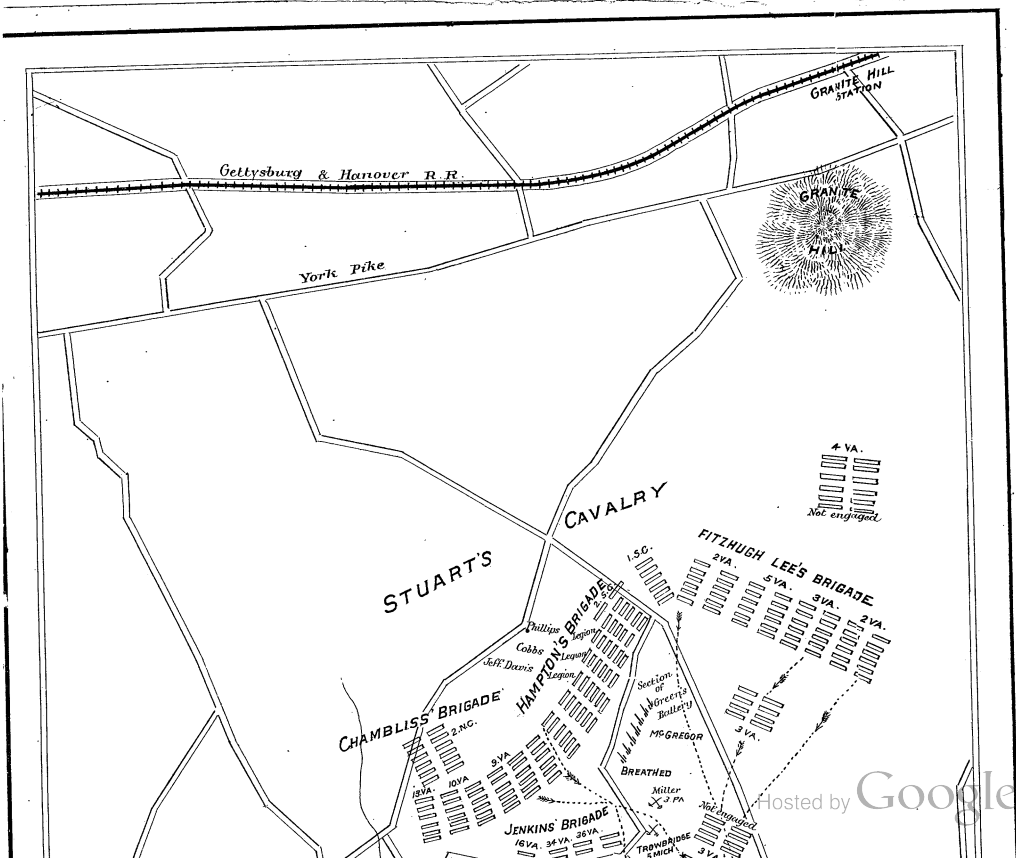
The major's horse was killed, and he only escaped capture by the timely arrival of his orderly, who was riding his second horse. The battalion, however, charged on nearly to the enemy's guns, when it was obliged to retire. Upon retiring, it was in turn charged by Chambliss' brigade and the 1st Virginia cavalry, which was in turn driven back by the balance of the 5th coming up under Colonel Alger.

Thus the battle swayed back and forth over the field. It was just at this time, with the 7th retired in some confusion after its bloody repulse at the high fence, the 6th supporting

the battery, the 5th broken up somewhat, but hotly engaged in its disconnected charges, and the 1st the only available force left, that the enemy conceived the idea of sweeping the field with a magnificent dash of his veteran legions. Hampton, who had been seeking in vain to find Stuart, had returned to his command to find the battle going sorely against them, and two regiments of his brigade and two of Lee's brigade about to charge. Thinking that two regiments would be sufficient for the purpose, he ordered back the two regiments of Lee's brigade, and placing himself at the head of his two regiments, led them to the charge. His regimental commanders, and Fitzhugh Lee, thinking he could not maintain himself with two regiments moved forward to his support until all of his brigade except the Cobb legion, and all of Lee's brigade except the 4th Virginia cavalry, were hotly engaged in the fierce struggle which followed. On the Union side, to meet this new danger, reliance was had mainly on the 1st Michigan. The odds were great, but that regiment had established a reputation for desperate fighting. It was ordered to charge. Colonel Town, a most brave and gallant soldier, placing himself at its head, orders the trot. With steady ranks, their sabres gleaming in the sun, they move forward until within striking distance of that advancing host, when with a wild cheer they burst upon it with their flashing sabres.

They are aided by the impetuous attacks of other detached bodies. Rogers and Treichel, with sixteen men of their squadron of the 3d Pennsylvania, all who could get their horses, with Alger and a portion of the 5th Michigan, vigorously assail the right flank. Miller, with his squadron of the 3d Pennsylvania, and Hart and Strong with a squadron of the 1st New Jersey, strike the left flank, and cut clear through it. McIntosh, with his staff and orderlies, charge in with their sabres. For a moment the ranks of that mighty





column held their ground then they staggered, broke and fled, leaving the Union troops in possession of the hotly contested field. The fight was over. Stuart had failed. He could not reach the Baltimore Pike, and the anticipated panic in the rear of Meade's army was a thing only of the imagination. Perhaps it was not, after all, of such great importance as it had promised. Pickett, too, had failed. The great invasion of the North was at an end; and now, instead of leading a victorious army in hot pursuit of the broken remnants of Meade's army, Stuart has the melancholy duty of guarding the flank of the defeated army of Northern Virginia as it takes up its mournful march to reach the other side of the Potomac.

It was a memorable fight. Beyond question, it was up to that time the most important and most desperate cavalry fight that had occurred.

The Confederate troops engaged were as follows: In Hampton's brigade, the 1st North Carolina and the 1st and 2d South Carolina regiments, the Cobb Georgia, the Jeff Davis, and the Phillips Georgia legions; in Fitzhugh Lee's brigade, the 1st, 2d, 3d, 4th and 5th Virginia regiments; in W. H. F. Lee's brigade, commanded by Chambliss, the 9th, 10th and 13th Virginia, and the 2d North Carolina regiments; in Jenkins's brigade, the 14th, 16th and 17th Virginia regiments, and the 34th and 36th Virginia battalions. The artillery was composed of McGregor's, Breathed's and Griffin's batteries. The 4th Virginia, however, was guarding the Confederate left, and took no active part in the fighting. The whole force numbered not less than six thousand men.

On the Union side the troops engaged were as follows: In Custer's brigade, the 1st, 5th, 6th and 7th Michigan regiments, the three latter being new regiments and never before seriously engaged, and one battalion of the 5th being absent guarding a train; in McIntosh's brigade, the 3d Pennsyl-

vania, the 1st New Jersey, and the 1st Maryland regiments of cavalry; in Colonel J. Irvin Gregg's brigade, the 4th and 18th Pennsylvania, the 1st Maine, and the 10th New York regiments of cavalry. In addition to these above, the Purnell troop of Maryland cavalry was temporarily serving with the 1st brigade, and Company "A," 1st Ohio cavalry, with the 2d brigade. The artillery consisted of Randol's light battery "E," 1st U. S. artillery, 4 guns; Pennington's light battery "M," 2d U. S. artillery, 6 guns; and the 2d section of light battery "H," 3d Pennsylvania artillery, 2 guns. The whole force numbered about five thousand men, but Gregg's brigade was not engaged, as it held an important position connecting with the right of the infantry line at Wolf's Hill. The 1st Maryland, Lieutenant-Colonel Deems, was occupied in guarding the right flank at some distance from the field of battle, and was not actively engaged. The aggregate forces actually engaged were thus reduced to about three thousand men.

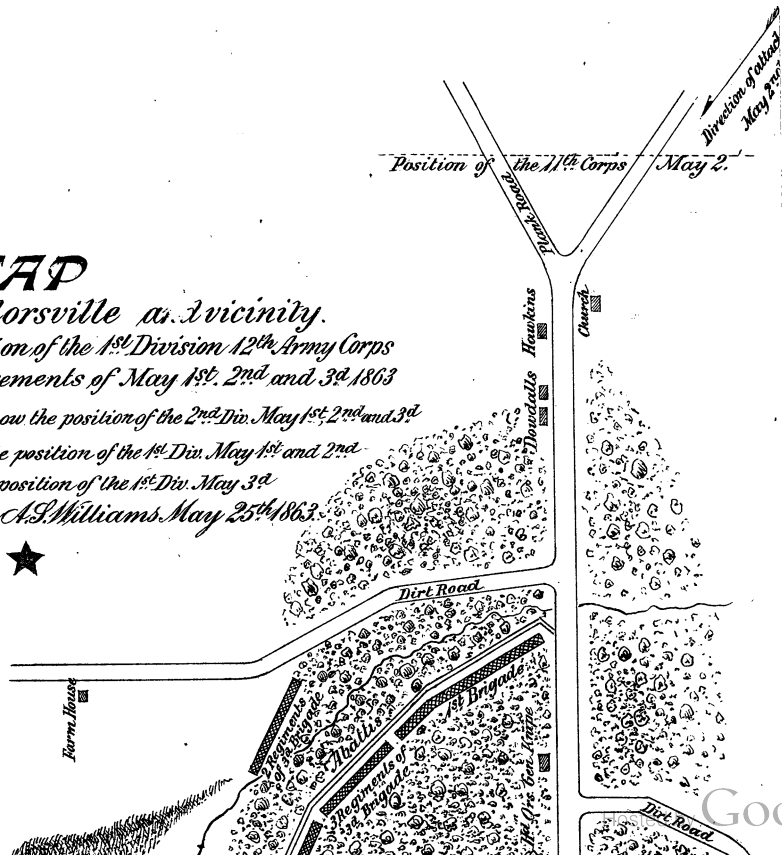
There has been much dispute as to who occupied the field after the fight was over. Stuart and his officers claim they drove the Union forces from the field. On the other hand, Gregg, McIntosh, Custer and their officers maintain that they remained masters of the field, even of that portion occupied by the Confederates at the beginning of the fight. McIntosh claims that after the fight he established his picket line in the woods where Hampton and Lee had massed their forces in the morning. In support of this he cites the statement of Mr. Rummel, the owner of the farm on which the fight occurred, who says that his father was captured that day by the rebels, who took possession of his farm buildings, and that after night he was released, and told that he might go home if he could get there, but that he could not get there on account of the Union picket line being between him and his home. He may not have had any clear perception as to

# MAP

*Of Chancellorsville and vicinity.*

*Showing the position of the 1<sup>st</sup> Division 12<sup>th</sup> Army Corps  
During the engagements of May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>d</sup> 1863*

*... The white blocks show the position of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Div. May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>d</sup>  
The shaded blocks show the position of the 1<sup>st</sup> Div. May 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>  
The red blocks show the position of the 1<sup>st</sup> Div. May 3<sup>d</sup>  
The brown blocks show the position of the 1<sup>st</sup> Div. May 25<sup>th</sup> 1863.*



whether the pickets he saw were Union or Confederate. But again, it is claimed that the Confederates used the Rummel farm buildings all night for hospital purposes. It is, however, a matter of small moment who had actual physical possession of the field. It is the opinion of the writer that neither side actually occupied that portion of the field where the fight took place, but that each retired to the positions occupied by them at the beginning of the fight. One thing will be admitted by all, and that is that Stuart attempted to turn the flank of Meade's army, and that he failed to do it; and further, that he was prevented from doing it by the good generalship of General Gregg, in forcing the fighting, and the hard fighting of the brave men under his command. While other troops performed their full duty, and deserve their full measure of credit, the fact still remains that the brunt of the fighting fell on Custer's brigade, and to that brigade chiefly belongs the credit of winning the fight.

I have omitted some minor operations of a portion of Gregg's division on the evening of the second day, which, while very creditable and important in their way, were not, in my judgment, of sufficient importance to require a detailed description.

I presume my narrative will be unsatisfactory to many. I have found it impossible to reconcile many conflicting statements. But after a very pleasant and full interchange of views, on the field, this last summer, with many officers, both Union and Confederate, I have endeavored to present a story of the fight as near the actual facts, as it was possible for me to come.



MY EXPERIENCES  
AS A  
PRISONER OF WAR.

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A PAPER

PREPARED AND READ BEFORE MICHIGAN COMMANDERY

OF THE

MILITARY ORDER

OF THE

LOYAL LEGION OF THE UNITED STATES,

DECEMBER 1st, 1886.

BY COMPANION

LT. COL. F. W. SWIFT.

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DETROIT, MICH.:  
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1888.





## My Experiences as a Prisoner of War.

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The fighting in front of Spottsylvania Court House, Va., on the 12th day of May, 1864, was at its height. Hancock with his gallant second corps had made the terrific charge at the "bloody angle," which resulted in the capture of nearly all of "Ed." Johnson's rebel division and about 30 guns. - Lee had massed his forces and was making herculean efforts to recover the position. Our division (Wilcox's of the 9th corps) had been double quicked to Hancock's support, but before he could reach the point he had been forced back after a terrible struggle, abandoning most of the captured guns. The slaughter in this angle was appalling, and the fighting equalled in stubbornness that of Gettysburg or the Wilderness. We were afterwards ordered to the left, and an attack ordered against Lee's right which reached near the C. H., and which had been weakened to strengthen his lines in Hancock's immediate front. Batteries had been placed at every available point, and we were ordered into the woods.

"Regiments to the right of us,  
Regiments to the left of us,  
Batteries to the rear of us,  
And rebels in front of us,  
Forward we moved."

The young fresh leaves of the forest made it impossible for us to see very far in any direction, but our advancing line very soon received a scathing fire from the front. And, about 100 feet away we could see the rebel flag in the dense undergrowth—showing unmistakably our proximity to the rebel line of battle. We were ordered to ‘lie down and commence firing.’ For a considerable time a terrible fusillade was kept up on both sides. While shell from both Union and rebel guns were constantly shrieking and exploding about us. And the air seemed to be filled with the missiles of death and destruction.

Many a poor fellow here met his fate, and out of the 225 men of the 17th Mich. who went into that ‘vortex of fire,’ 97 were killed and wounded. We were absolutely without orders after encountering the enemy; and in the absence of orders there was nothing to do but to hold our part of the line as long as possible. In the midst of this pandemonium of death and while we were lying as flat as possible to ‘Mother Earth’ I felt a touch on my shoulder. Adjutant Watts, who had been on the left of the regiment during our advance into the woods, said, ‘We had better be getting out of this, the line to our left has given away, a rebel brigade has swept around to our rear, and the woods are full of them!’

Directing the Adj. to look after the right of the regiment, I started down the line to look over the situation of affairs and had gone but a few yards when I came upon poor Avery of ‘A’ company who was lying upon the ground in the last agonies of death, having received a ball in the middle of his forehead. I stooped down, laid him in as comfortable position as possible. Saw that he was no more. And straightened up to go on. When, ‘*Halt there!*’ And four wicked looking muskets in the hands of as many wicked looking ‘Johnnies’ pointed full at my breast and not 20 feet away, brought me speedily to a realizing sense that I, too, was

a *prisoner of war*.

Of course resistance was useless. Here was an instance where discretion was the "better part of valor."

"I reckon the most of you 'uns are up at the Court House now. And you might as well go too," was the comforting remark of the Captain who took my sword. And, rapidly glancing about, and "taking in" the situation as rapidly as possible and considering the number of "gray backs" in the near vicinity, I soon came to the conclusion that *his* wishes and *not* mine, just at *that particular* juncture, were to be respected. I "accepted the situation" with as good grace as possible, and myself and several others were escorted up the densely wooded slope, over the rebel line of defenses to the Court House, where were congregated hundreds of Union prisoners, rebel soldiers, staff officers, hospital and ammunition wagons, &c.

As we entered the court yard I noticed a serious and gentlemanly looking person, clad in a brown suit and soft felt hat, no insignia of rank about him, standing by the gateway. "That is Gen'l Lee," said my escort, the Captain; and from photo's I had seen I had already guessed as much. Shot and shell were coming over in profusion from the Union batteries, making it very uncomfortable for us as well as the rebels. And soon we were moved out of the line of fire a mile or so to the rear into an open field near by Gen'l Lee's headquarters.

Here the boys of the 17th got together and we found there were nearly 100 belonging to our little regiment *prisoners*, but we did not then know that 97 more had been left killed or wounded on the bloody battle field. And still less did we realize how few of those prisoners then in full health would ever live to "breathe the air again on the free land in their own beloved homes."

I do not know how many ever returned from the horrors

of Andersonville, but I do know that many of them never did and that some who did return only came to die even upon the thresholds of their homes. One poor comrade (Coy of F Co.) whose people resided 3 or 4 miles from the railroad station, when he left the cars was so weak that he could not walk, was taken in charge by kind friends and word sent to his relatives, but before they could come to him his reason had fled, and he died in the arms of those he loved, giving no sign.

We remained in the vicinity of Spottsylvania for a couple of days, when we were escorted to Gordonsville, thence to Danville, Va. Here the commissioned officers were put into a large tobacco warehouse, and the enlisted men were sent on to Andersonville, Ga., and we saw no more of them.

After a day or two at Danville we were sent to Lynchburg, where we were kept for a week or more in a large hall over a store, on very short and very poor rations, and then forwarded in common box or freight cars to Macon, Ga.

We were 2 or 3 days and nights in transit. And, as the weather was warm, our guard would open the door and sit in the opening with their feet hanging out and their muskets across their laps.

Of course we naturally made the best of a bad situation. And, as we had some good singers and story tellers in our car, we made out to entertain our rebel friends very well. One of them was a German, who had been impressed into the rebel army, and consequently was not very hard to please, and the others, were an old man and his grandson, not very well up in discipline, and evidently not much impressed with the importance of their trust. The second night of our journey a scheme was devised for escape and of course we were more full of music and anecdote than ever. Several of us stood around the opening where the guard sat and sang with all our power, whilst others worked vigorously with their

jack knives cutting a hole in the door opposite.

This was no easy job, as it must be done between 2 stations ; but we sang so sweetly, and were so innocent and hilarious, and our fellows were so industrious, that the hole was made. And our boys in the midst of the fun having quietly removed the caps from the muskets of the guard, and everything being ready, ten of us quickly crawled through the hole, watched our chances one after another, swung off, dropped to the ground, rolled down the sandy embankment more or less bruised and bewildered, picked ourselves up, found that no bones had been broken and that we were free.

Those that jumped first were to follow the train, those who jumped last were to go from it until we all met, and as ten only were to jump we soon congregated.

After congratulating ourselves on having no broken bones or dislocated joints, we agreed on the best course to be pursued, chose our leader, who, under all circumstances was to be implicitly obeyed, and started from the railroad across the country, taking for our guide that friend of the fugitive, the *north star*.

We knew well, that, at the first stop, the conductor of the train would discover our escape and give notice of it to the authorities, and that we would be pursued. So we did our best to put as many miles as possible between the railroad and ourselves before daylight. How readily we obeyed the orders of our leader ! Once more we breathed the pure air of Heaven, and freedom beckoned us forward !

As daylight approached we turned into the densest wood we could find, and lay concealed during the day, having nothing to eat, only what we had brought in our pockets, which was very little. After night fall we took the road again, and as this part of Georgia was very sparsely settled, the road was comparatively safe.

Our intention was, if possible, to reach Sherman's lines.

All night we pursued our dreary way unmolested, without incident of note ; tramping as only those will tramp who are in pursuit of life, *liberty* or *happiness*, and as before sought the shelter of woods on the approach of day break. And so, until the night of the fourth day, having subsisted on wild mulberries and such other wild fruit as we could find, worn out with our long tramp and anxiety, getting only sleep such as we could day times. One of our party had ventured to make himself known to a slave working in a lonely cornfield not far from our hiding place, and received from him some corn bread, and arranged with him to bring us after dark more food.

Just before the hour arrived, and while we were congratulating ourselves upon the prospects for a "good square meal," we heard the deep ominous bay of *blood hounds*, and we knew that we were being pursued. No one who has never been a fugitive can tell of the "dismal dismay" the baying of these hounds produces. The relentless persistency and unerring certainty with which they follow the trail were well known to the poor fugitive from slavery, and no wonder were held in such terror by these friendless creatures, who well knew they could expect no mercy from the hound or his owner !

Of course our hopes vanished as the noise of the hounds increased, when to our great joy and relief our friend appeared to us with a "pome" or two concealed under his coat, and told us that we had been followed with hounds from the railroad (about sixty miles), and our whereabouts ascertained, and that the roads in that region were all picketed. He had found it impossible to bring us any bacon, but would try to pilot us to a road which he thought would not be picketed. Well, as there was no time to be lost in vain regrets, we "moved at once," the negro leading us through an almost impenetrable swamp "to throw the dogs off trail,"

and across the country several miles to a lonely road, and started us off with his blessing, as he said that he "must be back to de quarters befo' daylight or dey would spect him." He only requested us if we should be captured and see him at any time, not to recognize him in any way, else his life would be forfeited.

After parting with our faithful friend we started out with new hope and strength, and nothing occurred to alarm us until about two o'clock in the morning, while passing through a dense wood we suddenly came upon a party of our pursuers, who had selected this spot for ambush. They had no fires, the darkness was intense, and they were concealed and armed. They halted us, and as we were unarmed and helpless we were recaptured! Our captors soon kindled a bright fire, and on counting us and finding one of our party missing, put their dogs at work, very soon "treed" the missing yank and brought him in. They made us lie down and kept guard over us until daylight, when they escorted us to the village of Sparta, Hancock Co., a few miles distant; taken to the C. H., where all classes, old and young, black and white, bond and free, congregated to see the yanks.

The provost marshal, a big fat good natured sort of a rebel, too unwieldy to carry a musket, therefore one of the "home guard," brought us in some "pomes" or Johnny cakes and bacon, with coffee made of parched rye, and "fed the animals," to the great admiration of the gaping crowd, and to our comfort, for we were as hungry a lot of mortals as one would wish to encounter.

After breakfast we were put into wagons and under escort of some of the home guard, commanded by our friend the ponderous provost marshal, started off for Milledgeville.

Before we left Sparta, I noticed, in the outskirts of the crowd, the slave who had befriended us the evening previous.

Poor fellow ! He had done his best, and had *imperiled his life* to help de Linkum sojers," and it was not his fault that we were recaptured. We had traveled, after he left us, at least ten miles before being molested, and supposed we were beyond their pickets. As I looked at him, I thought I could discern a look of regret in his kindly old face, and felt that I would like to acknowledge the debt we owed him ; yet, as we had promised, I gave no sign of recognition. The ride to Milledgeville was without incident, excepting one episode brought about by the too free expression of sentiment indulged in by one of our party, who engaged in a dispute concerning the war, with one of the guard. Being of Celtic origin, and ready wit and tongue, he rather got the best of the argument with the aforesaid guard, who, to make up for lack of argument, cocked his gun and drew a bead on Col. Higginbotham, (65th N. Y. Vols.,) and informed him that nothing would give him so much pleasure as to blow his "infernal Yankee head off," which he doubtless would have done but for the energetic interposition of authority by the "ponderous marshall."

Arrived at Milledgeville we were taken to the principal hotel there and fed. The city seemed nearly deserted except by women and children. These crowded into the large dining hall to see the Yankee officers feed.

One nervous, spare, woman seemed to watch us as if she could hardly refrain from tearing our eyes out. Finally she broke out with, "You uns come down here to fight we uns. You miserable Lincoln renegades, you've got just what you deserve. I'd just like to see you and old Lincoln all in a pen together."

One of our party replied, "Why, Lincoln is one of the nicest men you ever saw, and he likes the girls too ; did you ever see him ?" "No," said she, spitefully, "and I don't want to ; I would rather see the *devil* here than old Lincoln."



How much longer she would have vented her spite on us, I don't know, for here the *ponderous marshal* once more interposed to save us, and taking the woman by the arm, said he didn't want her to talk us to death while we were on his hands, escorted her out.

After dinner we were put aboard cars, and started for Macon, where we arrived the next day, and were conducted at once to the stockade, built for Union commissioned officers, the enlisted men being confined at Andersonville, forty miles or more distant. This stockade was a large enclosure similar to that at Andersonville but smaller. A large wooden warehouse was inside, but as only 25 per cent. of the 1200 officers confined here could find accommodations in it, and as vermin of every description swarmed there, I preferred to sleep or stay outside, and take my chances with the elements. I had been within the enclosure but a short time before I was greeted with a warm welcome by Capt. Jas. T. Morgan of my regiment who had been captured at the battle of Campbell Station, Tenn., Nov. 16th, preceding. It was a welcome such as only could be given under like circumstances, and the captain, with that freedom and generosity so marked in his nature, made every effort to make my brief sojourn in the Macon stockade as pleasant as possible; even going so far as to insist on my sharing the hospitalities of his mansion, bed and board—which consisted of a blanket, 2 crotches, ridge pole, the ground, a tin cup and plate; and yet with the true gentlemanly kindness with which it was shared with me, made it princely entertainment. I also met Lt. Asa W. Sprague, of the 24th Mich. infantry, who had been captured at Gettysburg. He asked eagerly after his old regiment and friends, and seemed much depressed. His nature could illy stand prison life, and he gave signs of the longings that terminated his life at Charleston in the October following.

Our provisions here were very scant, poor corn-bread and

worse bacon ; yet we were vastly better off than the poor fellows herded and packed together like so many swine in the Andersonville stockade.

The "*dead line*" here became a startling reality, and was as zealously guarded as at Andersonville. I had been here only a day or so, when I saw a nail in a strip of railing which I coveted, and innocently enough endeavored to get it out, not knowing that this was a part of the "*dead line*."

While busily engaged in securing my prize (which I wanted in case I should secure slabs for a shelter), I heard the ominous cocking of a musket, and "Git out o' thar, you ——Yank !" and knowing well what that meant, I jumped to the rear as lively as possible, and looking up saw a sentinel just bringing his piece to an aim. Of course I "got." Like Mark Twain when he encountered the "stiff," "I simply went," and didn't visit that immediate vicinity again very soon.

Some of those stockade sentinels had never served at the front, and were always ready to demonstrate their soldierly qualities by shooting a "Yank" on very slight provocation.

The third morning after we reached Macon, I was washing myself at a little rivulet used for that purpose, and heard the well known cry of "Fresh fish !" and looking up I saw the crowd moving towards the gate where prisoners were admitted. The "fresh fish" were a lot of Federal officers taken from Butler's command at Bermuda Hundreds, about the time of the Wilderness battles. They had just been brought in, and as I had learned from a Richmond paper that the 27th Mass. regiment, in which I had a brother, had been captured with nearly all of its officers, I concluded I would likely find him in the lot. I started for the crowd, and soon I discovered him relating the circumstances of the capture at Bermuda Hundreds to a squad of officers with whom he had served at Newberne. As his powers of

description were very good, and he very earnest, withal, I found no difficulty in elbowing my way near to, and directly back of him. I stood for several moments almost touching his back. Yet so engaged was he with his recital, that he did not discover me, until finally seeming to realize that there was somebody very near to him, or noticing the amused look of some of his audience, he slowly turned his head, and our eyes met. The recital suddenly ended, his countenance changed to blank astonishment, and calling me by name, he said: "How-in-the-*world* did-*you*-get-here?" A shout of laughter broke up the meeting.

I invited my brother into my boudoir, and you can readily imagine that we passed pleasant hours talking over old times, the days of our boyhood, the dear ones at home, and everything and everybody we could think of, for then we had "nothing else to do."

In a camp like this every expedient was resorted to, to *kill time*. Those who were so fortunate as to own a pack of cards, would get up whist and euchre parties in the most approved style, at which refreshments were served in the aesthetic fashion. For instance, Des Huibres—"in your eye," sandwiches—side meat and hard tack, ice cream—"over the left," Roman punch—"In a horn," cigars—"when this cruel war is over."

If a smooth piece of board could be found, a chess board would be constructed with chess and chequer men, and this would afford diversion for many, and they would be kept in almost constant use. Others would organize forlorn hopes to dig tunnels, the utmost secrecy being observed. Some of the prisoners had little shelter tents, and under these a hole would be dug and kept covered in a very innocent way with straw or boughs, or boards sunk in the ground and filled even with dirt, and after dark, with spoons or tin dishes, the excavation would go on all night by relays, the dirt

would be carried out in handkerchiefs or pockets, and scattered about where it would not attract the eye. And thus would time be taken up, and hope kept alive.

In some instances here, and at Andersonville, escapes were effected, but the *failures* were far more numerous. Some would wrestle, leap, jump, run, do all sorts of impossible things, anything—everything, to drive away ennui. Yet, many there were who would give up to the most doleful forebodings. Many would chafe and fume, and fret as though they were being consumed by inward fire. And many a poor fellow actually died of *homesickness*.

I had been in Macon only a week, when I received notice from the captain of the guard to get ready to leave. A list of fifty officers, highest in rank, had been sent to the commandment of the Stockade, and as my name was among them, I was called for. All sorts of rumors prevailed, that we were to be exchanged, and these reports were encouraged by the rebel authorities to prevent our making efforts to escape.

Of course the parting from my brother who was not included in this order was a sad trial to us both, but hope came to our relief, and we thought he might soon follow, but there were yet many weary months in store for him, and it was yet a year, and the war had closed, before I saw him again.

“The fifty Federal officers of highest rank in Macon,” had been ordered—sent to Charleston, to be placed under fire of the Union guns. We were given to understand that we were to be exchanged at Savannah, where we were at first taken and placed in the old government barracks for a day or two, when orders came for our removal to Charleston, S. C., where we arrived June 10th, about 4 o'clock in the afternoon, in the midst of a tremendous thunderstorm, and marched directly to the city jail, soaked to the skin, where we were incarcerated like so many felons. And then we knew that we

had been brought to this hospitable city to be kept as hostages, to prevent the fire of the Union guns !

Well, after our uncomfortable ride, generous soaking, and incarceration in the common jail, where the crevices in the walls and floors wear *swarming* with body lice, bed bugs, and other vermin. This of course, was not a very consoling reflection. Still, we made up our minds that we could stand it as well as our guard or the people of Charleston, so we did not let this trouble us to any extent. We went supperless and wet to our couches, to dream of champagne dinners and presidential receptions. Our couches were the bare floor in strips, and we rested fairly well, for we had the company of the bugs all night.

The next day about noon our grub was brought us by the jailor, and was a miserable, scanty, mess of kale or cabbage leaves boiled, with a lot of wormy side meat, the only seasoning for our "soup," as the jailor called it. Yet we were ravenously hungry and we ate of this vile compound. What else could we do ?

Among the fifty, were Gen'l E. P. Scammon, formerly stationed in Detroit, Gen'l Wessels, Gen'l Thomas Seymour of Florida fame, Gen'l A. Shaler of New York, Col. E. L. Dana, 143 Penn. Vol's, Col. Walter Harriman, 11th N. H. Vol's, and afterwards governor of that state, and others of more or less prominence.

Very soon a vigorous and telling protest was sent to Sam Jones, (not him of evangelical fame,) then commanding the district of Charleston, C. S. A., *demanding* treatment due us as prisoners of war. In this jail were murderers, thieves, and other felons of the worst sort, and it was contrary to the rules of war to treat us like felons. In the basement of the jail also, were some of the men captured under Col. Shaw of Massachussets, who commanded a regiment of black troops, and their suffering as they were packed in that damp noisome

basement, must have been terrible, beyond description.

Each evening we were allowed a short time to promenade in the jail yard. And we could see these wretched comrades through the grating, but could do nothing to alleviate their condition, and it would not have been safe for any one even to have spoken to them.

The *protest* had its desired effect, and after about a week of jail life, we were taken out and escorted down Broad street, to a large frame house, near Chisholm's rice mill, and near the water of the bay. This house had been vacated on account of the shelling, was 3 stories high, and made very comfortable quarters for us.

We learned afterwards that Genl. Foster, then in command before Charleston, had notified Genl. Jones that 50 Rebel officers were on their way to his head quarters, on whom the same treatment would be meted as accorded to those under fire in Charleston, and that if any of them were killed while held as hostages, he should retaliate with interest. We had a fine large yard in which to promenade, and across the street at high tide the water would come up and give us a depth of 4 or 5 feet in which to bathe.

Bath houses were built for our comfort by the provost marshal at Charleston, under whose care we were, and who had been educated at Yale, a gentleman to the manor born, and to whom we were indebted for many courtesies of like nature.

We used to await the rising of the tide with a great deal of interest, for then the guard limit would be extended and we permitted to bathe in the clear salt water to our hearts content, a luxury only appreciated by those who have enjoyed it under like circumstances.

Here we were kept until the 3d of August, and as we had nothing to do but kill time and make ourselves as comfortable as possible, we went at it.

Our party divided into groups more or less congenial, selecting different rooms according to taste and numbers, and soon we were a settled community.

Our friend the marshall brought us books to read and such papers as he could procure, which were few aside from those printed in Charleston.

It was rather amusing to read the comments of these papers. One gushing correspondent (he must have been a renegade from the North) urged that we be taken and chained to the parapets of Sumpter, where the "Yankee shell fell thickest, and where we would get our just deserts." A wicket club was organized, a wicket ball manufactured, bats made, and in the ample yard we had many a famous game, greatly to our benefit and amusement, as well as to the entertainment of those who would gather outside to see the Yankee officers.

Col. Dana, of our party, was a very devoted churchman, and an Episcopalian clergyman having signified his willingness to hold service in our quarters, if desired, was at the instance of Col. Dana, invited to do so.

The following Sabbath he put in an appearance clad in his priestly robes and read service for us. Putting so much emphasis in his prayer for the "President of the *Confederate* States and all others in authority, it angered Harriman and some others, and disgusted Col. Dana so thoroughly, that the over zealous rector was not invited again to come and read prayers for us poor miserable *Yankee* sinners. We were *minus* "the benefit of the clergy" after that.

On the fourth of July we had speeches and toasts, and observed the day to the best of our ability. One mess celebrated with a sumptuous dinner consisting mainly of a *chicken pie*, for which they paid one hundred dollars Confederate money. Harriman gave us an *oration* which would have made the earth tremble had it been delivered any where else

than in Charleston. Naturally enough the shell seemed to come from Foster's guns faster than usual on this day, and in the afternoon, according to our usual custom, we assembled on the spacious balcony in front of the house to watch for their coming. It was a delightful summer day, and a lovely breeze came in from the ocean, the fleecy clouds floated lazily above us, and everything in nature betokened peace. It was "only men" that was "vile." The deep distant thunder of the bereligerent guns, the rushing of the great shells, or their detonations as they struck and exploded, were all that indicated war in that peaceful scene.

I should judge that there was from 70 to 100 shells a day sent into the city, and as the shell arrived before the report of the gun, it was curious to notice them. At first a low rushing sound in the air from no apparent cause, rapidly increasing, rapidly approaching; you look into the clear blue sky, but see nothing; over and beyond you it rushes with lightning velocity and demon like shriek, when CRASH! it strikes some structure and explodes, almost lifting the roof, destroying all within its scope of destruction; then a few seconds later perhaps you hear the report of the gun, five or six miles away on Morris island. "The line of fire" was directed to the spire of St. Michael's Church on Broad St., but as our quarters were about a third of a mile west of that, and near the Ashley river, we were in a comparatively safe place, and none of the shells exploded very near us, until the evening preceding our exchange, when one exploded nearly over our quarters, and a piece falling near me in the yard, I picked it up and now have it in my possession.

Through the kindness of the marshall we were allowed to purchase milk, eggs, fruits, fish, etc., from the negroes who would bring them around for sale. The rebel Sec'y of Treasury—Trenhelm, being a very patriotic man, sent us word that he would give us twenty dollars Confederate money for



one of greenbacks ; so we paid for provisions in Confederate currency at the rate of \$1.00 per quart for milk and \$1.00 per dozen for eggs, and we considered them very cheap at that. Shrimps, lobsters, crabs, rice, watermelons, etc., came in very liberally. And when Mr. Trenholm offered to give us thirty for one *gold* and cash our drafts on friends at the North, at that, taking his chances for their being honored, it may naturally be inferred that we suddenly became opulent *in Confederate script*, and that we “fared sumptuously every day.”

I never shall forget the toothsome dishes “set up” by my old messmate and friend Lt. Col. Bartholomew, 27th Massachusetts Infantry, as good a fellow and as good caterer as one ever campaigned it with. He would work patiently all the morning, preparing his deviled crabs, rice cakes, “cafe au lait,” &c., &c., wind up with delicious watermelon for desert,—blow me up “sky high” for not doing my share of the cooking; swear he would never get another meal and then proceed to make up his menu for supper, which was sure to make its appearance in due time and in a style worthy the gallant Colonel, who invariably consoled himself for his kindly repentance by saying that I was “only good to wash the dishes !”

So passed the warm days of summer, in games, songs, readings, arguments, longing for news from the “dear Old Army of the Potomac,” which we knew to be struggling as heroically and as devoted as ever with the enemy, but getting none that we deemed reliable, and only such as the rebel papers would print; days which at the best were dreary enough, for we chafed in our involuntary leisure, and we longed to be with our comrades in the line, to share with them the labors and the dangers of the campaign. And this feeling was so intense with some that it seemed as though it would render them insane.

Strong men became like children in some respects, and

the weak points in their characters were brought out with striking clearness. I will venture to say that there is no place on earth like the prison pen to bring out the selfishness and littleness of a man. And where "familiarity so breeds contempt." And yet on the other hand all the noble attributes of a man are brought out with the same vividness; and the blanket, the last morsel, and the last dollar, are shared with an heroic generosity and nobleness of spirit wonderful to behold. At last, after many weary days, and disappointing rumors of exchange, on the second of August, our genial Provost Marshal came to our quarters and announced that we were to be taken down the harbor the next morning for exchange.

Only those who have been prisoners of war can realize with what joy this news was received. Bright visions of "home, sweet, sweet home," and the dear waiting, praying ones there came to us, and all was hilarity and pleasure.

It did not take us long to pack up our goods and chattels. A few old blankets comprised pretty much all our outfits; and these, with such underclothing as we had, we left with the marshal to give to other Union prisoners. That night we had very little sleep. We had instead a "Symposium en train." There was a great deal of "song" but no "wine" there. Our friends in Charleston had failed to send in the champagne, but I am positive we were all more or less intoxicated *with joy*.

Soon after sunrise the Marshal came and informed us that he was ready to escort us to the boat that was to take us down the harbor. We thought we could detect almost a shadow of regret in the faces of our Captain and the guard as we said good by to them. They had been very considerate to us, and seemed to think we were pretty good yanks after all. I heard afterwards from Union officers that were there after

we left, that one of our shell killed the Captain and three of his men.

We were soon ready to leave, and quickly reached the ferry boat, where we were ushered into the cabin, the windows being fastened and blinds closed, lest we should obtain information respecting defences and obstructions in the harbor.

After a while, (though it seemed hours), the doors were opened, and we were permitted to go out on deck.

What a view there presented itself to our brimming eyes!

The early morning sun shone forth in dazzling splendor, casting a golden sheen over the waters of the beautiful harbor, far beyond which the deep blue of old ocean was visible. To our left could be seen Fort Moultrie over which waved the flag of treason, to the right Fort Johnson, and in front Sumpter, rising like a huge rock out of the sea, her thundering guns responded sullenly to the pounding of the Union cannon from our batteries, on Morris Island. Here, two or three miles away we could see floating in bold relief against the clear blue western sky, glorified by the triumphant rays of God's bright sun—majestic, silent, *and glorious*, the most beautiful, the most significant of all earthly insignia the "Star spangled banner!" Glorious, Heaven born emblem! May thy folds ever remain as unsullied, as full of meaning, and as dear to every freedom loving heart as they appeared to us, in the light of that morning sun. Strong men, who had not looked upon it for twenty months wept tears of joy as it waved them a silent welcome from captivity.

Among the rebel officers present and accompanying the flag of truce, was a young lieutenant, a correspondent of one of the London pictorials, who was busily employed in collecting items of interest and making sketches for his paper. I inquired of the marshal who he was, and he told me that it was a grandson of Philip Barton Key, who was the author of

the "Star Spangled Banner." An interesting coincidence, to say the least.

As our little steamer, with her white flag of truce at her bow, appeared in the vicinity of Sumpter, the booming of cannon and the roar of shot and shell ceased, and the quiet of peace for a time settled down upon the waters. The parapets of Sumpter were speedily lined with "grey backs," who came out from their bomb proofs to watch the proceedings of our little craft.

After proceeding a mile or more below Sumpter and about midway between Cumming's Point and Sullivan's Island, our boat rounded to and dropped anchor. Far away oceanward, and stretched across the mouth of the harbor, we could see the blockading fleet. How anxiously were our eyes fixed on that fleet to see some sign of recognition.

Will they answer the flag of truce? Will we be exchanged, or will it all fall through, were the anxious queries from many. After a while there were some signs of a movement in the fleet, and a large, majestic steamer left the line, heading for us with the white flag at her bows, and "*Old Glory*" proudly floating at her mast-head.

Arriving at neutral ground, she rounded to and let go her anchor, and signalled our boat. A boat was soon lowered, the marshal, the officers in charge of the exchange, and other dignitaries went aboard the U. S. frigate to arrange details, and while we are waiting the outcome of their deliberations, I will explain how this exchange happened to be brought about.

The fifty rebel officers sent to Morris island by our government in retaliation for our being confined in Charleston, among whom were Genl. Ed. Johnson, Basil Duke, Jeff Thompson, of Missouri, Genl. Morgan (a brother of John Morgan, the guerilla), and others of prominence, not relishing "the nearness" of the shot and shell as they came in from

Sumpter, sent a strong protest to the authorities at Richmond against such "unchristian" proceeding, and urged a proposal for exchange. This protest seemed to have the desired effect; at any rate the proposal was made, our government accepted it, and Jeff Thompson saved his "historic nose." "There they come!" From the frigate we see the boat returning with Union officers accompanying the Marshall, a welcome sign. "Orders to raise anchor and steam along side, sir," was what we heard said to the Captain, who immediately gave the necessary commands, and after much effort the anchor was raised, and we steamed slowly along side of the frigate, where we could see the rebel officers waiting to exchange places with us, and I wondered if *they* were *really* as *anxious* for the change as we. The gang plank was speedily thrown out and the roll call commenced, and as each name was called its owner responded with commendable promptitude. Some, who had for long months been in Libby and other prisons, and were weak and nervous, responded with painful eagerness to their names, and stepped quickly over the gang plank, as if fearful of the slip that might occur "twixt cup and lip." The same routine was gone through with the other side; the splendid band from the flag ship struck up "Home, Sweet Home," and men who had faced the storm of death at Shiloh, at Fredericksburg, Gettysburg, in the Wilderness, and on scores of other battle fields, embraced each other and *wept like babes*.

A ton or two of ice was put aboard the little steamer "to keep Thompson's nose cool," (as his comrades remarked,) and it was curious to see the southerners gather about it, and feel of it with so much gratification. One said, "its fo' year since I've seen any."

All was now consummated; the usual courtesies between the representatives of our government and the Confederates had passed. Anchors raised. The Marshall, whom we had

learned to esteem for his kindly attributes, stepped over the gang plank, followed by a hearty good-bye and three cheers from our fifty, which was as heartily responded to by him and his friends, and their little craft headed for Charleston.

Our noble steamer, so typical that day of the great republic, she responded with band playing the various national airs steamed back to the right of the blockading fleet which was drawn up in two lines about a mile and a half long across the channel.

As we approached the right of the first line, we turned to pass down to the left, each vessel as we passed firing a salute, and every one in full holiday rig, with every color displayed. On arriving at the left, we passed up between the two lines to the right and each craft as we passed manned the rigging and the sailors and marines in the intervals of the thunder of cannon made the welkin ring with their "three times three." It was a sight never to be forgotten. I have never witnessed a more magnificent spectacle. It was indeed a grand welcome from a grand republic. A kind "Well done," to her heroic sons. Do you wonder that tears of joy were shed by these men at such a reception, or that their vows of loyalty and devotion, and determination to *serve* to the *end*, were then and there renewed?

Arrived at the flag-ship, we were royally received by the admiral in command of the fleet, and Gen. Foster commanding the department, who with their staffs formed a brilliant retinue, in strange contrast to their seedy and rather delapidated looking guests.

F. W. SWIFT.

# CHICAMAUGA.

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A P A P E R

READ BEFORE MICHIGAN COMMANDERY

OF THE

MILITARY ORDER

OF THE

LOYAL LEGION OF THE UNITED STATES,

FEBRUARY 2nd, 1887.

BY COMPANION

HENRY M. DUFFIELD,

*Lieutenant and Assistant Provo-Marshal General, Army of Cumberland.*

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DETROIT, MICH.:  
OSTLER PRINTING COMPANY,  
1888.





## CHICAMAUGA.

In the extreme north-west corner of Georgia, there flows a sluggish, dirty, brown colored stream, to which the Indians gave, with unwitting prophecy, the appropriate name of Chicamauga, "The River of Death."

Along its banks was destined to be fought one of the most bloody battles of the war for the Union.

It flows in an almost northerly course, and winding through the gaps in Missionary Ridge, empties into the Tennessee river a little east of Chattanooga.

In the early part of September, 1863, Bragg had either been maneuvered out of Chattanooga by Rosecrans, or had purposely evacuated it to draw Rosecrans on beyond the impassable heights of Missionary Ridge, Lookout and Pidgeon mountains, then with the support of the troops expected from Virginia, strike his corps as they debouched from the various gaps in the mountains in detail, and before they could concentrate.

Rosecrans had been persuaded that Bragg would not make a stand north of Rome, and he had pressed his own army southward and westward with the view of reaching Lafayette. From Chattanooga to Lafayette, about twenty miles, the road runs nearly south. What might be called

two forks of it, cross the Chicamauga at two bridges about a mile and a half apart. The eastern or northern bridge is known as Reid's bridge, and the southern or western bridge as Alexander's bridge.

The battle of Chicamauga was fought for the possession of this road.

The fighting covered a period of five days from the 17th to the 21st of September, 1863, inclusive, but the 19th and 20th are known as "the battle."

On the evening of the 18th, the Union army extended from the Lafayette road—its left—to Crawfish Springs—its extreme right. Gen. George H. Thomas commanded the left wing, and Gen. Alex. McD. McCook the right, with the cavalry still to the right of him (Gen. R. B. Mitchell commanding in the disability of Gen. D. S. Stanley) and under his orders, while Crittenden was with the reserve corps.

The enemy had their right with reserves strongly massed in the vicinity of Reid's bridge. The Lafayette road ran parallel with Mission Ridge for some distance, and then bore to the left to Rossville, which it reached through a narrow pass in the Ridge.

The urgency of pushing his army still more to the left and north to avoid Bragg's intercepting his left and rear and getting between him and Rossville was apparent to Rosecrans, and he made his dispositions accordingly.

Meanwhile the enemy's cavalry had driven Minty's cavalry and Wilder's mounted infantry from Reid's and Alexander's bridges on to the Rossville road.

All night long Thomas moved his army to the left—that is, north-eastwardly, and down the Chicamauga, and at daylight had reached Kelley's farm on the Lafayette road. Baird's division was in front and was put in position at the forks of the road, facing Reid's and Alexander's bridges. Gen. Brannan's division was placed on Baird's left on

the two roads from the State road to Reid's and Alexander's bridges.

Col. Dan McCook informed Gen. Thomas that he had destroyed Reid's bridge after a single brigade of the enemy had crossed, and that he thought this brigade might be captured. His information was incorrect, but yet, it may have saved the army.

Thomas immediately directed Brannan to leave one of his three brigades in supporting distance of Baird, and reconnoitre the road to Reid's bridge, and if an opportunity offered, to capture the isolated brigade.

It was a current story in the army that the commander of these two brigades sent back word to Gen. Thomas to know which particular brigade he wanted captured, as there were five or six brigades there.

The attack was so sharp and so unexpected that it succeeded in driving back the enemy, and soon Croxton's brigade engaged three brigades of Forrest's cavalry, who were covering Bragg's right flank. The latter quickly called infantry to his aid, and Croxton's single brigade became hard pressed. Thomas had ridden forward, and seeing Croxton heavily engaged, sent Baird to his support. The two divisions now joined in line, drove the enemy back some distance, and halted for a re-adjustment. Learning that there was a large force on his right, Baird changed the front of King's regular brigade to the south, but not in time, and King's and Scribner's brigades were driven back by the overwhelming numbers opposed to them, in complete disorder, and with a loss of ten pieces of artillery.

Van Pelt of the 4th Michigan Battery was killed in this charge.

Starkweather's brigade was sent in to save the rout, but it too, gave way. Fortunately, at this juncture, Johnson's division of McCook's corps, and Reynold's division of

Thomas' corps arrived. They were immediately placed in position, and as soon as formed, attacked the enemy in flank, and drove him in great confusion for a mile and a half, while Brannan's troops assaulted them in front, and re-captured Guenther's battery, which King had lost.

So complete was the success of this assault that the enemy was driven in confusion across the Chicamunga. There they were posted in strong position on the west side between Reid's and Alexander's bridges.

But the line between Thomas and Crittenden was not closed and the enemy were concentrating to pierce through the gap. Brannan and Baird's divisions were ordered to reorganize their commands, and take a commanding position on the road from Reid's bridge. Their instructions were to hold it to the last extremity.

Most fortunately, Van Cleve's and Jeff. C. Davis' divisions had been ordered into action at this very point, and withstood for several hours of severest fighting the superior forces of the enemy.

While this struggle was going on on the right, Bragg assaulted the right center. King's, Hazen's, Grose's, Cruft's and Turchin's brigades stood their ground gallantly, but for a few moments only and were borne back with disordered lines. Although scarcely relieved from the savage assaults of the enemy's attacks on their left, Thomas moved Brannan's division to his disordered right, and with the most effective use of his artillery arrested the disaster. Brannan repulsed the enemy with great loss from the main road, and they were pounded by Negley's division coming up from the widow Glenn's, and again by Brannan who wheeled upon them from Kelley's farm.

The struggle ended with a severe night fight of over an hour's duration between Johnson's division and Baird's two brigades, and Cleburne's fresh division, supported by

Cheatham's. Both armies lost heavily, yet neither had had enough; each was unwilling to give up the struggle without another effort. Thomas's troops had marched all the night before, and fought all day, but they felt the contagion of their leader's indomitable courage and they were eager again to do battle. As the troops of both armies lay down upon their arms that night, the hope of victory was deadened with the oppression of doubt as to the issue.

But our troops did not know that Longstreet had reached Ringgold that evening with his division, and would be available in the battle of the next day. Breckinridge's division had not been engaged at all. Hindman's and Preston's but slightly, while nearly every brigade in the Union army had been heavily engaged.

Thomas arranged his line for Sunday's battle from left to right as follows: Baird, Johnson, Palmer, Reynolds and Brannan. Baird faced east well refused. Brannan held his right in *echelon*. The front coursed round the corner of Kelley's farm and crossing the Lafayette road a little south of his house, extended thence to the southwest.

Thomas requested Rosecrans to send Negley to fill out between Baird's left and the Reid's bridge road. At seven A. M., Negley not having arrived, Thomas sent a staff officer to urge him up as rapidly as possible. Bragg had also discovered by a reconnoissance that the Lafayette road was open on Thomas' left, and was accordingly delighted; but Thomas' staff officer brought up Beatty's brigade, which went immediately into action on Baird's left, then being furiously assaulted by the enemy who over-lapped him, and had partially gained his rear. The attack of the enemy was made in such superior numbers that Beatty in turn was compelled to fall back. Baird however, appreciating the critical situation, put in position several regiments of Johnson's reserve which, in conjunction with Vanderveer's brigade of Brannan's divis-

ion, and a part of Stanly's brigade of Wood's division, drove the enemy back, and entirely away from Baird's left and rear.

Simultaneously with this assault the enemy attacked Johnson, Palmer and Reynolds with equal fierceness, and pressed the attack heavily for two hours. Again and again they were driven back, and again and again fresh troops were put in to renew the attacks, but not more firmly did Wellington's troops at Waterloo withstand the onslaughts of Napoleon's charges than did these heroic troops resist their foe.

For over two hours did this unequal battle wage with fiercest fury. The flower of the Rebel army of Virginia was put in at last to carry the position. With the rivalry between them and Bragg's army, because of their boasted superiority, they made a last desperate effort to conquer the tired and decimated ranks of our army by a fierce assault. Stimulated to the very rashness of valor by rations of whiskey and powder they charged with the reckless fury of demons, but in vain. The slender line of blue wavered; in it were pierced great breaches, colors fell and were raised again aloft, captains wounded and killed gave place to lieutenants, and lieutenants to sergeants as company commanders. All along the line the sharp stern command "close up men," sounded out above the awful chorus of the musketry and artillery like the vox humana of a great organ.

The grandeur of the bravery of them all, the heroism of their firmness gave new courage to each individual soldier, and they were invincible. Braver men never roared to battle than followed Cromwell on to Marston Moor, but these rebel soldiers need not yield the palm to them for fierce intensity of attack, or bull-dog tenacity in its maintenance; but it was of no avail. Human bravery has limits put to its accomplishments. The enemy that they had attacked was truly worthy of their steel. Their reckless daring went down be-

fore the invincible calm determination of our troops as the sea breaks into foam and crawls white-faced back from its assaults on some granite cliff.

Just before the repulse on the left, Beatty urgently asked for fresh troops as absolutely necessary to save the left of the line. This it must not be overlooked, was the vital point of the fight, for it covered the road to Rossville,—the road to Chattanooga.

In the meantime, Thomas' continued calls for troops, and the quietness of the enemy on the right which had not up to this time—about ten o'clock in the morning—been seriously engaged, induced Rosecrans to withdraw his own right, and he ordered McCook to send two of Sheridan's brigades to Gen. Thomas with all possible dispatch, and the third, as soon as the line could be sufficiently withdrawn to permit it. He also directed Crittenden to send two reserve brigades of Van Cleve's division. Under a mis-apprehension as to Brannan's position, he imperatively ordered Wood to "close up on Reynolds. and support him." But Wood's left was in line with Brannan's right. In obedience to the order he withdrew from line and passed to the left in rear of Brannan. At this moment the enemy attacked fiercely. Gen. Davis threw his reserve brigade into the wide gap, but the heavy columns of the enemy enveloped it. His division resisted with great bravery and tenacity, but they were assaulted in front, flank and rear, and hurled in fragments towards Missionary Ridge. Laiboldt's brigade had not time to get into position to assist them, and the oncoming wave of the enemy quickly routed it. Buell's brigade of Wood's division was the last to leave the position, and it was severed as it retired. Instantly the enemy struck Brannan's flank which was left in air.

Sheridan was at the time moving his two brigades in quick time to the left. He halted, faced to the front, and with Wilder's brigade of mounted infantry, offered a desper-

ate but vain resistance. These brigades and Beatty's, and parts of Dick's brigade which were also moving to the left, were broken and swept over the ridge to the west. The suddenness of the retirement of the infantry exposed the artillery, and many guns fell into the hands of the enemy.

Brannan's right flank was temporarily thrown into confusion, but they soon restored these lines and took up a new and more refused position. The situation was now critical in the extreme. The right of the army was gone; Rosecrans had gone to Chattanooga and telegraphed that the day was lost. Thomas held but five divisions in line; against it were opposed the whole rebel army flushed with their victory on the right, and confident of success in their attacks upon our left.

Thomas was ignorant of the disaster to the right of the army and sent a staff officer (Capt. Kellogg) to hurry up Sheridan's whole division which Thomas had been informed had been sent forward to him. But the staff officer reported that in his attempt he had met a large force of the enemy in an open corn-field in rear of Reynold's position, advancing cautiously with a strong line of skirmishers. He had also met Col. Harker, whose single brigade was posted on a ridge in rear of Reynolds, and they both thought these troops were Sheridan's. At this moment heavy firing to the right and rear was heard, and Thomas rode in person in the direction of the sound. He had found it but too true. Where he had looked for Sheridan, the enemy were advancing in heavy columns. Where he hoped and was informed his reinforcements, (now so badly needed,) would be, he saw the enemy in force, maddened by their defeats, advancing cautiously, but with the gleam of a devil's fury in their eyes. No word had come to him from Rosecrans. He knew nothing as to the issue with him. With no line of troops intervening between him and the foe, he saw that foe advancing in a



direction to strike him before he could reach his troops.

In such a crisis, rarely, if ever before, was any general. With but twenty-five thousand men, all of whom were worn and wearied with the continuous fighting of the previous forty-eight hours, with both his flanks exposed, he saw the whole rebel army of sixty-five thousand men, more than half of them fresh and unfought, sweeping, circling round towards him with their line of steel, as the scythe sweeps round upon the fated grass.

Stouter hearts than even brave men have, would quail at such a sight. Defeat, nay, annihilation seemed inevitable. But there he sat upon his heavy charger, calm as some stately statue.

His hat had been thrown from his head by the overhanging branches in his rapid ride. His lips were pale and compressed; his square jaw was firmly set; his heavy brow was furrowed by a frown, and his shaggy eye-brows contracted until they all but hid his eyes from view, but on either cheek a small round flush shone in the sunlight, and we who knew him well, we who had seen him at Stone River when the right gave way, seeing that flush, knew at once that the indomitable will of "Old Pap Thomas" had registered a vow that they should never take that ridge, though the dead should cover it more thickly than the corn-hills on which we fought.

We knew not what the outcome would be. Victory we dare not hope for, but we knew that as surely as the sun went down that night, Thomas would hold that ridge or lie dead among its brave defenders on the crest.

To look at him was to drink in courage; to be near him was to share his bravery. He seemed indeed to be a very God of War.

On came the foe. As in the morning attacks they came, not firing, but withholding their fire until close range. In

front of him, to the right of him, to the left of him, they advanced in strong lines massed six and seven deep.

Hastily giving one staff officer an order to the artillery to "scrawn them with canister," and another an order to tell Reynolds that the enemy was in his rear, Thomas rode to put Wood in position. Barely had he done so before the attack began on Wood and Brannan combined.

Just in the very nick of time, General Gordon Granger who had heard the firing and had come forward without orders, rode up on Thomas' left flank with General Steedman and his division. "This opportune arrival of fresh troops," to quote Thomas's grim words, "revived the flagging spirits of our men, and *inspired them with more ardor for the contest.*"

General Steedman seizing a regimental colors, rode forward calling to his men to follow, and Whittaker's and Mitchell's brigades of fresh troops with a fury born of the impending peril, charged the foe, and striking him in the flank drove him over the ridge, and then formed line of battle from Brannan's right to the hill above Villetoes in front of Longstreet's left flank. And then the fight went on. Fresh troops of the foe poured in as fast as those in their front were driven back, until nearly nightfall.

To add to the peril of our troops, some one had ordered back the ammunition trains, and the troops had but two or three rounds to the man; but through all the storm of shot and shell, Thomas sits watching every assault, cheering his subordinates by his messages, and inspiring his soldiers by his presence.

General Brannan's aid rides up and says, General Brannan sends his compliments to Gen. Thomas, and reports that his men are out of ammunition; Gen. Thomas replies, "General Thomas' compliments to General Brannan: tell him to strip the dead and wounded." Off starts the

aid, putting spurs to his horse, when Thomas calls him back and tells him to ride leisurely, that he *does not want the troops excited.*

Soon comes another aid from Brannan, saying that he has stripped the dead and wounded, and he is again out of ammunition; to which Thomas replies, "Give my compliments to Gen. Brannan, and tell him to hold his position with the bayonet." But little time elapses before another aid from General Brannan rides up and says he fears his men will not hold their position, and asks instructions as to his disposition of them in case they cannot. With a frown, Thomas sends word, "tell Gen. Brannan that is *my old division*, and they *will* hold their position."

And so the bloody strife went on until night fell, and darkness quelled the conflict, and never was night more gladly welcomed than by our soldiers.

Wellington wished for night or Blucher, but we had no hope of any Blucher. We were alone. It was either night or death.

Then in the darkness and in silence, while "not a drum was heard nor a funeral note," with his grand guards left out in conspicuous but deceitful force; Thomas withdrew his army in safety, to the heights of Missionary Ridge without pursuit.

He had saved the day. He had held the Rossville road. He had saved Chattanooga, and in saving Chattanooga he had saved the army.

I borrow the words of the martyred Garfield, whose conspicuous gallantry on this very field, is known of all men, to fitly describe the debt we owe to Thomas.

"While men shall read the history of battles, they will never fail to study and admire the work of Thomas during that afternoon.

"With but twenty-five thousand men, formed in a semi-

circle, of which he himself was the center and soul, he successfully resisted for more than five hours, the repeated assaults of an army of sixty-five thousand men, flushed with victory, and bent on his annihilation.

“Toward the close of the day, his ammunition began to fail. One by one his division commanders reported but ten rounds, five rounds, or two rounds, left. The calm quiet answer was returned, ‘Save your fire for close quarters, and when your last shot is fired, give them the bayonet.’ On a portion of his line, the last assault was repelled by the bayonet, and several hundred rebels were captured. When night had closed over the combatants, the last sound of battle was the booming of Thomas’ shells bursting among his baffled assailants.

“He was indeed, the ‘Rock of Chicamauga’ against which the wild waves of battle dashed in vain. It will stand written forever in the annals of his country, that there he saved from destruction the Army of the Cumberland.”

HENRY M. DUFFIELD.

NOTE. The following is a correct list of the Michigan Troops engaged in the Chicamauga Campaign.

INFANTRY.

| Regt.          | Brigade Commander.                        | Division Commander. |
|----------------|-------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Ninth,         | On duty at Gen'l Thomas'<br>Head Quarters |                     |
| Tenth,         | R. T. Smith,                              | Gen'l Morgan.       |
| Eleventh,      | T. R. Stanley,                            | “ Negley.           |
| Thirteenth,    | Geo. P. Buell,                            | “ Wood.             |
| Fourteenth,    | R. F. Smith,                              | “ Morgan.           |
| Eighteenth,    | Doolittle,                                | “ Morgan.           |
| Nineteenth,    | Coburn,                                   | “ Steedman.         |
| Twenty-first,  | Lytle,                                    | “ Sheridan.         |
| Twenty-second, | Doolittle,                                | “ Morgan.           |

ARTILLERY.

|                    |             |                |
|--------------------|-------------|----------------|
| 1st Mich. Battery, | King,       | Baird.         |
| 4th “ “            | Vanderveer, | Brannan.       |
| 5th “ “            |             | R. S. Granger. |

CAVALRY.

|            |           |         |
|------------|-----------|---------|
| 2nd Mich., | Campbell, | McCook. |
| 4th “      | Minty,    | Crook.  |



MICHIGAN  
IN THE  
Opening of the War.

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A P A P E R  
READ BEFORE MICHIGAN COMMANDERY  
OF THE  
MILITARY ORDER  
OF THE  
LOYAL LEGION OF THE UNITED STATES,

MARCH 2nd, 1887,

BY COMPANION

W. H. WITHINGTON,

BREVET BRIGADIER GENERAL U. S. VOLUNTEERS.

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# MICHIGAN

IN THE

## OPENING OF THE WAR.

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The most striking illustration of the inability of human wisdom to forecast the future, even the immediate and obvious future, is presented in the failure of the North to apprehend that war was really coming thirty days before it burst upon us.

As we look back now upon that period, and recall the utterances and the movements preceding the final outbreak, the coming of civil war seems as positively foreshadowed as night is foreshadowed by the setting of the sun.

It is not strange that the declarations and threats preceding the election of Abraham Lincoln, did not greatly alarm the North. We had heard this kind of talk for so many years, it passed by us like the idle wind. But when deeds followed words and threats took form in overt acts of secession and hostility, the North still believed nothing of actual war was coming. This blindness and fatuous waiting to see what the South was going to do, continued down to the firing on Sumpter and the actual call for troops. It stood in striking contrast to the swift and resolute action of the South.

Their turn for surprise came, however. They too had failed to forecast the future. The unexpected suddenly loomed upon them in the towering form of an awakened and united North.

The first official notice and proclamation of insurrection, was made even before Lincoln's election in a message by Gov. Gist to the legislature of South Carolina.

Here let me say a somewhat personal word about South Carolina. Wanton as was her conduct, there was an intensity, directness and courage about her action which challenges admiration. The qualities which characterized her as a state, I found in her people. During six months experience as a prisoner of war in the States of Virginia and South Carolina, I had, for a prisoner, rather exceptional opportunities for meeting people of both States. The South Carolinians were like open and avowed foes, who had no fear that kindness to a prisoner would compromise their attitude of rebellion. With the Virginians there was a kind of sneakiness—a bearing half apologetic for the State's secession, and half timidity for fear any show of magnanimity or kindness would cast doubt upon their disunionism which made them very disagreeable jailors. I came home feeling that the South Carolinians were good enemies.

This little State boldly took the initiative at every stage. A month before the official message just referred to, its governor sent a confidential circular letter to the governors of all the cotton States, presenting the question of secession, in case Lincoln electors were chosen, and saying, "If a single State secedes, South Carolina will follow, if no other State takes the lead she will secede alone. And she did. Her ordinance of secession was passed December 20th, 1860. Mississippi followed January 9th, 1861. Florida January 10th; Alabama January 11th; Georgia January 19th; Louisiana January 26th; Texas February 1st. They could hardly

take this action fast enough.

Next came Gen. Twigg's treasonable surrender on the 18th of February, of all the U. S. military posts and property in Texas. There were eighteen of these posts and stations and arms and stores to a large amount.

Besides these posts in Texas, there were, in the seceded States, "one quite extensive navy yard at Pensacola, Fla., twelve to fifteen harbor forts along the Atlantic and gulf coasts, capable of mounting 1000 guns and having cost over \$5,000,000; half a dozen arsenals containing an aggregate of 115,000 arms, transferred there from Northern arsenals by Sec'y Floyd about a year before, on pretense of danger from slave insurrection. In addition there three mints, four important custom houses, three revenue cutters and a variety of miscellaneous property."

The governors of the cotton states took forcible possession of these forts, arsenals, navy yards, custom houses and other property, in some cases even before the States had formally seceded. The only forts not seized were three in Florida and those in Charleston harbor, whose final capture opened the slow moving eyelids of the North to the fact that the South meant what it was doing. All through these preceding overt acts, which were nothing less than levying actual war, the North stood still. This paralysis was first due to President Buchanan's weakness, and to traitors in his cabinet. But after Mr. Lincoln came into office and down to the fateful firing on Sumpter, there was no preparation for war. The whole army gathered for the protection of the rebel infested and rebel surrounded capital was *six companies of regular troops*. This force was supplemented by about a dozen companies of district militia some of whose members were of doubtful loyalty.

At this distance of time, and with our minds familiar with the great armies of the later days, it is hard to believe

the utterly defenseless state of the national capital at this crisis could be possible. It takes ones breath even now.

I have briefly recounted some of the steps of the rebellion in the closing days of 1860, and the opening months of 1861, in order to bring freshly before us the condition of things confronting the States at the outbreak of the war.

Although not wakened to the belief that war was actually coming, many of the States—I might say most of the States, independent of any expectation of war, were in a far better condition to defend their borders and capitals than was the national government.

The president of the United States had no army and no men from which to make an army. All he could do was to call on the States. The States had their militia which was to a greater or less extent an organized and available force according to the degree to which their respective governments had thought it worth while to foster and support a military department. With most of the States the militia was neglected, and despised because neglected. The declaration of the constitution that “a well regulated militia is necessary to the security of a free State” was unheeded. In the minds of the average legislator the State had “no use for it.” Massachusetts, New York and some other eastern States presented notable exceptions. And the exceptions saved the national capital.

How far Michigan presented an exception to this general indifference to a militia, and disbelief in any possibility of war, or need for preparation is a part of the purpose of this paper to present. Michigan had a small body of organized and uniformed militia. There were in the State at this time twenty-eight companies, having an aggregate strength of 1241 officers and men. This force existed not by the encouragement and support of the State, for the entire sum spent annually upon the whole military establish-

ment was \$3000. It was based upon the military spirit and supported from the pockets of its members. While there were some most creditable companies, due to the use of private means to keep them up, the majority of these organizations were poorly equipped and all were poorly armed. There was real soldierly instinct and martial spirit in these companies, however, and when the hour came they justified their existence.

The event which had more to do than anything else with the prompt and effective response to the call for troops, and the really brilliant entry of Michigan upon the stage of military action, was an encampment of its uniformed militia, held in Jackson, in August, 1860. It was the first State encampment of Michigan troops.

The camp was under the command of Gen. Alpheus S. Williams, the colonel of the Michigan regiment in the Mexican war, and the dear old "Pap Williams" of the grand army. Col. James E. Pittman, our first companion of the third class, was adjutant. Gen. O. B. Wilcox, then an ex-lieutenant of the U. S. army, and soon to be the gallant and spirited colonel of the 1st Michigan Volunteers, was present as an interested spectator, and an unofficial inspector and critic.

This camp, brought to organization by the old soldier who commanded it, and having, as a pattern of military drill and discipline, the Detroit Light Guard, was an awakening to the militia of the whole state. It roused their ambition and generated the soldierly spirit and pride which from the first infused the Michigan troops, and the leaven of which ran through the war. To this militia organization and to this encampment is due the generally excellent manner in which the early regiments were officered.

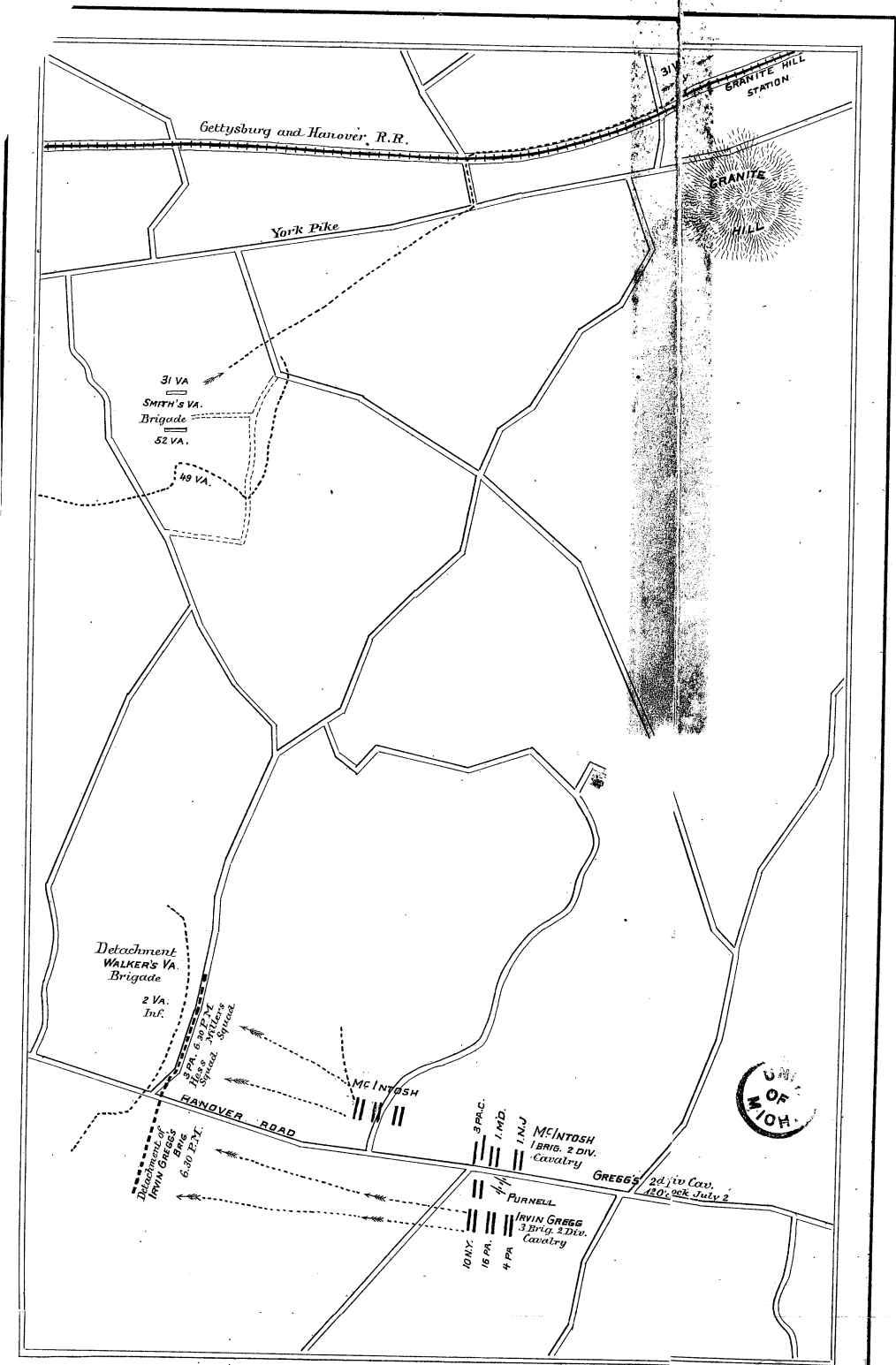
It would be claiming too much, I think, to say that the militia-men were wiser than the people or the legislature in

foreseeing the need for these preparations. They builded wiser than they knew. But it is the fact that a number of the so-called "military" men of the state, by concert of action, visited Lansing early in the session of the legislature of 1861, to urge the adoption of measures providing for a military force, to be available in the emergency which they held to be at least threatening. Having been one of the number, I speak upon personal knowledge.

The Michigan legislature met early in January, 1861. I wish it could be said that the then assembled wisdom of the state excelled that of sister states. Two of the foremost men of the state then, and foremost still, (Hon. James F. Joy and Gov. H. P. Baldwin,) were members of that legislature. But they could not forecast the events close at hand, and their action exemplifies my trite remark upon the fallibility of human wisdom.

Earnest, stirring and patriotic words were spoken by the retiring Governor Wisner, and by the incoming Governor Blair, and the legislature passed resolutions of no uncertain sound, but beyond this, it seems to have gone on placidly about its routine business, and to have manifested no belief that there would be any fighting.

The military men urged action providing for organizing two regiments, and, towards the end of the session, an Act was passed entitled "An Act to provide a military force." This Act was approved March 16th, 1861. It authorized the governor to accept and muster into the state service from the uniformed volunteer militia companies, enough to make two regiments. Although the Confederacy had then been organized at Montgomery; Jeff. Davis elected president; Twiggs surrendered to rebels in arms; the forts seized; batteries commanding Sumter erected; the "Star of the West" fired upon and repelled in its attempt to provision the Sumter garrison, and other acts of open hostility performed, it was



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Map of the Field of Operations of GREGG'S (Union) and Stewart's (Confed) Cavalry at the Battle of Gettysburg July 3 1863. 6 to 8 P.M. July 2.

provided that, "in case of actual hostilities," these troops might be transferred to the military service of the general government.

This force, by the terms of the Act, was to be put on a course of drill and instruction at such points, and to devote such time, not exceeding ten days in any month, as should be directed by the commander-in-chief. Care was taken to provide that the governor might disband these regiments, for the legislature did not really believe there would be any need of them.

I don't like to tell it of my honored friend, Governor Baldwin, but a single word which he proposed to insert in this bill to provide a military force, exhibits more forcibly than any statement I can make, the utter failure of statesmen of that time to realize that the country was on the brink of a tremendous conflict. Looking upon the bill to provide a military force as a scheme of the military men, and having the idea of that period as to a militia, Governor Baldwin, then in the state senate, moved to amend the bill by inserting before the word "field," where "field officers" occurred, the word "corn," so that it should read "cornfield officers."

The disbelief in any actual need for the act to provide a military force was finally and completely manifested by the adjournment of the legislature without appropriating any money to carry it out. It was thus so practically useless that Gov. Blair took no action under it.

The legislators had hardly reached their homes however before they were summoned to meet again. The emergency for which lame and doubting provision was made was nearing fast. Gov. Blair saw it, and by proclamation on the 2nd day of April, called the legislature to meet in extra session on the 7th day of May. Events were traveling faster though than this. Before the 7th of May came around, the doubts, uncertainties and mists of the political atmosphere had been



rolled away like a scroll. Let me describe the event which dissipated them in the language of Nicolay.

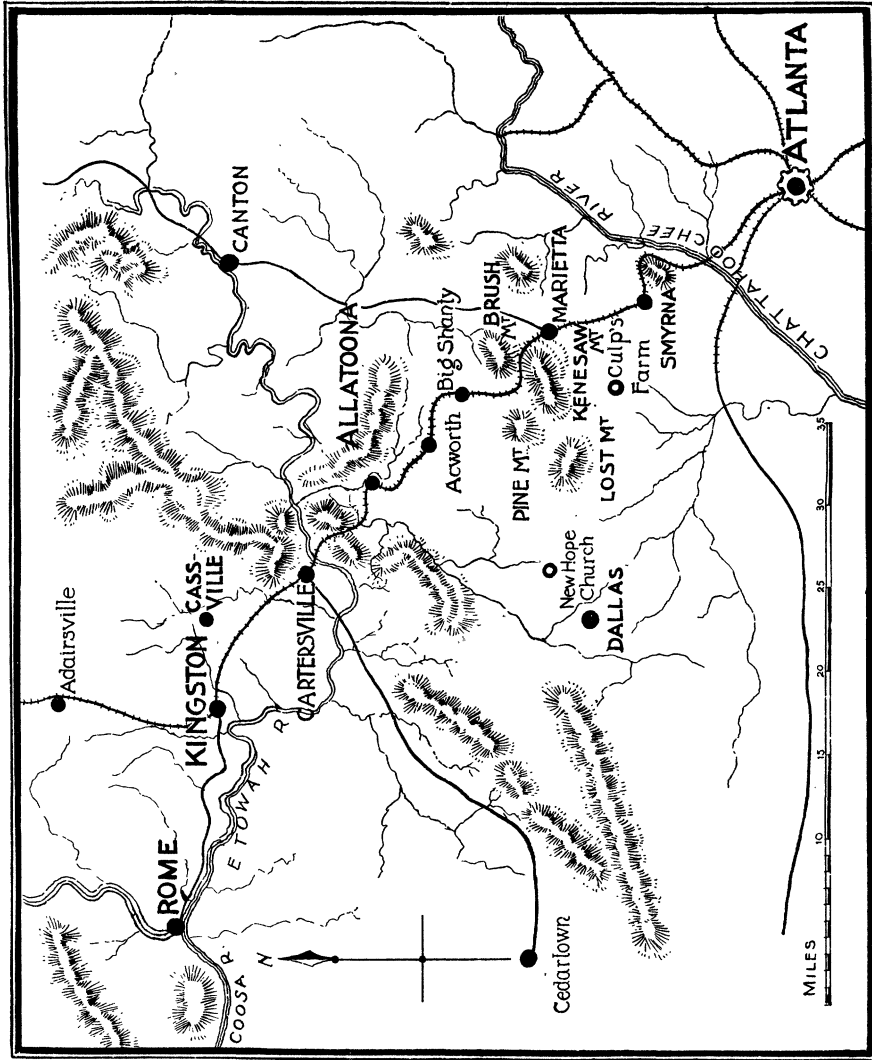
“At half past four o'clock on the morning of April 12th, 1861, while yet the lingering night lay upon the waters of the bay, leaving even the outline of Fort Sumter scarcely discernible, the assembled spectators saw a flash from the mortar battery near old Fort Johnson on the south side of the harbor, and an instant after a bomb-shell rose in slow high curve through the air and fell upon the fort. To the beholders it was the inauguration of the final scene in their local drama, to the nation and the world at large it began a conflict of such gigantic proportions and far reaching consequences that it will forever stand as one of the boldest landmarks in history.”

Sunday, April 14th, the flag went down, and Anderson surrendered. April 15th came the President's call for 75,000 men for three months. Gov. Blair's call followed on the 16th of April, for one regiment of ten companies.

What now to do was clear enough. Troops must be raised and organized. But how raised and how organized? When confronted with this question it was realized for the first time in this state that there was some use for a militia, and for men with knowledge of military affairs. There was no groping or pottering. The intense urgency of doing found clearly defined advice of what to do from Williams, Wilcox, and other military men. Our worthy companion, Gen. Robertson, had then just entered upon his long and useful career as Adjutant General, (which position he still holds and will hold for life,) bringing to his duties the experience of an old soldier.

Thanks to the causes which I have named, Michigan had something of a militia and the call and subsequent orders provided that this first regiment should be made up from the uniformed volunteer companies. The camp at Jackson had

ALLATOONA AND VICINITY.





given knowledge of what companies were most proficient and best officered and enabled selections to be made with promptness and intelligence.

✓ Tenders of services came promptly from all the live companies. From them the following were selected and made up the 1st regiment.

Detroit Light Guard, Jackson Greys, Coldwater Cadets, Manchester Union Guards, Steuben Guards, Ann Arbor; Michigan Hussars, Detroit; Bur Oak Guards, Ypsilanti Light Guard, Marshall Light Guard, Hardee Cadets, Adrian.

By general orders, April 24th, Lieut. Orlando B. Wilcox was appointed Colonel of the regiment, Capt. L. L. Comstock, of the Manchester Co., Lieut. Col. and Capt. Bidwell of the Coldwater Co. Major.

The following day Col. Wilcox designated his staff, lettered the companies and ordered them to Fort Wayne, Detroit.

So numerous were the tenders of services and so clear the need of more troops the Governor in the same order of April 24th, constituted a brigade and appointed Gen. Alpheus S. Williams, Brigadier General. April 25th, the 2nd regiment was organized. This regiment was also made up, with the exception of two companies, of the uniformed militia. Whether this was a good regiment or not I leave to its second Colonel, our Loyal Legion Commander to testify.\*

The money for equipment which the legislature had failed to appropriate, and which indeed would not so soon have been in the treasury if it had, was promptly made up by individual subscriptions. In this way \$81,020 was raised.

Gen. Lewis Cass, of Detroit, and Henry A. Hayden, of Jackson, each contributed \$3000, being the largest single subscriptions. This method of getting money had to be continued up to the middle of July 1861.

Gen. O. M. Poe.

It would be difficult for me to describe but cannot be difficult for you to recall the excitement of those days. At one bound the north sprung from a kind of benumbed gaze, to resolute purpose and intense activity. Michigan was not distinguished from her Sister States in this but she was distinguished for the manner in which this purpose and activity took form in the character and equipment of her first contributions of troops.

Detroit had for years been a military post and the U. S. officers there helped to give practical direction to the ideas of what was required. Michigan sent out her first regiment fully armed, well equipped, fairly well drilled and in condition to at once take the field. It was ready to leave the state and importuning for orders to do so before those orders came.

The enthusiasm of the people, men and women, found expression in bestowing upon the regiment abundant gifts. There were presentations of flags and cockades, soft underclothing and convenient housewives, blue scarfs for the gaiety and stout boots for the discomfort of the wearers, havelocks to protect them from the southern sun, and bibles to guard them from a still more heated region. Grim suggestions in lint and bandages, photographs and charms from sisters and sweethearts, and "God bless yous" from the heart of the whole state. So equipped and so laden with gifts and blessings Michigan's first regiment was sent forth on the 13th day of May, 1861.

The superior form in which Michigan troops were sent to the front can best be seen by comparison and perhaps is best established by the testimony of others. The first volunteers to reach the capital were some three or four hundred men from Pennsylvania; I say men not troops because they had neither arms or equipment. Then came the armed, compact, and gallant Massachusetts Sixth, whose prompt departure and thrilling entry upon the scene will forever stand as a

monument to the value of a well organized and well sustained militia. "To this regiment belongs the unfading honor of being the first regiment armed and equipped for service to respond to the president's call."

It mustered on Boston Common the day after the call and the day after that embarked for Washington. Of course I do not present this achievement as exalting Michigan. None of the states equalled Massachusetts and New York in the efficiency of their militia. Michigan however as well as Massachusetts is placed in high light and the value of an equipped militia further exemplified by two facts in this connection.

The contested and bloody passage through Baltimore of the Sixth Massachusetts is well known. It is not so well known that immediately following the Sixth Massachusetts was Small's Pennsylvania brigade numbering a thousand men, all unarmed. The mob which had attacked the Sixth Massachusetts turned upon these men, forced them to retake their train and go back to Philadelphia.

For days Maryland hung in the balance between the Union and secession. The rebel element held sway in Baltimore and no Union troops passed through that city from that time until the arrival of the Michigan First. The First arrived at Baltimore May 16th. The mob which had attacked the Sixth Massachusetts and discomfited and driven home the Pennsylvanians', was still there, but it did not venture to raise its hand against the Michigan soldiers. It thought prudent to go no further than mutterings and sullen looks.

On the way to Baltimore the regiment stopped over night at Harrisburgh and quartered at the camp there established for the rendezvous of Pennsylvania troops, and the detention of volunteers from other states who had been sent forward unequipped. In the morning we had orders to proceed, and I well remember the looks and expressions of admiration,

and envy of our natty uniform and complete equipment, from the chafing, impatient and somewhat forlorn mass of men gathered there and waiting for arms.

From the testimony of others I make a few quotations :

The Cleveland Plaindealer, speaking of the arrival of the First in that city, said, "A great many of our citizens visited them and expressed admiration of the men, and the very admirable manner in which they had been armed and equipped for service by the state. The comparison between the action of Michigan and Ohio is not at all flattering to Ohio."

Pittsburg and Harrisburg papers were equally complimentary.

The Baltimore Sun of May 17th, said: "The Michigan regiment attracted general attention and commendation by their solid appearance and well disciplined movements *a la* Hardee. It was composed almost wholly of young, steady and intelligent looking men, and it appeared to be capitally officered. They were exceedingly well equipped, thanks to the liberality of the state of Michigan, which had furnished them an entire outfit from head to foot, and were armed with Minnie guns. \* \* \* The Michiganders, were accompanied by two Pennsylvania companies from Camp Curtin. The Pennsylvanians were armed with old percussion muskets."

The New York Tribune's Washington correspondent telegraphed, "No regiment that has yet arrived has created such an excitement as the Michigan First."

And the New York Evening Post's Washington correspondent wrote, "The Michigan rifle regiment came into town about ten o'clock last night, marching from the depot up the avenue to Eleventh street. They were preceded by a splended band of music, which soon aroused our citizens, and long before they had reached the quarters assigned them

hundreds of people were out to give them welcome. The enthusiasm of the crowd was irrepressible for *this was the first western regiment* which had arrived at the capital."

Thus Michigan made her response to the President's call.

The "splendid band" was the famous Light Guard band of Detroit. Its leader was Prof. Kern, whose figure of conspicuous rotundity, many Detroiters must well remember. It proved a tempting butt for one of Mr. Lincoln's jokes. The day after the arrival of the regiment, the officers went to the White House. The band serenaded the President, and the party were invited into the east-room. The officers were presented, and also Prof. Kern. Eyeing him over, Mr. Lincoln said, with one of his droll smiles, "Professor, you must be the biggest blower in the service."

Every step of the regiment, from its summons onward had been for most of its members, first steps into new scenes and an unknown life. All was strange and exciting. The act next before it however has left a deeper impress on my mind than any other event of my service. Up to the 23rd of May, the Union forces had been gathering at Washington. The rebels occupied the City of Alexandria, and the opposite bank of the Potomac.

On the night of the 23rd, the war was to be formally opened by the initial forward movement on to rebel soil. Washington was full of rebels and rebel sympathisers, and absolute secrecy as to the movement was decreed. Under arms with rations and ammunition, subordinates and men felt, rather than knew, that the Potomac was to be crossed. The movement was momentous, and secrecy, quiet and night added awe to it. Orders were given in subdued tones, and in solemn silence the four regiments ordered to cross at the long bridge, took up their march at 2 o'clock in the morning of May 24th.



The movement was not so dangerous as most of us, who expected to find the opposite bank of the river swarming with rebels, supposed, but it was historic as the opening aggressive movement—the entry of the Grand Army of the Republic, as it was then named for the first time, upon the sacred soil. In this movement Michigan took part with its First regiment.

After crossing the Potomac it was detached from the other regiments and marched down to Alexandria, which City it entered by land simultaneously with Elsworth's Zouaves who had approached it by water, and whose gallant leader there met his tragic death. The rebel troops fled on our arrival, and the First raised the stars and stripes over the captured City.

With the first battle may properly close Michigan in the opening of the war. I shall not prolong this paper to describe that battle. The story of Bull Run has been told, and we cannot enjoy dwelling upon it. Michigan had a part in it, however, which was not inglorious. Under our own Richardson, the Second and Third Michigan regiments were with the troops which opened fire upon the rebels at Blackburn's Ford on the eve of Bull Run, and which the next day, covered the retreat from that ill starred field. The first, being of Wilcox's brigade, Heintzelman's division, made the long circuitous march to turn the rebel left. It crossed at Sudley Ford and did its fighting on the hill near the Henry house, where battle raged the fiercest. McDowell's report says, "The hottest part of the fighting was for the possession of this hill. The force engaged here was Heintzelman's division, Willcox and Howards's brigades on the right," supported by others.

Captured on this hill, I was put on parole and allowed to remain a few days at the temporary hospital caring for Col. Willcox, Capt. Ricketts and others.

Two days after the battle, under this parole, I walked over the battle field. Approaching it from the Lewis house, Gen. Beauregard's head-quarters, on the day of the battle, the first dead bodies I came upon were clad in the dark blue roundabouts of my dear comrades of the Michigan First. I knew the regiment had pushed its way further than any others. It was a gratification to its Colonel, and his comrades, on their return from southern prisons, to know that the distinction was recognized. It must still be a matter of some pride to every Michigan man to read from Gen. Heintzelman's endorsement upon a report of the Bull Run battle.

“The First Michigan on the extreme right, held the most advanced position we occupied on that disastrous day.”



THE OPERATIONS  
OF  
GENERAL ALPHEUS S. WILLIAMS,  
AND HIS COMMAND IN THE  
CHANCELLORSVILLE CAMPAIGN.

AS WITNESSED BY A MEMBER OF HIS STAFF.

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A P A P E R  
PREPARED AND READ BEFORE MICHIGAN COMMANDERY  
OF THE  
MILITARY ORDER  
OF THE  
LOYAL LEGION OF THE UNITED STATES,

APRIL 6<sup>TH</sup>, 1887.

BY COMPANION  
COL. SAM'L E. PITTMAN.

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1888.



## Chancellorsville Campaign.

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As whatever military career a staff officer may have, is as far as it goes that of his commanding officer, the writer, in part as a diversion, occupies some of his leisure from time to time in arranging his memoranda of the several campaigns in which Gen'l Williams took part, and this paper is part of such record. If therefore, personal pronouns are occasionally used, it is asked that due allowance may be made.

THE SUBJECT IS,

“The operations of General Alpheus S. Williams, and his command in the Chancellorsville campaign, as witnessed by a member of his staff.”

The first division of the 12th corps, army of the Potomac, commanded by Gen'l Williams, during the winter of 1862 and 63, and spring following, occupied the right of the corps at Stafford Court House, Virginia—said corps forming the right of Gen'l Hooker's army.

On the 13th of April, 1863, among the rumors current in our camp, was that the entire cavalry force had moved under Gen'l Stoneman, in the direction of Kelley's Ford, on the Rappahannock, which movement at once suggested to all, active operations of some kind. The following day orders were received to cut down transportation, draw rations, ammunition, &c., and hold ourselves in readiness to move.

The utmost activity and enthusiastic speculations as to the work to be done, prevailed throughout the camps, which enthusiasm extended to certain regiments whose time was nearly up, and were only waiting orders from army head quarters for muster out. Two of these regiments were two years enlistment, and one nine months. To their credit, let it be said, that in zealous preparation, they fell not behind that other portion of the command, having no cause to expect soon to be welcomed in their own dear homes by rejoicing relatives and friends.

The onward orders however did not come as was expected, but as it is so well known that unprecedented storms delayed all Gen'l Hooker's plans, particulars need not here be given. Finally on the 25th of April, the orders were received to move on Monday morning the 27th, at day break and right welcome they were, although only one man in the corps knew as to the objective point; and that man, (Gen'l Slocum,) wouldn't tell.

Gen'l Hooker's entire army had now reached a high state of efficiency, by his judicious anticipation of all reasonable wants of the troops; by frequent reviews in which the several corps gained respect for, and confidence in each other; and another important factor in giving the army greater power, was the liberal granting of furloughs to enlisted men, and leaves of absence to officers, which gave all the needed rest and change, after the weary marches and severe fighting of the preceding summer and autumn.

Furthermore, the distrust of Gen'l Hooker, attributable in some degree to the reputation he had for over self-confidence and an impatience with superiors in rank, had given place to great confidence: in many portions of his command, to almost unbounded admiration; so that everything conspired to call out the best work of a thoroughly loyal and earnest army.

General Williams' native talent, aided by a thorough knowledge of the art of war—the result of his life study of military science and history, together with his experience in the Mexican war, placed him in perfect harmony with preparations for vigorous operation, and he heartily responded at the outset, by continuing that firm and steady, though not wearying, discipline which he had the faculty of exercising to a marked degree, and which he had required when he first assumed command of troops in the field.

He stimulated the officers of his division to still more frequent recitations in tactics, requiring daily drills in good weather; taking himself an active personal part whenever and wherever it promised to do the most good.

At the beginning of the Chancellorsville campaign, the three brigades were commanded respectively by Gen'ls Thos. H. Ruger, J. F. Knipe and Col. R. Ross, (the latter only in temporary command.)

Gen'ls Ruger and Knipe were in this campaign, as they had been upon all previous occasions, ready co-operators with their division commander, and perhaps the aforesaid colonel also as far as he knew how. The staff officers assisting the general in the field were Capt. Wm. D. Wilkins, Asst. Adj't. Gen'l, one Aide (the writer), an acting Asst. Inspector Gen'l.; the Commissary of Musters, and a Prussian officer originally sent over with letters to Gen'l McClellan for the purpose of witnessing war in this county, and who had been commissioned in our service with orders to report to Gen'l Williams.

It was on the 20th of April that the division emblem—the red star—had been first put in use, and it proved of great practicable benefit. This emblem ever after was looked upon with great pride, and was the same red star when the division became the 1st division of the 20th corps under Hooker, Slocum and Williams, as corps commanders, and



Thomas and Sherman as Army Commanders. It is even more highly valued now in our peaceful pursuits in civil life.

To give the plans of Hooker, or to follow the movements of the other corps of the Army of the Potomac, would not prove interesting, for all these have been told and retold so that even the generation then unborn has become familiar with the particulars.

The march from Stafford, as before mentioned, was entered upon the 27th of April with eight days light rations, and sixty rounds of ammunition carried on the person—it becoming necessary to use part of the knapsack for this purpose. A reserve of small arm ammunition was carried by 70 mules of most diminutive size ; two boxes for each animal. Two ambulances, a few wagons for forage, and one battery was assigned to each division—the remaining artillery and the regular wagon trains were to be sent on some other time.

Nothing occurred during the two days march to Kelly's Ford to break the monotony beyond the passing on to the head of the column, when near the ford, of Gen'l Hooker and his staff, followed by a great cavalcade of the gorgeous lancers ; of the escort it might have been said

“ And on they came  
In mortal lists to fight,  
Their oaths are said,  
Their prayers are prayed,  
Their lances in the rest are laid.”

At Hartwood Church the 12th corps had united with the 5th and 11th corps, and arrived at Kelly's Ford, it was announced by general order that all three corps would cross the river—the 12th and 11th moving thence to Germania Ford on the Rapidan, crossing there, while Gen'l Meade the 5th corps would proceed via Ely's Ford ; the three corps to unite again at Chancellorsville if they got there, and there seemed to be no doubt felt as to that.

As Gen'l Hooker returned to Falmouth, Gen'l Slocum was placed in command of the entire force of three corps. Gen'l Williams consequently fell in command of the 12th corps, and Gen'l Ruger of the division, each officer retaining his personal staff.

The morning of the third day, our corps which was to have the advance, was astir before daylight. The entire force was still on the north side of the river at Kelly's, which was to be crossed, and before night also the Rapidan at Germania.

As the troops lay massed in column over the green fields near the river bank, and as the different arms—infantry, artillery and cavalry (General Pleasanton with part of his cavalry had joined) moved down the winding way to the pontoon bridge, across it and up the banks on the south side—some evolutions being made both by cavalry and infantry, preparatory for attack if necessary; surrounded as the locality was by an amphitheatre of hills, a view was presented that it is neither easy to forget nor to describe. The interest of the hour was perhaps largely increased in that there was more than ordinary risk in the isolation that had been entered upon.

In crossing the pontoons, some demonstration was made by a Confederate cavalry picket, but it was short. We were soon over, and bounding off for Germania.

While the march toward Germania was rapid, still it was with reference to meeting determined opposition. A squadron or two of cavalry led off. Under Gen'l Williams's arrangements, the infantry skirmish line occupied nearly a mile on either side of the one road we had to take, with two regiments marching in the fields by the right of companies—the remaining brigades of the 1st division following on the road, and the 2nd division (Geary) at proper distance. The 11th corps followed; and thus the column proceeded, the Con-

federate cavalry keeping us in sight until well on the way. Arriving at Germania, a Confederate force of bridge builders and armed guards was found, which soon fell into our hands. They had not progressed in their work far enough to help the advance division any in crossing the stream, and the ford, on account of heavy rain the day before, was all but impassable ; nevertheless the men pushed in, with the water to their armpits, and cartridge-boxes slung upon their fixed bayonets. A foot bridge was soon built over the piers of the burnt bridge, men detailed to relieve the "shackasses" of their burdens, by carrying the ammunition over the foot bridge, while the little animals swam the stream to resume their loads upon the other side. The 2nd division and the 11th corps then comfortably crossed the foot bridge. On the 30th of April, Chancellorsville was reached, having had some skirmishing with an infantry force with artillery just before arriving. We had marched 65 miles in three and one-half days, crossing both the Rappahannock and the Rapidan.

Gen'l Meade's corps had already arrived, having the shorter route, and that evening Gen'l Hooker established his headquarters at the Chancellorsville House, which soon presented a gay and cheerful scene ; everybody happy, and many anticipating overwhelming victories and great success.

Congratulations were the order of the evening, and the joy of the occasion culminated in Gen'l Hooker's highly enthusiastic general order, complimenting the three corps, &c., &c.

Gen'l Slocum returned to the command of the corps ; Gen'l Williams to his division ; and the whole command fell to work constructing defensive works.

Much has been published about this campaign, and the work of the 1st and 2nd May, is well known, down to the hour when Jackson's forces were stopped in their mad pursuit of the 11th corps.

At this point, I read a leaf forming part of my record of those days, but reluctantly, as it revives unwelcome memories of Gen'l Hooker, whose friendship I gained and highly prized during the time he commanded the 20th corps in the Atlanta campaign, namely :

On the morning of the 1st May, there existed much anxiety and apprehension among nearly all, if not all, the corps, division and other commanders. It was of current report, that Gen'l Hooker, the night before, had said : " God Almighty could not prevent his destroying the rebel army," which created great uneasiness—even to the most irreligious. Doubtless the absence of plan and preparation for combat, contributed largely to disturbing the minds of many ; still, the blasphemy (no one hesitating to call it that) produced a profound impression. If, consequently, the Divine Hand is to be traced in what so soon followed, is it not striking that the great exponent of Confederate devoutness should be the instrument to crush the Union Havelock.

When we see such a remarkable march and attack as that of Jackson ; such unaccountable neglect by so able an officer as Gen'l Howard, and the complete mental paralysis of Hooker, it does cause us to ponder over the matter not a little.

Passing over then to Saturday afternoon, just before Jackson's announcement of his presence upon Howard's flank and rear, we find Sickles with Birney's and Whipple's divisions, and Williams with his division, pushing to southward. The right of Williams' division had come in collision with Anderson's troops, but the brigade temporarily commanded by Col. Ross not emerging from the thicket through which our line had to advance, Gen'l Williams directed the writer to personally bring it forward. A considerable part of the brigade was found involved in an extensive windfall, and while in the act of extricating it, the General came from our

front, remarking that something serious had happened on Howard's right; ordered this brigade, as he had the other two, in accordance with instructions through a staff officer from Gen'l Slocum, to return as quickly as possible to the works we had just advanced from.

As soon as the heads of the brigade had reached the open ground, Gen'l Williams with his staff started in the direction whence much could be heard, but nothing seen on account of the intervening woods. The Gen'l at once sent the writer to direct Col. Cook, commanding the guard over the knapsacks of the several brigades, to hold his position at all hazards. Upon reaching the left of Cook's original position, no troops were found, but considerably in rear. through an opening in the wood, I saw a mass of men, artillery, beef-cattle, mules, &c., flying in wild confusion towards Chancellorsville, whereupon I rejoined my General, who with Col. Wilkins was riding at full speed in the direction of the flying crowd on the plank road. We subsequently learned that Col. Cook with his six companies had moved forward gathering and holding for a short time, some 2000 of the fugitives. These demoralized men however soon departed, leaving Cook and those who stood by him to fall prisoners to Jackson's advance line.

Reaching the plank road, we joined in with Col. Dickin-son of Hooker's staff, and other officers attempting to rally Howard's men, but aside from halting a few batteries we could do nothing, officers and men were alike stampeded; they were like a flock of sheep driven to a corner with not one thought of defence. However, after a momentary stop, they were off again in the direction of U. S. Ford, and we were not sorry to have them go, for the troops of our division who had followed their chief on the double quick, soon reached the plank road, and thus had a comparatively clear field upon which to interpose between the pursuers and the

pursued. Let it be said here however, that we learned later on, when this corps was consolidated with the 12th, that there were regiments and brigades in the 11th corps that were able, and did under the same Hooker, in Sherman's campaigns, perform their full duty, and would have done it at Chancellorsville had they had a fair chance.

Gen'l Williams, who had met his approaching column, led it by a right flank to the plank road, a little to the west of Fairview, faced two brigades to the front, which brought our line facing to the west directly opposed to the approaching enemy. This new line, was at nearly right angles with that of the morning and afternoon, our left just crossing the works, with the right and rear of the works now occupied by the enemy. The Gen'l immediately advanced his line against the exultant foe, receiving and returning its fire.

Jackson's lines however had now become very much mixed; like the spent tempest too, his furious charge had lost its force, and seeing organized troops in their front, Stonewall's men thought it wise to halt. About this time Jackson's right flank was assailed by Pleasanton, as Jackson rushed on after Howard, thus slightly changing direction to the left, and bearing upon our centre and right, and beyond.

Also about this time Hooker had ordered Berry's division of the 3rd corps forward from the Chancellorsville House, which division subsequently connected north of the plank road with our right at the plank road.

My memoranda and memory, and also letters written by Gen'l Williams to his friends at home immediately after, all agree that the final stoppage of the Confederate lines occurred about sunset.

As quiet began to reign, which was not long (events followed events quickly that afternoon and evening), the writer approaching his chief, remarked somewhat rapturously perhaps that "we had gotten out of the scrape pretty well," to

which he replied, "We may not be out yet; I look for them on our right flank," whereupon it was urged that as Gen'l Slocum was not present, and as it was a time of so much confusion and uncertainty, he (the Gen'l) should go in person to Gen'l Hooker and explain our position. The hero of this sketch, however was too much of a soldier to leave his command even for so short a time, or to think of going beyond his corps commander, but the seriousness of the situation so far overcame his hesitation as to prompt him to say, "You go with my compliments, reporting our position, and add that I expect to be flanked, if not supported, on my right very soon." A few minutes ride took me to the Chancellorsville house. Gen'l Slocum, who with other general officers, among them Gen'l Howard, was on the verandah advanced to meet me, eagerly enquiring what news, and to him the message was given.

Both Slocum and Howard (the latter having joined us) said, "come with us to Gen'l Hooker." The report was made to Gen'l Hooker, the bearer thereof instructed to assure Gen'l Williams that troops were already moving to connect with him, and upon my return Gen'l Berry's men were taking such position.

If I have gone very much into particulars, it has been to show the skillful and important service done at this critical moment by General Williams, backed up by his magnificent troops.

All the books thus far published, giving a history of Chancellorsville, are silent as to this achievement of our commander, and his "Red Star" Division.

Neither has a correct account of Sunday morning's battles following, as yet been published, all which seems unaccountable when access to official reports is so easy at the war department where they are filed.

After getting our lines adjusted with Gen'l Berry's, all

was quiet, when an order, said to originate at army headquarters, came, to push forward from our right, so as to re-occupy the works. The execution of this order would involve an advance direct to the front, and a half left wheel of the deployed brigades; and it was then dark, the light of the faint misty moon having but little effect in the woods and underbrush.

With a good part of Jackson's troops massed upon the ground these two brigades were to sweep over; now looking back upon it, it would be as practicable for Gen'l Poe to attempt to remove the obstructions at the Limekilns with a snow plough, as for that force to accomplish what it was ordered to attempt

When this last movement was found a hopeless task, we were ordered back upon the line running north and south, upon which we had met Jackson's advance a few hours before. The enemy followed sharply but wisely.

The result of the evening operations was a loss of 500 officers and men to our division. Col. Wilkins, at the front, as he always was in an engagement, unless his duties prevented, was captured. Our right regiment lost its Colonel, Lt. Col., and about 200 men killed, wounded and prisoners. Another regiment its Colonel and many men. The Major of another regiment mortally wounded, and so on.

Quiet again reigned, and the dead silence was even more painful than the roar of cannon and musketry just over; but about eleven o'clock, the silence was effectually broken when the divisions of Whipple and Birney, of the 3d, (Sickles,) corps, were pushed against Jackson's right flank, and a little across our left front, the principal object of which was to bring these two divisions into some sort of connection with the main line, now composed of William's and Berry's divisions, for Jackson's troops interposed between Birney and that line.



From a descriptive letter Gen'l Williams wrote home a few days after these events, which within a few weeks has been placed in my hands, I am permitted to give the following extract, which is a graphic pen picture of that night attack.

“ A tremendous roll of infantry fire, mingied with yellings and shoutings, almost diabolical and infernal, opened the conflict on the side of Sickles' division. For some time my infantry and artillery kept silent, and in the intervals of the musketry, I could distinctly hear the oaths and imprecations of the rebel officers evidently having hard work to keep their men from stampeding. In the meantime Sickles' artillery opened—firing over the heads of the infantry, and the din of arms and inhuman yellings and cursings redoubled. All at once Berry's division across the road on our right, opened in heavy vollies, and Knipe (commanding my right brigade next to the road on the south) followed suit.

Best began to thunder with his thirty odd pieces. In front and on the flank, shell and shot and bullets were poured into these woods, which were evidently crowded with rebel masses, preparing for the morning attack. I can conceive of no spectacle more magnificently, and indeed awfully grand and sublime, than this night attack. Along our front and Sickles flank probably 15,000 or more musketry were belching an almost incessant stream of flame, while from the elevations just in the rear of each line, from 40 to 50 pieces of artillery kept up an uninterrupted roar, re-echoed from the woods with redoubled echo, from the bursting shells which seemed to fill every part of them with fire and fury.

Human language can give no idea of such a scene—such an infernal and yet sublime combination of sound and flame and smoke, and dreadful yells of rage, of pain, of triumph, or of defiance. Suddenly, almost on the instant, the tumult is hushed, hardly a voice can be heard, one would almost sup-

pose that the combatants were holding breath to listen for one another's movements. But the contest was not renewed."

The result of this night attack was to bring Birney's division in communication with the line running across the plank road occupied by ourselves, and Berry as heretofore described. The nominal front of Birney and Whipple would be to the northward, but nearly all night attacks end in confusion and misunderstanding, and this was no exception. To Gen'l Hooker there probably seemed to be only the one thing to do, viz: to gather them in rear of our line, and at break of day this was begun, the last of Whipple's division coming in betwixt Williams' left and Geary's right, with the enemy after them in considerable haste.

Upon our left, just around the angle, Geary joined, so that he faced to the south. On beyond Geary, it is hardly necessary to speak, for it was on Berry's and Williams' line with enfilading fire on Geary, that the battle of Sunday, May 3rd, raged.

How Williams' division behaved on Sunday morning, May 3rd, will be shown by giving a sample account from one who opposed us, in the following extract from the story of a First South Carolina infantry officer, in Caldwell's history of Mc'Gowan's brigade.

He says: "We could not see much for the morning was foggy, and the smoke of both lines soon became so dense that I could not even distinguish the colors of the enemy. The firing waxed furious. Our advance was checked, the cheering hushed, all on both sides addressed themselves to loading and firing as rapidly as possible. The two right regiments were hotly engaged. Indeed the 13th and 14th South Carolina had to fire at right oblique. The slaughter of Orr's Rifles, and the 1st South Carolina was immense. Gen'l Mc'Gowan, just behind the colors of the First huzzahed lustily, seeming to be at the highest enthusiasm. The Federals fired.

with unusual accuracy. It was to be expected, for we stood in full relief upon the crest of the hill. The few men they had scattered along the ravine behaved with provoking composure.

They deliberately loaded their pieces behind the trees, stepped out, picked their men, fired, and returned to the trees to reload. In the course of time however, they were discovered, and forced to lie close. Archer's brigade, as I understand it, was to move clear to our right, and at some inclination to us, so as to strike the enemy in flank. The latter must have apprehended something of the sort, for they hugged the fortified hill with singular pertinacity. But now we were at a standstill. The enemy became emboldened, and advanced upon the unprotected right flank of our brigade. At last he swung forward so as almost to enfilade our line. The rifles gave way. The First followed slowly, and the movement extended gradually to the left of the brigade. But we halted at the line of works about 70 or 80 yards from the last position; and the enemy continuing to advance, we resumed battle. Gen'l Mc'Gowan was wounded upon the works. Brig. Gen'l Colston brought in a fresh line, saying they would show us how to clear a Federal line: But their reckoning was not accurate, they were forced back with us into the works. The firing continued unintermitted, deadly."

To show what became of us after these four hours of deadly struggle, the closing lines of Gen'l Williams modest official report will best suffice, which are as follows :

"My regiments had literally exhausted their ammunition, some of them had been 24 hours without food, and most of them several nights with but little sleep, while engaged in entrenching. My regiments had several times crossed the breastworks, to attack the enemy's repulsed columns, but the nature of the ground, the thickness of the underbrush, the heavy columns of the enemy always at hand, as well as their

positions on either flank, admonished me to act on the defensive, until a more favorable moment for the offensive should present itself.

Finding it was impossible to bring up my ammunition pack train under the tremendous fire of artillery and infantry, or to replenish my ammunition in any way, I reported to the Major General commanding the corps, that my regiments must be replaced with fresh troops, and that it would be impossible for me longer to resist the heavy attacks of the enemy. Soon after, meeting Gen'l Sickles on the field, he assured me that troops of his corps had already been sent to replace my line: I immediately sent orders to the brigadiers to withdraw their troops in order, as soon as relieved. It was not too soon, the enemy were pressing forward on both flanks of my north and south line. The artillery on our front was already mostly withdrawn with empty chests. The troops sent to my relief were checked before they reached our breastworks, and the whole line finally fell back in good order under a severe artillery and infantry fire, which swept the open field, as far back as Chancellorsville house.

At this point my brigades were halted behind the rifle pits, fronting down the wilderness plank road, and after a while, by order of the Major Gen'l commanding the corps moved down the road towards U. S. Ford, behind our second line, and formed in the woods, to the right on the cross road towards Scott's Dam. In the evening my division relieved a part of the 11th corps, and occupied the left of our four line near the Rappahannock. Here we were for two days employed in entrenching our position, and on the morning of the 6th, marched to the pontoon bridge on the Rappahannock, and recrossed the river, the rearmost division of the army, except the rear guard of the 5th corps.

The same evening my division occupied its old camp at Stafford Court House."

This closes the extract from the report, and I have only to add, that the losses out of our 6000 men, making up our division when we left Stafford, April 27th, were 1700 officers and enlisted men. It was a sad return ten days later to the very spot we had so joyously set out from. I attach hereto a map which was prepared under the special supervision of Gen'l Williams and is correct.

SAM'L E. PITTMAN,  
Late Captain and Asst. Adj't Gen'l  
U. S. Vol., and B v't Lieut. Col.

— THE —  
STONEMAN † RAID  
OF 1865.

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A P A P E R

PREPARED AND READ BEFORE MICHIGAN COMMANDERY

OF THE

MILITARY ORDER

OF THE

LOYAL LEGION OF THE UNITED STATES,

JANUARY 8th, 1888.

BY COMPANION

GEN'L LUTHER S. TROWBRIDGE.

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DETROIT, MICH.:  
OSTLER PRINTING COMPANY,  
1888.



# ✦ The Stoneman Raid ✦

OF 1865.

I think I shall be quite within bounds in saying that no enterprise of equal importance during the late civil war attracted so little attention as the

## STONEMAN RAID OF 1865.

Whether considered with reference to the actual physical results accomplished, or as a part of that comprehensive plan of operations, designed, not for the capture of Richmond merely, but for the overthrow of the army of Northern Virginia, it was a very important expedition, and deserves special mention in history; and yet I presume the average American citizen is about as ignorant of it as of things that have never happened. This is not so strange when we consider the surrounding circumstances. So many other operations of greater importance were going on, that all eyes were directed elsewhere. Wilson, with his magnificent army of cavalry, was swooping down through Alabama, accomplishing what seemed to be miracles of valor, carrying by storm fortified positions of great strength, heavily armed and strongly manned. His thin lines of dismounted cavalry charging through abattis, over entrenchments and heavy parapets, driving before them



the veteran infantry of the confederacy and making capture of prisoners and artillery in such numbers that the true story of his wonderful march reads more like romantic fiction than the sober realities of actual war.

Canby and Farragut were knocking at the gates of Mobile. Sherman, with his great army fresh from its triumphal march to the sea, was stalking with the stride of a giant through the Carolinas; while Grant, with tireless and never ceasing vigilance, was tightening his hold upon Richmond and preparing for those final blows which were to shiver the confederacy in pieces. What wonder that the eyes of all people were directed to these great operations, and that few thought of the movement of a small division of cavalry starting from East Tennessee and destined to accomplish a service, which in certain contingencies would have been of the greatest moment in the great tragedy of war then drawing to a close.

In the spring of 1865, General Grant anticipated that if Lee should be forced out of Richmond he might undertake to move through southwestern Virginia, and, driving our forces out of East Tennessee, strive to establish himself in some of the many strong positions which that mountainous country afforded. He would thus be enabled to greatly protract the struggle, though he might be hopeless of securing the independence of the confederacy.

To prevent such a possibility, as well as to cut off General Lee's army from the rich supply fields of southwestern Virginia, General Thomas was directed to send a force to destroy the railroads as far as possible towards Lynchburg, thus putting a great obstacle in the way of the movement supposed to be possibly contemplated by General Lee.

The expedition, consisting of three brigades of cavalry under the command of General Stoneman, was concentrated at Mossy Creek, Tenn., March 22nd, '65. It moved toward the Virginia line, and on the 25th of March, ten miles west of

Jonesboro, everything that could retard a rapid march was left behind: one ambulance, one wagon, and four guns with their caissons being the only vehicles accompanying the expedition. There was at that time a considerable force of confederate cavalry operating in southwestern Virginia, a fact which should be borne in mind to understand and appreciate the strategy of this movement. The object of the expedition was kept a profound secret. If any one but General Stoneman knew it, the knowledge was not allowed to get to many of the subordinate officers. By the movement of one brigade to Carter's Station, the idea was conveyed to the enemy that we were going directly into Virginia. But by a rapid movement the command crossed the Watauga River higher up and struck directly across the mountains towards North Carolina. On the 27th of March we reached Boone, a little town far up in the mountains. At this place, Major Keogh, of Gen'l Stoneman's staff, a very gallant officer, afterwards slain by the Indians in the Custer massacre, with a detachment of the 12th Kentucky Cavalry, charged and routed a company of home guards, capturing sixty. At this point the brigades separated, Gen'l Stoneman with Palmer's brigade, moving on to Wilkesboro by Deep Gap, while the other two brigades with the artillery moved to the same point by the Flat Gap road.

An incident occurred here, which, while of no special importance, may be of interest, as showing the embarrassment which sometimes came to an officer through the failure of a superior to give the necessary orders. I was sent with my regiment a distance of a mile or more on a side road to a place where I would find forage for my horses, with orders to be ready to move at five o'clock in the morning. I asked the orderly who brought the order, whether he had instructions for me as to the order of march in the morning; "No," he said, "you will receive the order in the morning."

We turned out early, got our breakfast, and at five o'clock stood with our horses saddled, ready to mount; but no order came. We waited an hour, and, receiving no word, I sent an orderly to see whether the other regiments were moving. He soon returned and reported all quiet in the other camps, with no signs of movement. We waited, and waited. Seven o'clock, eight o'clock, nine o'clock came, but no orders. I then sent an officer to headquarters, to ascertain whether there were any orders for us. He soon came back and reported that every body had gone. Not a soldier was to be seen anywhere. Where they had gone, which road our brigade had taken, was not known, and there was no way of finding out.

I could not think it was intended that we were to be left there, and so we moved out. Finding a road running to the east, along which a body of troops had passed, we took it, not knowing whether it was the road followed by our brigade or not. We marched all day without coming up with our troops, and without means of obtaining information. I do not remember that we saw, during the whole day, a single person of whom we could make a guide or from whom we could gain any information as to the country. Night came on, and it was so dark we could scarcely see our horses heads. About ten o'clock we came upon a broad stream. We did not know whether it was fordable, or where the ford lay if there was one. On the opposite side, lights could be seen moving back and forth, and the voices of men could be heard; but whose they were, was not known.

Supposing there must be a ford there, we resolved to try it. Having a large, strong horse, I started in first, and, although the river was deep and the current swift, we found a respectable ford. Just then came on a violent storm. When we reached the opposite bank, we found the battery belonging to the Division, which had taken another road, stalled in

a deep, narrow cut in the road, and it was with great difficulty that we could get past it. The banks on the side of the road were very steep, and, of course, very slippery with the rain. The rear batallion, not understanding the cause of the delay, turned back and went into camp on the other side of the river. Slipping and floundering along, many horses falling, we finally succeeded in getting past the battery, when an orderly found me, and brought the pleasing intelligence that we were to move nine miles down the river, cross the stream again, which was rising rapidly with the violent rain, and go into camp. Weary, wet and hungry, this was not the most agreeable news, but like good soldiers we moved on, and at two o'clock in the morning we again forded the river, were conducted to a piece of woods, and told that we could make ourselves comfortable for the remainder of the night. Under the circumstances, we need not put out pickets, as that duty had been attended to by our comrades who had gone before.

After disposing of the men as best I could, I sat down on the root of a large tree, leaned my head against the tree, and in less than two minutes by the watch, was fast asleep. The rain continued all night, and in the morning I was wakened by the water trickling down my neck inside my rubber cloth coat. If you would have a picture of some of the minor discomforts of a cavalry raid, imagine the writer sitting on a log in the woods, near a sputtering fire, with a tin plate on his knees, a tin cup with coffee in it on a stump handy by, making a breakfast of fried bacon and corn pone, while the breakfast was fast being cooled and the coffee rapidly diluted by the incessant rain. Up rides an officer, who exclaims: "Why, Colonel, what are you doing here? They have a good warm breakfast for you down at that farm house. There are about thirty of the fellows there and they are keeping a place for you." It only needed some appearance of wings to make

me quite sure that that man was an angel!

At this point the command halted for a day, partly for rest, and partly because a sudden rise in the Yadkin River had made fording difficult and dangerous; but more I fancy, to give full effect to the sudden appearance of so large a body of cavalry in that portion of North Carolina, threatening both Greensboro and Salisbury. The strategy was well planned and effective. Had we moved directly into southwestern Virginia, the forces there could have so hindered and delayed our movements as to seriously imperil the great object in view. By this movement across the mountains, those forces had been avoided, and were so far away as to offer no serious obstacle to the accomplishment of our mission. What that mission was, was still a profound mystery to all not in the secret confidence of the commanding officer. The enemy was entirely deceived as to our point of attack. By a rapid movement to the north, Gen'l Stoneman found the railway running from Lynchburg to East Tennessee, entirely at his mercy. At Hillsville, Colonel Miller, with five hundred picked men, was sent to Wytheville—where he had a sharp engagement with the enemy, but succeeded in destroying a depot of supplies, and on his march, two important railway bridges. At Jacksonville, Major Wagner of the 15th Pennsylvania Cavalry, with a small force, was dispatched to Salem, where he began the work of destruction, and carried it to within a few miles of Lynchburg. The remainder of the command moved on to Christiansburg, where it arrived about midnight, April 4th.

The 10th Michigan was at once sent to the east to destroy the bridges over the Roanoke river, and the 11th Michigan to the west to destroy the great bridge over the river New. The next morning these bridges were effectually destroyed. About twenty miles east of Christiansburg the railroad crosses the Roanoke river six times in as many miles, and

the 10th Michigan destroyed six large beautiful bridges, five of them covered, a destruction which would have been avoided could the events of the next ten days have been foreseen. It was while engaged in the demolition of these bridges that I obtained a Lynchburg paper of the day before, giving an account of the fall of Richmond. News of our approach having preceded us, the train which brought the paper had gone no further than the station where we were at work. I at once sent the paper by the fleetest horse to be found in the regiment, to General Stoneman at Christiansburg, and was thus fortunate in giving him the first information that he had of the fall of Richmond.

The main object of the expedition was accomplished. For a distance of one hundred and twenty-five miles, that railroad, so important to General Lee in case of his escape from Grant, was in ruins. Nearly every bridge and trestle of any importance, for that distance, had been totally destroyed or entirely disabled. Well might General Thomas say, in his official report, "a railroad was never more thoroughly dismantled than was the east Tennessee and Virginia from Wytheville to near Lynchburgh."

The main object of the expedition had been accomplished. The railroad was in ruins, and Richmond had been evacuated. What would be General Lee's next effort? Would he undertake to make his way through south-western Virginia into east Tennessee, as had been conjectured; or would he strive to unite his army with that of General Johnson, in North Carolina, and with their combined forces attempt the overthrow of Sherman before Grant could come up?

Whatever his plans, he doubtless little understood the ceaseless vigilance and the untiring energy of his pursuers.

I suppose it was in anticipation of the attempted junction of Lee's and Johnson's armies that it was thought that our division could do some more effective work on the rail-

road running from Richmond through western North Carolina. After a day of needed rest, which was well employed in picking up fresh horses, the command moved in that direction. Palmer's brigade was ordered to concentrate at Martinsville or Henry Court House, as it is called. The 10th Michigan was then in the beautiful valley of the Roanoke near Salem, about seventy-five miles from Henry Court House. We were ordered to be at the latter place by nine o'clock on a certain morning and there await the arrival of the remainder of the brigade. To be sure to be on time, we made the distance in twenty-six hours, and reached Henry Court House about six o'clock in the morning to find it occupied by a superior force of the enemy's cavalry under Col. Wheeler.

I do not know that I ever found the time when it was exactly pleasant to come unexpectedly upon a superior force of the enemy, but if there is any time which is more unpleasant than another, it is in the early morning after a continuous march of twenty-four hours when men and horses are thoroughly fatigued. The fight was short but decidedly sharp, and we remained masters of the field, though not without serious loss, having one officer, Lieut. Kenyon and four men killed and another officer, Lieut. Field and three men seriously wounded. The enemy's loss was reported at twenty-eight killed and mortally wounded. This movement to Henry Court House had a meaning and a significance which we did not then fully appreciate, as we afterwards learned. By it the enemy was made to believe that Greensboro was our objective point, and consequently troops were withdrawn from Salisbury, and rapidly sent to the threatened point.

The enemy saw their mistake when a few days later General Stoneman appeared before Salisbury instead of Greensboro.

The brigade being reunited at Henry Court House, we moved to Danbury and Germantown, from which latter place Palmer's brigade was sent to Salem to destroy some large factories engaged in the manufacture of clothing for the confederate army, and thence to operate on the railroad running from Greensboro to Salisbury, while Stoneman, with the other two brigades, crossed the Yadkin River at Shallow Ford, and started directly for Salisbury. Upon arriving at Salem, General Palmer sent the 15th Pennsylvania cavalry under Lt. Col. Betts to strike the railway between Greensboro and Danville, and the 10th Michigan Cavalry to destroy some bridges over Abbott's creek between Greensboro and Salisbury, sending one battalion to High Point to make a diversion in that direction, while he remained with the remainder of the brigade at Salem.

The 15th Pennsylvania met with marked success on its expedition. It broke the railroad between Greensboro and Danville as directed, and on its route surprised a South Carolina regiment of cavalry, making prisoners of its commanding officer and a large number of the men.

The battalion of the 10th Michigan sent to High Point, under the command of Capt. Cummings, a member of this commandery, succeeded in capturing two railroad trains loaded with quarter master, commissary and medical supplies, some large depots of supplies and several thousand bales of cotton belonging to the confederate government. The value of the property destroyed by this detachment was estimated at more than three millions of dollars. The other two battalions of the 10th, numbering not more than three hundred men, proceeded to destroy the bridges over Abbott's creek, after accomplishing which they were to move on directly to Salisbury to co-operate with Genl. Stoneman. Another all night march was before us. It was desirable that the bridges should be destroyed before daylight. Consequently



two companies were sent forward at a trot while the remainder of the command moved on more at leisure. All our information was to the effect that there was no force of the enemy in that vicinity. It seemed quite unnecessary, but as a matter of form, a small advance guard was sent forward although it was confidently expected that should there be any enemy on the road, timely notice would be given by the two companies which had gone on in advance.

As day began to dawn, a blacksmith of Co. B. came up to me, and said he had nearly run into the pickets of the enemy. I paid little attention to what he said, supposing that he had mistaken the pickets of the two companies who were supposed to be at work at the bridge, for those of the enemy. Not long afterwards a young officer Capt. Dunn riding by my side called my attention to a covered wagon which had turned into the road, and at once disappeared around a curve in it. At my request he galloped on and overhauled the wagon which was found to contain a couple of confederate officers. They informed me that a large force of confederate cavalry was encamped some distance ahead on the road. I paid slight heed to this, as I thought they were trying to tell a startling story, and I could not understand how such a force could escape the notice of the two companies which had gone ahead.

Turning our prisoners over to the officer of the day, we resumed our march, but had not gone far when I observed that the little advance guard had halted. Galloping up to learn the cause of the halt, I was informed that a large force of the enemy was encamped a short distance ahead, apparently unaware of our approach.

This force was Ferguson's brigade of Wheeler's cavalry corps, and outnumbered us about four to one. With fresh horses it would not have been difficult to make a sudden attack even against largely superior numbers with the

chances of success greatly in our favor. But with horses worn by a continuous march of twenty-four hours without rest, it seemed extremely hazardous to attack a force so largely outnumbering ours, and that force refreshed by a comfortable night's rest in camp. Then again, should we succeed in driving the enemy, it would be directly toward Salisbury, where he might augment the forces with which Stoneman was expected soon to be engaged. On the other hand, could he be drawn after us it would increase the chances of Stoneman's success which was beyond all things most desirable.

These considerations decided the matter and we determined to withdraw. No sooner was the movement commenced, than we were attacked with great fury. I think I may be pardoned for saying that there then followed one of the most spirited and exciting, and in my judgment, one of the best fought minor engagements of the war. The 10th falling back by alternate squadrons, constantly presenting an unbroken front to the enemy; wheeling out of column into line, and steadily delivering their volleys from their Spencer carbines until they could see another squadron ready to receive the shock of the enemy; then wheeling into column and falling back to a new position—officers and men without exception showed a courage, coolness and discipline truly gratifying to a commanding officer.

The movements were all conducted with as much precision, as if the place had been but the parade ground, and the exercise but the sham fighting of the drill. The enemy attempted to pass a column by each flank, while the attacks in the rear were made with a daring and courage worthy of a better cause.

The fighting was constant and fierce without a moment's interruption for nearly three hours, and extended over a space of about six miles, when the enemy became discouraged

at his failure to surround the handful of men and ceased his pursuit.

His loss in the engagement was afterwards ascertained to have been about seventy five in killed and wounded, while ours was trifling.

General Stoneman had moved on to Salisbury with two brigades. He met the enemy a few miles from town, at a little stream which had very high and precipitous banks and could not be forded. The only way to cross it was by a bridge which was effectually commanded by the enemy's artillery. After trying for some time in vain to dislodge them by his artillery, he called to him a staff officer, Lt. Col. Smith of the 10th, now commander of the state troops of this state, and said to him : "Colonel, I want you to take twenty men armed with the Spencer carbine, cross this creek in some way, and flank those fellows out up there." Smith took his twenty men, crossed the stream on a log out of sight of the enemy, stealthily crept up on their flank, when suddenly, with a yell, he poured a murderous volley into their ranks. The effect was remarkable. Panic stricken the whole force broke in the greatest confusion. Stacey was on them in an instant with his Tennessee cavalry, and the fight was over. Results: nineteen pieces of artillery, eleven hundred prisoners, and supplies enough for an army of a hundred thousand men.

A few days later we learned of the surrender of Lee's army, and for some days we were engaged in paroling prisoners. Then came the armistice, and we were ordered back to Tennessee. We made one day's march into the mountains in that direction, when we learned that the armistice had been disapproved at Washington, and we were ordered back into South Carolina to lay waste the country so that no supplies could reach General Johnson's army from west or south of the Catawba river. The execution of that order

was happily made unnecessary by the surrender of Johnson's army.

Although the division was engaged for some weeks afterwards in the pursuit of Jefferson Davis, the capture of Salisbury terminated what I have chosen to call the

STONEMAN RAID OF 1865.

From the beginning to the end, the expedition was managed with rare judgment and skill. While its movements were so directed as to constantly deceive the enemy as to the real point of attack; its quick and heavy blows were delivered in unexpected quarters, working immense damage to the waning hopes of the Confederacy.





RECOLLECTIONS  
OF THE  
BULL RUN CAMPAIGN

AFTER TWENTY-SEVEN YEARS.

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A P A P E R

READ BEFORE MICHIGAN COMMANDERY

OF THE

MILITARY ORDER

OF THE

LOYAL LEGION OF THE UNITED STATES,

FEBRUARY 1st, 1887.

BY COMPANION

HENRY F. LYSTER, M. D.

*Formerly Ass't. Surgeon 2nd. Regt. Michigan Infantry, and  
Surgeon 5th. Michigan Infantry. and Acting Med. Director 3rd. Corps,  
Army of the Potomac.*

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DETROIT, MICH.:  
WM. S. OSTLER, PRINTER.  
1888.



## Bull Run Campaign.

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The 2nd regiment of Michigan infantry had been encamped below the Chain bridge on the Maryland side of the Potomac since the 12th of July, 1861. Col. Israel B. Richardson was in command, although Mrs. Richardson, his wife, who accompanied him, was the power behind the throne. It was not until the Colonel had become a general of division, that he outgrew his better half and bossed things generally himself.

Lt. Col. Henry L. Chipman had accepted a captaincy in the 11th Regiment U. S. infantry, Adjutant Wm. J. Lyster had gone to the 19th U. S. infantry.

Major Adolphus W. Williams, who later to the surprise of many of us, became the colonel of a high number Michigan regiment, and was breveted a brigadier general of volunteers was with us at this memorable time. The major had invited the adjutant and myself to join his mess, which had been organized by purchasing through Higby and Stearns, a mess-chest duly furnished with stores, and by obtaining the services of the major's nephew and brother-in-law as cooks and skirmishers. We were soon reduced to the point of starvation, although in camp. When a polite inquiry



would be made as to whether dinner was ready: "Well it aint, you know," would be the somewhat unmilitary reply. Any ordinary cook would have been dismissed, or sent to the guard house, but from a nephew of the major it had to be condoned. At last after a few weeks experience, Harve, the cook, was noticed kneading some flour and water upon the head of a barrel, and was asked by the Adjutant what these preparations meant, replied, "I'm building up some pies that will make your eyes stick out." And they did.

About this time the Regimental Quartermaster used to spend the greater part of the day in Washington, nominally on business, but he too frequently neglected to order up the wagons with the soft bread and fresh beef; and when night came on apace, and he was warned to return to the command, his short comings began to loom up before his anxious mind and lie heavily upon his conscience. He would approach cautiously the outer boundaries of the camp, and preserving a strict incognito, with faltering accents and disguised voice would enquire whether the bread wagons had arrived. If they had, he rode gaily into camp, but if they had not, he faded from view, and did not return to meet those who were hungrily lying in wait for him. It was while in camp at the Chain bridge that we made out our first muster rolls. Those who have been engaged in this work will appreciate the service so kindly and politely rendered by Major Brooks, U. S. army, now retired, and living on second avenue in this city. Verily in these matters "a soft answer turneth away wrath and pleasant words are of more value than pearls and rubies." The recollections of Major Brooks and of the very agreeable and courteous Capt. Charles Gibson, ass't com. of subsistence on duty in Washington at that time, have remained as pleasant memories with those volunteers who came in official contact with them.

The soldiers of the 2nd regiment were greatly interested

in a resident near the camp known as Bull Frizzel. He kept himself saturated with a country liquor called peach brandy, which rendered him very inflammable and caused him to give utterance to a good deal of "secesh" sentiment, and kept him in the guard house most of the time. As he was the only rebel in sight it was frequently proposed that we begin our work by shooting him, but calmer counsels prevailed, and we left him to the slower, but not less sure course, marked out by himself, and the worm of the still.

On the 4th of July the non-commissioned officers obtained permission to drill the regiment in battalion drill—4th Sergt. Wm. B. McCreery acted as colonel. Col. Richardson watched the manœuvres from the front of his tent with much pleasure and interest. Turning to me he enquired the name of the sergeant commanding, and said in his peculiar drawl, "Dr. Lyster these non-commissioned officers drill the battalion better than the commissioned officers can do it." He made McCreery 1st Lieut. and Quartermaster in less than a month from that date.

Our first march to meet the enemy began July 16, 1861, when we crossed over the Chain bridge to the sacred soil of Virginia. We were brigaded with the 3d Michigan infantry, the 1st Massachusetts infantry and the 12th New York infantry. Col. Richardson was put in command of this brigade, and Surgeon A. B. Palmer was acting brigade surgeon. We had marched five or six miles towards Vienna Court House where Gen. Schenck of Ohio had not long before run a railroad train into a masked battery, and we were all on the qui vive regarding masked batteries, and unusual things of that sort.

The sun was yet in the meridian when I heard a commotion near the head of the brigade and upon riding up was astonished to find that Dr. C., acting at that time as hospital steward of the 2d, was chasing a small rebel pig and

flung his revolver at it while in pursuit. The soldiers cheered lustily and the doctor hotly followed the squalling porker intent upon having a spare-rib for supper. All this unfortunately attracted the attention of Dr. Palmer, who was riding with the Colonel at the head of the brigade. Dr. Palmer, with an eye to the preservation of good order and discipline in his department, drew his sword, and galloped after Dr. C. and the pig. The soldiers cheered down the whole brigade still more vigorously appreciating the added comic element in the affair, and warning Dr. C. of his danger watched the unequal chase with increasing interest. The pig escaped for the moment, and Dr. C. mixed up with the column somewhat crest-fallen, but was later restored to his usual equanimity when a hind quarter of the pig was sent him in the evening.

Nearly a year later, after the battle of Charles City cross-roads, June 29th, 1862, on McClellan's retreat, Dr. C. remained with the wounded and was taken prisoner, and went to Richmond. In this he showed the highest appreciation of the professional relation, but as a non-commissioned officer at the time, he ran an undue risk of being detained indefinitely in the military prisons; almost equivalent to a death sentence.

To the surprise of everyone, he was almost immediately exchanged. His long deserved commission of ass't surgeon, came to him soon after, and when he resigned to accept a desirable professional alliance in Detroit, in April, 1864, the regiment lost one of its most efficient and highly respected officers.

Dear Dr. Palmer, who only a month ago covered with professional honors, went over to be mustered into that growing army of veterans in the silent land, was so elated with his success in this first march, that he confidently assured me as we lay in bivouac that evening, that he felt within him those martial qualities which would give him command of troops

in case he should determine to substitute the sword for the lancet.

That night the stars were out, and the uncertain moon was low in the western horizon, the darkest hour just before the dawn was on us, when the nervous strain of the pickets post could hardly be expected to resist the extreme tension of the first night out. The imagination turned some unoffending object into the stealthily approaching foe, and the musketry began to rattle with a liveliness that seemed very like active work. I shall never forget how long it seemed to take to lace up those balmoral shoes, to don my uniform, and get the horse unpicketed and saddled, so as to be able either to pursue or fly as might seem most sensible. The next night I slept with my shoes and hat on, and with old Dan tied to the wheel of the ambulance.

It was about this period of the march that the star of the regimental Quartermaster began to wane. It was all about some honey. Mrs. Richardson had gone up to the command of the brigade at the same time that the Colonel had, and a hive of honey had been added to the headquarters stores. Most of us had had some of it, but it had been expected to last like the widow's cruise of oil through the campaign. It was observed that the Quartermaster had some honey after it had suddenly disappeared at headquarters. Nothing that he had failed to do hitherto was equal to this new offence. The next day the men began to get out of rations and the wagons were slow in getting up. The Quartermaster was found late at night asleep in the train. Dr. Palmer again drew his sword and pricked around with it into a wagon in the dark, and roused him. He fled before the wrath of the command and never stopped until he had reached Battle Creek, Mich.; and McCreery reigned in his stead.

On the 18th of July we were halted about half a mile beyond Centreville, having a nooning, when the enemy were reported

a mile and a half in front of us at Blackburn's ford. We fell in at once, and marched forward through some intervening woods, formed in line behind Lieut. Ayres' regular battery, which opened upon the woods across Bull Run to the west of us about a quarter of a mile. We soon drew the fire of a rebel battery, which turned out to be the Washington Light Artillery from New Orleans. The first shot fired at the army, afterwards known as the Army of the Potomac, was at this time, and it took the leg off of a sergeant of artillery in Ayres' battery on our front, and knocked a log out of a house in the yard of which the battery was stationed. The effect of this shot was not observed by the enemy, and the range was altered, and the other shots were not so effective.

It fell to my lot to attend the first Michigan soldier wounded by the enemy in the war. We were moving down as a support to the 1st Massachusetts and 12th New York, who had been sent down to the ford to "feel the enemy," which they succeeded in doing to the extent of losing 40 wounded and 12 killed. The bullets and solid shots were passing over us, when a rifle bullet struck Mathias Wollenweber of company A, 2d Mich. infantry, in the left side, and he fell upon the sod. I tried to probe the wound with my little finger, and held my horse with the bridle rein thrown over my left arm. Every time a shot passed over us, old Dan would toss up his head and pull my finger out of the wound, and I concluded that while like Mercutio's wound, "it was not as deep as a well, or as wide as a church door, it was enough;" and so it proved, for it finally "let out his sweet life" twenty years afterwards. Vickery came over with a four wheeled ambulance and picked him up and carried him back to Centreville, where he was afterwards captured by the enemy.

Vickery was a tall, raw-boned Irishman from county Cork, who followed Surgeon Palmer from the University of

Michigan, to look after the regimental hospital. He was clever, well educated, with plenty of wit and a large heart. The Second loved Vickery more, I believe, than they ever did anyone else, and with good reason too. He rose to be assistant surgeon Aug. 8, 1862, and surgeon Sept. 1st, 1864. He jumped up upon the earthwork at Petersburg, June 29th, 1864, to see the colored troops charge at the Burnside mine explosion, when a bullet cut one of the femoral arteries. Surgeon Hamilton E. Smith, of the 27th Michigan was beside him at this time, and performed the most valuable service of his life in checking the hemorrhage, as these wounds are usually fatal on the field. Vickery is now a surgeon in the regular army, and is in charge of the army and navy hospital at Hot Springs, Arkansas.

Colonel Richardson shortly after came over from the front, and in a scornful sort of manner, suggested to the regiment, that we had better be getting back or the enemy's cavalry would cut us off. Upon this we moved back into the woods. Loss in the 3d Brigade, 19 killed; 38 wounded; 26 missing. Rebel loss, 15 killed; 53 wounded. It was upon this occasion that Major Williams, after having moved the regiment well into the woods, formed them into a hollow square to resist an expected charge of cavalry. How well I can remember the beautiful appearance the regiment presented in the timber, with fixed bayonets. In the movement I was left on the outside, and tried in vain, to get into the place where the Adjutant and Major seemed so safely protected. Colonel Richardson's remarks to the Major, when he discovered our position, and proceeded to unravel us, were not of a character to be repeated, even at this late date.

It was on our way in from the place where Wollenweber had been wounded, and at the edge of the woods, that I found one of our lieutenants lying at the foot of a large oak tree, quite white and limp. He had been in the Mexican

war and we regarded him as an experienced soldier. I stopped an army wagon and tried to load him in, supposing he had been taken seriously ill. Colonel Richardson, who seemed to be ubiquitous, ordered him out, and spoke very harshly to him, and took quite an unprofessional view of the case. After the Colonel had gone on, I ordered the Lieutenant loaded in again, and as the last order is usually the one obeyed, we carried him back in safety. He disappeared like the Quartermaster, and we never saw either of them any more.

The Colonel had not gotten quite as much work out of the 1st Massachusetts and 12th New York, as he had expected, and he reared around a good deal during the next two or three days.

For two or three nights before the memorable Sunday, July 21, 1861, picket firing had been very constant, and the details from the regiment had pretty generally fired off their pieces a good many times. The grand rounds at night by the officer of the day was considered little less than fatal. He usually proceeded with a sergeant on each side as flankers, all with pistols at full cock. After having made the circuit of the pickets, this officer lay down to sleep with his flankers on either side, in order to prevent so important an official from being captured.

We held our position between Blackburn's ford and Centreville along the line of the Bull Run during the battle on Sunday, the 21st. It was quite a commanding position, and we could look off to the north and west, and get some idea of the plan of the battle.

We came near being the centre of the fight ourselves. It seems, that Beauregard intended to deliver battle on our left, and cut through to Centreville and get in the rear of McDowell, but the aide de camp who was sent with the final order, stopped to get a drink at

a spring. The farmer, upon whose land the spring was located, being an ardent rebel, would not permit him to go on his way with only this cold cheer, but insisted upon pledging him in a glass of peach brandy. The excitement was so great, and the importance of the occasion so supreme, that the aide took several drinks of this apparently harmless beverage. Upon remounting and galloping off he accidentally struck his head against a tree, and became insensible, so the order was never received by Ewell, the general in command on the Rebel right. In the meantime, General Hunter's column was pressing the enemy's left so hard that they were forced into a defensive battle.

During all this day, we, at Blackburn's ford, heard the heavy firing beyond the stone bridge, and hoped that the Union forces were winning a great victory, and that we should be in Richmond within five days. It might have dampened our ardor somewhat had we known that nearly four years of hardship were to intervene before we should realize the fulfillment of that "hope deferred."

During the afternoon, about 4 P. M., Colonel Davis, of the 2d brigade of Colonel Miles' division, made a very creditable defense of our left. Colonel Richardson's brigade, the 4th of Tyler's division, was making a demonstration at Blackburn's ford by throwing out heavy skirmishers, as if to cross over. Colonel Jones was ordered by General Johnson to cross and attack our left, in order to prevent the division from joining in the battle on the Warrenton pike, which was at that time very hotly contested. Colonel Jones crossed at McLean's ford, with three regiments and formed in line intending to flank Captain Hunt's field battery of four guns. Colonel Davis, noting this movement, changed his front unobserved and waited for the attack. When Jones' brigade came within five hundred yards Captain Hunt opened upon his line with



cannister, and Jones' Brigade simply disappeared.

As Colonel Nicolay says, in his "Outbreak of the Rebellion," Jones modestly reported a loss of 14 killed and 62 wounded. The loss in Davis' brigade was trifling. What would have been the result of throwing the brigades of Richardson, Davis and Blenker, over the stone bridge not more than a mile distant, to meet the forces of Ewell, Early and Holmes, as they came up from our left to join the battle at the Henry house. Can anyone imagine what would have been the effect upon the long victorious Union troops, who had marched so many miles, and fought so many hours, and charged again and again, by regiments, up the Henry house hill?

I remember to this day, how much solid satisfaction it gave us that evening, when we first began to realize that we were defeated, to hear that General Scott was hurrying up from Alexandria with a 50 pounder seige gun, manned by the marine corps from Fortress Monroe.

The medical men of our brigade and General Miles' division, were in a large farm house on the left of the Blackburn's ford pike.

I had just made my first amputation, and was examining the bones of the amputated arm, when Colonel Richardson rode up and reiterated his warning of three days before, that "you had better be getting out of here or the enemy's cavalry will cut you off." Complying with this apparently well founded order, and with the aid of Vickery and Cleland, loading up my solitary patient, I was about to mount my horse and move back towards Centreville, when Colonel Richardson asked me if I would be obliging enough to let Mrs. Richardson have my horse, as she could not find hers, and he was about to send her back to Alexandria under the escort of Captain Brethschneider and his two companies of flankers. Of course, however much I felt that I needed a

horse at that moment, to avoid the charge of black horse cavalry, momentarily expected from the left, I acceded to the Colonel's request, assuring him that I considered it a privilege to render any service to either the male or female commander of our brigade.

Reasoning that if I was obliged to walk, I had better not stand upon the order of my going, but go at once, I started off at a fair, brisk, shooting gait of some four or five miles an hour, expecting to join the column moving back on the Blackburn ford pike to Centreville. I had not proceeded more than a hundred yards, when, like Lot's wife, I looked back, only with more fortunate results, for I spied old Dan eating clover, and Mrs. Richardson mounted upon another horse, and starting off under Captain Brethschneider's escort. I turned back, mounted old Dan, and rode down to Centreville, and up on to the Rebel earth-works, which overhung Fairfax pike.

It is not often in a lifetime that one is permitted to see such a sight as I then witnessed. A retreating, uniformed, unorganized, unarmed crowd, poured down towards Washington at a steady unhalting pace. The men who had borne the burden and heat of the day, the camp followers, the friends of the several regiments who had come along to see the victory. Every now and then a wounded officer or soldier, assisted by his comrades, went by. Here appeared a couple of Zouaves riding on an artillery horse, with the broad, flat harness on, as it had been cut out of the traces. I remember seeing a Zouave officer walking along, slightly wounded, and hearing him say to those with him, that he would go no further, here he would stand and fight to the last, and just then a gun from one of our field pieces was fired off in an unmeaning manner, over into Virginia from near Centreville. The sound of that gun sent all his military resolutions to the winds, and he passed along with the steady

current of the retreat. On looking down into the lunette, I saw a number of open carriages, and standing up in one of them was Zach Chandler, looking off towards Bull Run (for Centreville was on a hill,) into the red dust which formed the horizon toward the battlefield. This must have been near nine o'clock in the evening, at that season of the year about the time that the growing twilight takes the place of daylight. I had sent on the regimental ambulance, and rode back to the 3rd brigade, which lay with Tyler's and Davis's brigades, to the south and south-west of Centreville, in line of battle, waiting for the long expected attack of Beauregard.

It was a relief to see the quiet composure of these troops after having witnessed the confusion of the retreating mass surging towards Washington. After the darkness fell, these three brigades covered the retreat. Richardson's last.

Col. Miles had been suspended by McDowell on account of drunkenness and inefficiency, Colonel Richardson having complained to McDowell that he had been constantly interfered with by Col. Miles, commanding the 5th division; that Miles was drunk and incapacitated for duty, and it was by his orders Richardson had been withdrawn from holding Blackburn's ford.

It was here that Richardson lost his sword, and his wife's horse and side-saddle. The sword he had left standing against a tree, and forgetting it there when he moved on. He borrowed mine, greatly to my relief. It was a heavy cavalry sabre which had been issued to me by the State—for ornamental purposes, I presume—and was a counterpart of the one lost by the Colonel. He applied for permission to send a flag of truce, hoping to have the horse and side-saddle returned, but was refused by General Tyler, very curtly. Richardson had known General Bee, and he told me he knew that if Bee was able to do so, he knew he would send them back. Poor Bee had hummed his last note, and was no longer a

worker in the hive of the Confederacy. He had been killed in the hot work on the Sudley road, on the 21st.

The 3rd Michigan of our brigade, had about the same experience that the 2d had in this campaign ; and to the 1st Michigan belong any laurels won by hard fighting. This regiment made four charges at the Henry house hill in the hottest of the battle, and lost 6 killed, 37 wounded, and 52 taken prisoner. Here it was that General Wilcox was severely wounded, and that Captain W. H. Withington was captured.

We believed that a stand would be made at Fairfax Court House, and no one in our division imagined we would go further back. As I rode into Fairfax Court House that night, a rather warm-looking individual in a rumpled linen duster, and with a straw hat well pushed back on his head, rushed down into the road, and seizing me by the hand, fervently exclaimed, "Thank God ! Govenor, you are safe." I said, I was, just as thankful as he appeared to be, and appreciated it quite as much as if I was a govenor, as it did not make much difference, so long as you were safe, what your rank was. It seemed he had mistaken me for Govenor Sprague of Rhode Island. I did feel flattered for the moment.

At this place I saw an anxious looking elderly man leaning over a gate, who asked me whether the army would make a stand here. His youngest son was in the house, mortally wounded ; in the retreat a black horse cavalryman had ordered him to surrender and upon his refusing had shot him, the ball passing through the spine. The father had followed his son in to the field. He was from Ohio. His name was McCook, and he was the father of those gallant sons, afterwards known as the "fighting McCooks." His son died that night. McCook found out the name of the rebel cavalryman, who came from Warrenton, Virginia, and hunted for him in and about Washington and Alexandria for a long time ;

coming on his hot trail several times. By a strange coincidence, two or three of the McCook brothers were killed upon different anniversaries of this same day. I remember one, a general officer, was killed by guerillas, who took him out of an ambulance in Tennessee. And this old gentleman himself was shot by Gen'l Morgan's men, in the raid through Ohio.

We did not halt at Fairfax Court House, but kept right on to the Long bridge at Washington, by way of Munson's hill and Arlington. In this battle of Bull Run the Union army lost 481 killed, 1011 wounded, and 1460 missing. The Rebel loss was 269 killed, 1483 wounded, no missing mentioned.

It was in many respects a grand battle, and was well conceived and well fought on both sides. And there were as valorous deeds and as good work done on this open field by the raw toops, as were done in any battle of the war. The mistakes were chiefly tactical, and could hardly have been separated from the conditions which at that time existed: who knows what might have been the result had the battle been set 24 hours sooner, or before General Joe Johnston had added his 8,884 men and 22 guns, to Beauregard's army. As it was, this army from the valley of the Shenandoah, which did most of the fighting on the Rebel side, and the arrival of its last brigade on the flank and rear of the Union lines decided the contest. Military critics are agreed that in many points, Bull Run, was a battle which the more it is studied the more it will redound to the military credit of both sides engaged in it. While the troops were not handled with the same firmness as Grant, Sherman, or Sheridan would have shown later, the material was there in as good quality as when its commanders of regiments and brigades, such as Richardson, Keyes, Sherman, Porter, Burnside, Hunter, Heintzleman, Ricketts, Franklin, Griffin, Wilcox and Howard, later rose to the command of Divisions, Corps and Armies.

This campaign occurred in what might be designated as

the "romantic period" of the war. Who that was in field and camp in the summer of '61, does not realize the truthfulness of this distinction as compared with the sledge-hammer work under that modern Charles Martel, General Grant, in '64 and '65?

We were all young then—and the imagination was more active, the ambitions were greater, the pleasures and disappointments keener. Every man carried a baton in his knapsack, and Hope, the enchantress, was clad in the most roseate hues. Who can look back after these long years, when all of us have drunk the cup of experience, and have in too many instances found it far different from the nectar of our youth, and not sympathize with the thrill and enthusiasm of those earlier days of the war?

The soldier of '61 was full of life and patriotism, his ardor undampened by the stern discipline and reverses of the war. The soldier of '65 was inured to hardship and adversity, and hoped less, but fought and accomplished more. The period of romance had changed to a period of system and endurance. Individuality had given place to mechanical action, and what was lost in enthusiasm and animation, was made up in concert of action and confidence in method. The military machine ran more smoothly and with less friction, and inspired greater confidence. The history of these four years of war has its counterpart in our own lives. In our youth, we acted upon impulse regardless of consequences, now we think before we act: "then we saw through a glass darkly, but now we see face to face; then we knew in part, but now we know even as we are known."

Life is easier at fifty than it was at twenty, but as a rule it is not more delightful; and so it was with the war. In '61 it was pic-nic, and a theatre; in '64, and '65 it was a business, and a circus.

The story of the Bull Run campaign which I can recall

is no fable, nor is it the vain imaginings of a cavalryman, it is the veritable truth. That campaign had every adornment of high coloring, it was gotten up regardless of expense, and the music and scenic effects were magnificent. It needed the brilliant tinting of a Turner to paint it true to life, and the pen of a Mark Twain to record its vitality and expression. With its unhappy termination, went out forever the effervescence and impulsiveness of the service in the war. And with the disappearance of the baggy red breeches and the havlocks, and the pell-mell marching, came in the forty rounds in the cartridge box, the three days rations in the haversack, and the sharper lines of rout and battle.

PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS  
OF THE  
Occupation of East Tennessee  
AND THE  
DEFENSE OF KNOXVILLE.

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A P A P E R  
READ BEFORE MICHIGAN COMMANDERY  
OF THE  
MILITARY ORDER  
OF THE  
LOYAL LEGION OF THE UNITED STATES,

DECEMBER 5th, 1888,

BY COMPANION

ORLANDO M. POE,

*Colonel of Engineers, Brevt. Brigadier General U. S. Army,  
Late Chief Engineer Army of Ohio.*

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DETROIT, MICH. :  
OSTLER PRINTING COMPANY,  
1889.



This paper was originally prepared at the instance of "The Century Company," which now owns the copyright. The portion (about half) relating especially to the defense of Knoxville, has been published in "The Battles and Leaders of the Civil War." In response to a request from me for permission to read the paper at a meeting of the Loyal Legion, the following courteous reply was received, viz:—"After our book is out there will be no objection to the publication of the whole article in the archives of the Loyal Legion."

The book has been issued, and therefore the permission quoted has become operative.

O. M. P.

## PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS

OF THE

### Occupation of East Tennessee and the Defense of Knoxville.

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At the beginning of 1863, the Confederates had two lines of railway communication between their eastern and western forces; one by the Coast wise system to Savannah or Augusta and thence southward or westward; the other by way of Lynchburg, Knoxville, and Chattanooga, where it branched towards Memphis or Atlanta.

The former could be interrupted at Branchville, because the occupation of this point by the Federal forces would not only directly break the line from Charleston to Augusta, but, by implication that from Charleston to Savannah also.

In addition to the desire to repossess the forts and harbor of Charleston, the operations in that quarter had for their object to gain a foothold upon, and control of the railway junction at Branchville.

The other line could be interrupted by seizing and holding any portion of it between Lynchburg and Chattanooga, provided the junction at Cleveland or Dalton were included. Early in the struggle, movements made in the accomplishment of this object, by forces operating towards the direction of Nashville and Chattanooga and the occupation of Cumberland Gap, were thwarted by counter movements, and the close of 1862 found the Confederates in full possession of all

the territory to the northwesterly base of the Appalachian Mountain system. South of Nashville General Bragg's Army occupied a strong position north of Duck River. His infantry front extended from Shelbyville to Wartrace, and his cavalry rested at McMinnville on his right, and Columbia and Spring Hill on his left. A considerable force occupied the fortified position of Cumberland Gap. Minor forces were thrown well to their front in each case.

It was determined by the Federal authorities to make strenuous efforts during the summer of 1863 to effect permanent lodgments in East Tennessee, both at Chattanooga and Knoxville, not only for the purpose of interrupting communication by that route, but to afford relief to a section where Union sentiments were known to exist to a very considerable extent. It was accordingly arranged that the Army of the Cumberland, under command of General Rosecrans, should move from its quarters at Murfreesboro against the Confederate Army commanded by General Bragg confronting it, whilst a force should be organized in central Kentucky to move towards Knoxville in co-operation.

In the latter part of January, 1863, General Burnside was relieved from the command of the Army of the Potomac, and about the same time the 9th Army Corps, which had been his personal command prior to his assignment to the higher one, was detached and ordered to Newport News, where it remained until the 17th of March, when two of its three Divisions were sent by water to Baltimore, thence by the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad to Parkersburg, then by the Ohio River to Cincinnati and Louisville, afterwards to be distributed through central Kentucky.

On the 25th of March General Burnside assumed command of the Department of the Ohio.

Late in May, 1862, all the troops in Kentucky not belonging to the 9th Army Corps, were organized as the 23rd

Army Corps, with General George L. Hartsuff in command, and not long afterwards the writer was assigned to the Corps as its Chief Engineer.

Following this, an Engineer Battalion of 300 men was organized, in two companies, by sufficient details from all the Infantry regiments in the Corps. They were provided with, and always kept in readiness for service a fair supply of intrenching tools, which proved of inestimable value in the defence of Knoxville, as they constituted nearly the entire supply at that place. The Battalion retained its organization, and served with the Corps to the end of the war.

These preliminary steps were in progress when the exigencies of affairs at Vicksburg required that the two Divisions of the 9th Corps should be sent to assist in the operations there. After the fall of Vicksburg they took part in the movement upon Jackson, and they did not return to the Department of the Ohio until after the advance into East Tennessee had been begun. Their absence caused but little delay however, as the time was utilized in forwarding the establishment of an intrenched position at Hickman Bridge, on the Kentucky River, known as Camp Nelson. This was intended as a base of supplies for subsequent operations.

About the middle of August the available forces of the 23d Corps moved upon Montgomery, Tennessee, as follows:

Hascall's division of Infantry from Crab Orchard, by way of Somerset, Smith's Ford and Chitwood's.

Manson's division of Infantry, from Lebanon, by way of Columbia, Burkesville and Albany.

Two brigades of Cavalry from Loudon, by way of Williamsburg and Chitwood's.

Two brigades of Cavalry from Columbia, Ky., covering the right flank of Manson's column.

The movement was made without difficulty or special incident until reaching the Indian tavern, about eight miles

from Montgomery, where a brigade of Cavalry was detached, which, by a rapid and unopposed march of about forty-five miles occupied Knoxville, on the 2d day of September. Their entry into that place was signalized by a warm welcome upon the part of the inhabitants, who loudly cheered the old flag ; a demonstration seldom witnessed by our soldiers after passing beyond the loyal States.

Meanwhile the remainder of the force continued its march towards Kingston. At the old Emory Iron Works the Infantry and Cavalry separated, the former proceeding by way of Waller's Ford to Lackey's on the main road from Kingston to Knoxville, whilst the Cavalry endeavored by a rapid movement to gain possession of and save the railroad bridge over the Tennessee at Loudon. Upon reaching Lackey's it was learned that the Cavalry had arrived at Loudon too late to prevent the destruction of the bridge by the enemy. Thereupon the Infantry turned towards Knoxville, and on the 4th of September entered the town.

The railway between Knoxville and Chattanooga was of the utmost consequence to the Confederates, as it afforded an interior line of communication between their forces in Middle and East Tennessee, by which either could be readily reinforced by the other. Loudon bridge was the largest and most important structure on the line, and before opening the campaign against Knoxville it was deemed advisable to destroy the bridge, to the end that no considerable reinforcements from Bragg's immediate command could be rapidly thrown to the Eastward of Loudon. Its dimensions were 900 feet long, 60 feet high, with a draw-span in it, and once destroyed, much time would necessarily be consumed in rebuilding it. Accordingly, Capt. E. C. Denig, Assistant Adjutant General on the staff of General Speed S. Fry, Commanding at Camp Nelson, volunteered to undertake its destruction alone, depending largely upon his skill as a tele-

grapher [to enable him to accomplish it. He left Camp Nelson in disguise, made his way to Loudon without detection, and there awaited a favorable time. He found the bridge so carefully guarded, however, that no opportunity occurred offering reasonable chances of success. Meanwhile he passed much of his time in the telegraph office and gained some valuable information. It became evident that Bragg had his hands full in opposing Rosecrans' advance, and that he could not make any considerable detachment for Loudon or Knoxville. As the Federals approached, Capt. Denig realized that the conditions were changed, and he became quite as anxious to save the bridge for use when Rosecrans should occupy Chattanooga, and Burnside Knoxville, as he had previously been to destroy it. But the enemy now only awaited, as a signal for its destruction, assurance that they could not continue to hold the bridge. The appearance of Burnside's Cavalry in the immediate vicinity served the purpose, and notwithstanding Capt. Denig, by false telegrams and other means, made every effort to save the bridge, he was not successful. He rejoined us at Knoxville much chagrined at his failure, and we were glad to see him again, for his undertaking had been of so perilous a character that the chances were against his ever returning.

However, a ponton bridge situated a short distance above the railway bridge fell into our hands uninjured, and was subsequently of great service to us.

Before leaving Kentucky, General Burnside had sent a brigade of infantry to threaten the confederate position at Cumberland Gap. As soon as Knoxville was occupied, General Shackelford, with two regiments of Cavalry, was sent from there against the same position, approaching it, however, from the opposite direction. General Burnside followed with two more regiments of Cavalry, and two of Infantry—the latter marching from Knoxville to Cumberland Gap, in

fifty-two hours, a distance of about sixty miles. The position was practically invested, and on the 9th Sept., was surrendered by General Frazer, with its garrison of about two thousand men.

The general plan under which the campaign was then in progress, contemplated the movement of the greater portion of General Burnside's force down the Valley of the Tennessee to a connection, (possibly a junction,) with Rosecrans' Army, then at Chattanooga or its vicinity. This involved leaving Knoxville to be held by a small force, and rendered necessary the erection of sufficient fortifications. Meanwhile I had been assigned as Chief Engineer of the Army of the Ohio, as the force under the command of General Burnside was now designated, and instructed to arrange for a garrison of six hundred men, intended only to hold the place against a cavalry "dash."

During the time the enemy held Knoxville, a very small beginning had been made towards the erection of earthworks. An insignificant line had been thrown up on the hill northwest of the college, and a slight epaulement of the bluff overlooking the railway station. Neither of these could be of the slightest use in the construction of such works as were required under the instructions referred to. The plans for two works were submitted, one on the site of the imperfect work first mentioned, and the other on Temperance Hill in East Knoxville. The former was afterwards known as Fort Sanders, and the other as Fort Huntington Smith. They were approved by General Burnside, and work upon them was at once begun by the engineer batallion of the 23d corps, and a small force of negroes, but progressed slowly on account of the difficulty of getting suitable materials. They were not entirely completed until after the siege of Knoxville. Meanwhile our lines were extended down the valley towards Chattanooga, in the endeavor to establish a connection with the

Army of the Cumberland. By the 18th September, a battalion of cavalry in the extreme advance reached Cleveland, Tenn., and the prospect for an early accomplishment of the object was good until the result of the battle of Chickamauga put an end for the time being to further movements in that direction, and Sweetwater became our outpost.

The two divisions of the 9th corps had rejoined us at Knoxville a short time before this. Early in October a force of the enemy coming from the eastward, moved down the railroad to the vicinity of Bull's Gap, and pressed heavily upon our forces at that point.

On the 9th of October, General Burnside left by railroad for Bull's Gap, to assume personal charge of affairs, taking with him three short trains laden with troops of the 9th corps. The trains were drawn by such wheezy old engines as the enemy had left us, and progress was so slow that it was not until after dark that we reached General Wilcox's position at the gap. The next morning our cavalry, followed by the infantry, moved out towards the enemy, and about 10 a. m. encountered his pickets at Blue Spring, driving them back a mile. By the time the remainder of the force got up and into position the afternoon was far advanced. A spirited attack easily dislodged the enemy, and he was driven from the field with small loss on our side, but darkness soon suspended pursuit.

In anticipation of a successful assault a brigade of cavalry had been sent around the enemy's right flank under instructions to take position in his rear, and delay his retreat sufficiently to enable our infantry to overtake him. The brigade reached Rheatown at about 2 o'clock next morning and one regiment was sent westward to Henderson's. The enemy attacked this regiment at daylight, pushed it out of the way, and in like manner passed the remainder of the brigade two hours in advance of our pursuing infantry. A



running skirmish between our cavalry and the enemy's continued throughout this day and the next with slight result, and the pursuit was then discontinued. Our infantry halted at Rheatown.

Upon the whole the affair was unsatisfactory, and the damage done the enemy was much less serious than it should have been. It was reasonable to expect that a determined resistance by our cavalry would detain the enemy long enough for the infantry to come up, in which case the issue could not have been doubtful.

One of the incidents occurring this day so well illustrates possible events in our country, that it may be well to relate it. The morning was sultry for the season; the march began very early; our mess arrangements were of the crudest character, and when, after a ride of some ten miles on a very insufficient breakfast, we reached Greeneville, we were both tired and hungry. At the eastern edge of the village we were at the head of the moving column when General Burnside, reigning his horse out of the road and followed by his staff, dismounted at the gate of a small wooden cottage which had some fifteen or twenty yards of well kept ground in front of it. Possibly the halt just at this point was accidental, but it may have been determined by the fact that, standing in the doorway of the cottage was a matronly looking woman whose kindly face plainly showed how glad she was to see the Union soldiers. Apparently recognizing the head of the group as an officer of rank, she came forward and asked him if he was General Burnside. Upon receiving an affirmative reply, she said, "Come in with your staff, I have prepared breakfast in expectation of your coming." We promptly accepted the invitation, and entering the house found such a breakfast as few of us had seen for months. The inevitable chicken with the best of bread, butter, honey, ham, &c., were there in plenty, and we did full justice to the

occasion. For many a day thereafter we gratefully remembered and spoke of the timely hospitality, but few, if any of us expected to again see or hear of our hostess.

Less than two years afterwards, however, that same kindly faced woman, as the representative of her invalid mother, took her place at the side of the President of the United States, on all ceremonial occasions at the White House. She was the daughter of Andrew Johnson.

How wild would have seemed the prediction if any one in that breakfast party that October morning had prophesied the facts as they actually came to pass.

We returned to Knoxville on the 14th of October. On the 22d our outpost at Sweetwater and reserve at Philadelphia were attacked successfully, and affairs in that direction began to take on a threatening appearance. On the 23d we went to Loudon, and during the next three days General Sanders with a cavalry force recovered the ground at Philadelphia, and drove the opposing force nearly to Sweetwater. Reconnoissances in the vicinity of Loudon resulted in the determination to abandon that place for the present, and this was carried into effect by 10 a. m. on the 28th, whereupon the ponton bridge was detached at its southern end, which caused it to swing to the other side, and the process of dismantling it for the purpose of taking it to Knoxville commenced. The bridge was constructed by the confederates and fell into our possession at the first occupation of Loudon. The boats were very heavy, built of  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inch southern pine plank, the main body of each boat being rectangular in form, and finished at the upstream end by an addition which was an equilateral triangle in plan. There was material enough for three boats in each one of these. To get them out of the water, twelve mules were hitched to each boat and they were dragged on the ground for about half a mile, to a railway cut, where they were loaded on flat cars. The chess-plank

were carried the same distance on the backs of men. By nightfall the bridge was all at the railroad, and the greater portion of it loaded.

Whilst the transfer of the bridge from the river to the railroad was in progress, a couple of squadrons of confederate cavalry appeared on the south bank. I fully expected them to open fire upon us, as we were within easy range, and it would not have been at all difficult to stop our operations, but they took it all very quietly, and after a short time requested some one to come to their side of the river. Upon receiving assurance that I would be permitted to return, I took a canoe and paddled over, leaving instructions to push the work as rapidly as possible. The commanding officer, a major, whose name I do not now remember, received me most courteously. Realizing the importance of time I exerted myself to the utmost, and told all the stories that I could recall. The rebel was too polite to show any signs of weariness, though some of the tales must have made a heavy draft upon his courtesy. Doubtless he regretted having invited me to cross, but there I was, and there I was bound to stay until his patience should become exhausted. It was not until my host intimated that his time was up and notwithstanding his great esteem for me he must say good-bye, that I withdrew to my own side of the river. It was very pleasant to see him promptly mount his command and move off, leaving us to complete our work undisturbed. I have never been able to understand why we were not interfered with. It has always been a great puzzle, and it will probably never be solved.

The bridge material was taken to Knoxville where by working night and day, it was relaid, and at 1 P. M. of Sunday, November 1st, Sanders' division of cavalry commenced crossing it to the south side of the Holston, and moving out in the direction of Marysville. It remained in use

for months, and was simply invaluable. We undertook the construction of a bridge which could be transported on wagons, sawing the lumber from green trees and forging the nails and other iron parts from scrap iron picked up wherever we could find it. For the latter purpose every available black-smith was employed, but the bridge was never completed.

The abandonment of Loudon was decided upon with a view to taking up a stronger position on the northern bank of the river from Kingston to Lenoir's, where a ponton bridge was to be thrown over the Holston and the line prolonged by the right bank of the Little Tennessee sufficiently near the mountains to render impracticable a movement around our left flank by the enemy in force. This line required a much smaller force to hold, particularly as the autumn rains were coming on, when the Little Tennessee would not be fordable.

The bridge at Lenoir's was successfully constructed from materials at hand, and used until withdrawal to Knoxville began, when General Potter, commanding the 9th Corps, was instructed to destroy it. He reported the due execution of the order, but General Longstreet states that he sent wagons to bring it to his lines at Knoxville, from which it may be inferred that the destruction was not very complete.

On the 13th of November it was ascertained that the enemy had constructed a ponton bridge at Hough's Ferry, near Loudon, and were crossing in force to the right bank of the Tennessee. At the same time General Wheeler, with nearly the whole of his four brigades of cavalry made a rapid night march and crossed the Little Tennessee, with a view to cutting off Sanders' command and occupying the heights on the south side of the Holston opposite Knoxville or, as stated by Longstreet, "failing in this, to threaten the enemy at Knoxville so as to prevent his concentrating against us before we reached Knoxville."

Wheeler found only one regiment at Marysville, the 11th Kentucky cavalry, of Wofford's brigade. This was quickly dislodged by the greatly superior force of the confederates, and pursued by Dobbins's brigade, but being reinforced by the remainder of the brigade a counter attack was made by Wofford. The arrival of Harrison's and Morgan's brigades of confederates again gave them such preponderance of numbers that they succeeded in driving Wofford across Little river. Wheeler crossed Little river next morning and attacked Sanders at Stock creek, meeting with a very stubborn resistance from a force certainly not more than half as large as his own. Sanders was gradually driven back to the vicinity of Knoxville, but he succeeded in preventing the desired occupation by the enemy of the heights south of the Holston.

It has been reported that our cavalry was driven in the wildest confusion for three miles, and to within less than half a mile of the river opposite Knoxville, where the bulk of it "dashed over their pontoons into the city," and "those who could not cross scattered over the country." Inasmuch as the great object of the movement was the occupation of the heights which were fully half a mile from the river opposite Knoxville, the failure to do so is hardly consistent with the report. The fact is, our cavalry was not driven in the wildest confusion, not a single man of it dashed across our pontoons into the city, nor was it scattered over the country. Attended by a single orderly I crossed the bridge to the south side, rode out from the river towards Marysville all of three miles without getting beyond our lines, saw General Sanders and talked with him, but saw no signs of demoralization nor any indication of greater confusion than such as is incident to a rapid movement of cavalry. Sanders was perfectly cool and confident of his ability to defeat the enemy's apparent object to gain possession of the heights opposite Knoxville. He may have been over confident, but he presented such a front

that the confederates refrained from pushing matters to a conclusion. Not only did they fail to occupy the heights at this time, but at no time during Longstreet's operations against Knoxville did they occupy the heights opposite the town. Their furthest advance in this direction was a point opposite the mouth of Third Creek, nearly a mile and three-quarters from our ponton bridge.

Wheeler soon withdrew, and crossing the Holston at Louisville rejoined Longstreet on the 17th.

Upon learning of Longstreet's movements, General Burnside with a portion of his staff repaired to Lenoir's. I was left at Knoxville to execute such instructions as should be sent me, especially in regard to the measures to be taken for the defence of Knoxville, where it had been determined to make a stand. The movements of our troops during the next few days had for their object to delay the advance of the enemy to enable us to get our trains into Knoxville, and to forward the preparation of defensive works.

Longstreet advanced in two columns, McLaws' division taking the left hand road, leading to Campbell's station, and Hood's division (commanded by Jenkins), the one to the right, following the line of the railroad to Lenoir's. The latter soon came in contact with the Federal skirmishers and drove them slowly back, but failed to reach Lenoir's that day. Every effort was made during the night to ascertain Burnside's movements, but his bold and vigilant rear guard succeeded in completely concealing them. By daybreak the whole force was on the road, and when the confederates advanced they found Lenoir's deserted.

The road upon which Burnside was moving followed by Jenkins, intersects that along which McLaws was advancing, about a mile southwest of Campbell's station. It was therefore essential to the safety of his trains, if not of his entire command that Burnside should reach the junction point be-

fore McLaws.

Just before daylight on the 16th of November Hartranft's division took the advance of Burnside's column from Lenoir's and pushed forward as rapidly as the condition of the roads permitted, followed by the trains, and the remainder of the troops.

McLaws, under urgent instructions from Longstreet, and with full knowledge of the importance of seizing the intersection of the roads, was making every endeavor to get possession before the arrival of Burnside. He was opposed by a small force, entirely insufficient to materially retard his progress, but his march, like Hartranft's, was impeded by the mud resulting from the heavy rains of the preceding days. It thus became a race for the position. Hartranft won by perhaps half an hour, and turning west on the Kingston road he quickly deployed his division in such manner as to confront McLaws, and at the same time cover the Loudon road along which our trains were moving.

During the movement from Lenoir's Burnside's rear guard, composed of Humphrey's brigade, had several sharp encounters with Jenkins' advance, in which Humphrey handled his forces so well as to excite the admiration of both friends and foes, always standing long enough, but never too long.

Scarcely had Hartranft's dispositions been made when McLaws appeared and attacked, but he steadfastly held his ground until the remainder of our troops and all our trains had safely passed. The trains continued on the road to Knoxville, while the troops were formed in line of battle about half a mile beyond the junction, with Ferrero's division on the right, and White's in prolongation to the left, whereupon Hartranft withdrew from his advanced position and took his place in line on the left of White. A small cavalry force scouted the roads on each flank of the line.

About noon Longstreet unsuccessfully attacked our right, and afterwards our left centre. Later, taking advantage of a wooded ridge to conceal the march, he attempted to turn our left flank with three brigades of Jenkins' division, but our scouts soon discovered and reported the movement. Burnside had already determined to retire to a new position about two-thirds of a mile to his rear, and this development but slightly hastened his withdrawal from the first line.

The difficult and hazardous undertaking was successfully accomplished, in the face of the enemy. I did not witness it, but have always heard it spoken of with enthusiasm by those who were present. All concur in the statement that the troops moved with the greatest coolness, deliberation and precision under a heavy and continuous fire, and that the maneuver more closely resembled a drill than an actual battle.

McLaws' division promptly advanced to attack the new position, whilst Jenkins continued his turning movement, but the difficulties of the ground delayed him until nightfall stopped his further progress. Meanwhile McLaws' attack failed to make an impression, and at the close of the action Burnside remained in possession of his own ground.

Soon after dark Burnside continued his movement to Knoxville, the head of his column appearing there about day-break next morning, November 17th.

General Burnside placed his whole loss in this important affair at about three hundred. General Jenkins reported his as one hundred and seventy-four. The losses in McLaws' division might have been as great. It is highly probably that the losses on both sides were about equal.

It was Longstreet's avowed object to bring Burnside to bay before the latter could concentrate his forces at Knoxville, with the additional advantage of such earth-works as might have been constructed there. This he succeeded in doing at Campbell's station, and there his famous troops would



surely have achieved all that he hoped, but for the valorous conduct of those opposed to them. A defeat of the Federal forces at this point meant direst disaster to them. Longstreet sought to accomplish this, but failed. Burnside fought to give his trains time to reach Knoxville, and to gain the cover of night under which to complete his withdrawal to that place. He realized these objects, and therefore was fairly entitled to claim a victory.

Of course many reasons have been assigned for Longstreet's failure at Campbell's Station. The confederate General, Sam. Jones, in writing of this affair says, "When such an opportunity is lost in a campaign, blame is generally attached to some one or more commanders; and this was not an exception to the general rule." He quotes General Longstreet, as expressing the opinion that "if General Jenkins could have made his attack during this movement, (the withdrawal from the first to the second position,) or if he could have made it after the enemy had taken his second position, we must have destroyed this force, recovered East Tennessee, and in all probability captured the greater part of the enemy's forces."

There can be no doubt but Longstreet's opinion was correct as to the effect of a Federal defeat at Campbell's station, and his superiority of forces on the field, together with his confidence in their prowess, are quite sufficient to account for his feeling of assurance that an attack by Jenkins, as intended, would surely have been successful. His opponents, however, cannot be expected to admit the correctness of this assumption. They were as good troops as those of Longstreet, were at bay, and were prepared to fight with the utmost desperation. This feeling might have compensated for inferiority of numbers.

It may not be improper to remark that the presence of Wheeler's five thousand cavalry on the field would have sup-

plied a force capable of the requisite celerity of movement, and given such a preponderance of force as to render success almost certain. Their absence at such a time was fatal, and was not justified by the measure of their success on the other sides of the Holston. Twenty-four hours after the event, they rejoined Longstreet, but it was then too late. By that time we were securely established in position at Knoxville,

In anticipation of his early withdrawal, General Burnside had instructed me from Campbell's Station, while the fight of the 16th was in progress, to select lines of defense around Knoxville, and have everything prepared to put the troops into position as fast as they should arrive. I was well acquainted with the ground, and but little further examination was necessary to enable me to designate, in writing, the proposed location of each organization.

The topographical features of the vicinity of Knoxville, give that place decided strength as a military position. On the northern or right bank of the Holston, a narrow table-land or ridge, generally elevated about one hundred and fifty feet above the river, but with many points of greater height, extends from a point about two miles east of the town, down the river to Lenoir's, a distance of some twenty-four or five miles. Its width varies considerably, but just at Knoxville it is about thirteen hundred yards, and the valley bounding it on the north-west, parallel with the river, is perhaps fifty feet above the stream at the ordinary stage of water. The East Tennessee, Virginia & Georgia Railroad, is located along this valley, which was almost entirely clear of timber.

At short intervals the ridge is cut through by small streams emptying into the Holston, two of which, called First and Second Creeks, run through the town at a distance apart of about one thousand yards. The main portion of Knoxville, as it existed at the time of the siege, occupied that portion of the table-land included between the two

creeks, the river and the valley. East Knoxville was situated next east of First Creek, upon an elevation rising to 225 feet, known as Temperance Hill. East of Temperance Hill, and separated from it by a depression in the ridge, is Mabry's Hill, the height of which is 230 feet, the highest ground on the north side of the Holston within cannon range of the town. Beyond this the ground, with a few minor elevations, gradually descends to the level of the valley. Immediately upon the bank of the river, south of Temperance Hill, is Flint Hill, with an elevation of 162 feet.

Third Creek, a little more than a mile westward from Second Creek, forms the south-westerly limit of another natural division of the ridge, including, with an elevation of 198 feet, the hill north-west from the college, and lower hills between it and the river, having elevations of 150 and 160 feet respectively. The college stood on the last of these.

Going north-westerly from the river, ridges are found in succession at short intervals. They are generally parallel to the one described. The most important was the one occupied by the enemy, immediately across the valley, at a distance of about a mile from our line.

South of the Holston the ground rises in a series of prominent points, the highest of which is about 360 feet above the stream, and is directly opposite Knoxville on the prolongation of Gay street. The knobs form a range, of which the crest line is practically parallel with the river, at an average distance from it of about half a mile, with a wide valley beyond.

On the Knoxville side of the Holston, the left of our line rested upon the river, about a quarter of a mile below the mouth of Second Creek, extended from there at an angle of about eighty-two degrees with the river for nine hundred yards, to battery Noble,\* then bending about fifty degrees

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\*The several positions along the line were not named until after the lines were established; Fort Sanders, on the 18th November, and the others after the siege was raised. All were named after officers who had been killed during the siege, or in the operations preceding it.

to the northward, continued a little more than six hundred yards to Fort Sanders, where it changed direction about sixty-five degrees to the eastward, and overlooking the valley, followed the crest of the bluff, parallel with the general course of the river, for some 1600 yards to Battery Wiltsee, opposite the railroad station, including in this part of the line Battery Zoellner between Fort Sanders and Second Creek, Battery Galpin just east of Second Creek, and Fort Comstock between Battery Galpin and Battery Wiltsee. From the last named, with a slight change of direction towards the river, it continued along the crest of the bluff, over Temperance Hill to Mabry's Hill, a distance of 2400 yards, including Battery Billingsley just west of First Creek, Fort Huntington Smith on Temperance Hill, Battery Clifton Lee and Battery Stearman in the depression between Temperance Hill and Mabry's Hill, and Fort Hill on the extreme easterly point of Mabry's Hill. From here the line turned sharply to the southward for 1300 yards and reached the river at a ravine about 1000 yards above the mouth of First Creek. A continuous line of infantry cover connected all these positions, and dams were built at the crossing of First and Second Creeks which, by backing the water, formed considerable obstacles, especially in front of Temperance Hill, where the line was parallel with the course of First Creek for 1200 yards, and the pond impassable without bridges.

An interior line was established from Fort Sanders to Second Creek, near its mouth, including Fort Byington built around the college, and another from Temperance Hill to Flint Hill, where it terminated in Battery Fearn

On the south side of the river such of the heights, (four in number,) as were necessary to the defense, were occupied by detached works with extensions for infantry cover, insufficient however, to make the line continuous, or even ap

proximately so. Fort Stanley was built on the hill directly opposite Knoxville, and a line of ordinary rifle trench carried eastward from it, across the Sevierville road and to the adjacent height. The hill nearly opposite the mouth of Second Creek was occupied by Fort Dickerson, and the next one to the westward by Fort Higley.

The arrangements for the defense of the position on the north side of the Holston were necessarily made in the most hurried manner. The earthworks known as Fort Sanders and Fort Huntington Smith, intended for a very different condition of affairs, were so far advanced towards completion when Longstreet appeared before Knoxville, that their use without modification was compulsory. The plan of neither one was what it would have been had they been designed as parts of a continuous line. Especially was this the case with respect to Fort Sanders, the trace of which was such that under the stress of circumstances its north-western bastion became a prominent salient of the main line, and notwithstanding the measures taken to remedy this objectionable feature, its existence caused us great anxiety. The sector without fire of the bastion referred to, (the one attacked,) would have been a sector without fire for the line, but for the arrangements made on either side of it to overcome the defect as far as possible. The fire thus obtained in front of this bastion was not all that could have been desired, but the event proved that it was sufficient. The single fact that Longstreet's renowned infantry failed to carry it by assault, practically demonstrated that there were no very serious defects unrecognized or unprovided for.

As already stated, the head of Burnside's column appeared at Knoxville at daybreak on the 17th of November. It was met near Third Creek, and the organizations, in succession, directed to their respective stations, formed upon the lines they were to occupy, (described above,) and told to dig,

and to do it with all their might. By the middle of the forenoon all were in their assigned positions and hard at work. The location of but few of the organizations was changed during the siege, and these but slightly.

Except the incomplete Forts Sanders and Huntington Smith, nothing in the way of defensive works had been previously contemplated. All now understood the necessities of the situation, and but little urging was required to induce the troops to work with a will. Lines of rifle trenches soon appeared, only to rapidly grow into continuous infantry parapets. Batteries for the artillery were ready to receive their guns in the shortest possible time.

The defense of that portion of the line from Second Creek, by way of Fort Sanders to the river, was assigned to the first (Ferrero's) division of the 9th corps. The first brigade (Morrison's) extended from the river to near Fort Sanders, the third brigade (Humphrey's) garrisoned Fort Sanders and continued the line to Battery Zoellner, and the second brigade (Christ's) from there to Second Creek at Battery Galpin. One section of Roemer's Battery of three inch rifled guns was posted at Battery Noble and the other two sections at Fort Byington.

Benjamin's four 20 Pdr. Parrotts, with Buckley's six 12 Pdr. Napoleons were assigned to Fort Sanders. One of the latter mounted in the Pan Coupe of the north-western bastion, looked directly out over the sector without fire before alluded to.

The second (Hartranft's) division of the 9th corps extended the line from Second Creek to First Creek, with Gitting's four 10 Pdr. Parrotts in Fort Comstock, and three 3 inch rifled guns of the 15th Indiana Battery in Battery Billingsley.

Chapin's brigade of White's division, 23d corps, connected with the right of Hartranft's division. An interval

was then left for Reilly's brigade of Hascall's division, (never occupied however, this fine brigade having been held in reserve during the entire siege,) over which Chapin's brigade was afterwards extended, as the unfordable pond formed by damming First Creek made the position very strong. Hoskin's brigade extended the line around Mabry's Hill, and Casement's brigade of Loyal Tennesseans thence to the river.

Sims' 24th Indiana battery of 3.8 inch James' rifled guns, and one section of the same kind of guns of Henshaw's battery were stationed in Fort Huntington Smith. The other two sections of this battery were brass 6 Pdrs. and were posted, two guns in Battery Clifton Lee, and two in Battery Stearman. Shields' battery of six 12 Pdr. Napoleons and one section of Thomas' battery of 3 inch rifled guns (known as the Wilder battery) were posted on Mabry's Hill; and on Flint Hill one section of 12 Pdr. Howitzers, manned by details made principally from the regiments of Loyal Tennesseans.

The heights south of the Holston were occupied by Cameron's brigade of Hascall's division, 23d corps in support of the other four guns of Thomas' battery, and Konkle's battery of four 3 inch rifled guns.

The cavalry was also stationed on the south side of the river, except as hereafter related.

It is to be borne in mind that at the time the troops were placed in the position indicated, nothing had yet been done towards the construction of any of the works, except Forts Sanders and Huntington Smith, and none had yet been named. (See note preceding.)

During the night of the 16th of November, Sanders' division of cavalry crossed to the north side of the river, and moved out on the Loudon road to cover our forces, approaching from Campbell's Station until they could get into position

and make some progress in the construction of defensive works. Slowly falling back as the enemy advanced on the 17th, he finally made a stand, with one brigade of about 700 men under his immediate command, upon a hill just north of the Loudon road a mile from Fort Sanders, and about 800 yards west from where that road crossed Third Creek, while the other brigade, (two regiments of mounted infantry,) commanded by Col. Penebaker, turned at bay where the Clinton road crossed the ridge about a mile north west from Fort Sanders.

For the remainder of the 17th these commands stubbornly held their ground, in full view of our lines, the principal attacks being directed upon Sanders' position, and all of us who witnessed the fighting well remember our admiration of the gallant conduct of our cavalry in its fierce contest with Longstreet's infantry aided by the pounding of Alexander's guns, which only ceased when it became too dark to continue the combat.

About 11 P. M. General Burnside sent for me, and upon reporting to him at his head quarters at Crozier's house, I found him in conversation with Sanders. After some preliminary remarks he asked me how long it would take for the troops to advance the works to a defensible condition, and was informed that it could be done by noon the next day. Turning to Sanders he asked him if he, (Sanders,) would maintain his position until that time, and received an assuring promise. Sanders accompanied me to my quarters where we discussed the matter until after midnight, and then laid down upon the same blanket to get some rest. Before day-light of the 18th he was called by the guard, and left to join his command.

At daylight the attacks upon Sanders were renewed with the evident determination to dislodge him in the shortest possible time. As hour after hour passed and that cavalry



continued to stand against the pressure, it excited the wonder of the rest of our army. The contest was very unequal, and occasionally a few of our men would leave their position behind the piles of fence rails which constituted their only cover, with the apparent intention of retreating. At such critical times Sanders would walk up to the rail piles, stand there erect, with fully half his height exposed to the terrible fire at short range, until every retreating man as if ashamed of himself, returned to his proper place.

He held his ground until noon, as he had promised General Burnside, and then in accordance with an understanding with me he continued to hold it, intending to do so until actually driven away. At about half-past two he fell, mortally wounded, and the screen which he had so stubbornly interposed between the enemy and our hard working troops was quickly rolled aside

Sanders fully realized the importance of every moment gained beyond the time he had promised. Every spadeful of earth turned while he was fighting aided in making our position secure, and he had determined to sacrifice himself, if necessary, for the safety of the rest of the army. Hence he maintained his position so strenuously, and but for his fall it is possible he would have held it until night, as I sincerely believe he meant to do. His power to control and handle his command seemed absolute, and as far as an observer could judge, it appeared ready to stand by him to the very end.

Nowhere during the war was the personal influence of a brave and chivalric gentleman more manifest. Sanders' fine presence, soldierly bearing, extreme gallantry and unvarying courtesy attached to him the incongruous elements composing his command, and enabled him to handle it as he did on this occasion, when its behavior was certainly worthy the commendation it received.

And Sanders' course in this affair was all the more

praiseworthy, in view of the fact that he had a premonition of his fate. The night before he fell he freely talked about it with me, his West Point classmate and friend, and expressed his readiness to die, if this should be necessary to make good our defence. We all knew the value of the additional time gained for us by the gallant conduct of himself and his command, but the regret was universal that it should have been purchased at such great cost. The fort in front of which he fell was named in commemoration of the service rendered.

Early on the 18th eight or ten of the enemy had established themselves in the upper story of the tower of a brick house which stood about 750 yards beyond Sanders' line, and from this advantageous position greatly annoyed his command by their accurate fire. He sent a request to Benjamin, in Fort Sanders, to try the effect upon these sharpshooters of a few shots from his 20 Pdr. Parrotts. The distance was 2500 yards, and Benjamin had no ammunition to waste upon a mere squad. But the reputation of his famous battery was challenged, and he directed one of his best gunners to see what could be done. The response was a shot directly through the compartment occupied by the sharpshooters, badly wrecking it, (ascertained by examination after the siege,) abating the nuisance, and rendering a second shot unnecessary. With our glasses we could see the men running from the building, but never knew whether any were injured or not.

During the whole war I saw no prettier single shot, though its accuracy may have been accidental, and the same gunner might have failed with a second one. Yet the fact stands that it went where aimed, and accomplished the desired result, much to the delight of hundreds of our men who cheered loudly when it struck.

By the night of the 18th our infantry trenches on the

north side of the river had been made nearly continuous, and our heavier works well advanced. The enemy's skirmishers pushed up in front of ours, and the siege was fairly on. On the 19th he extended to his left, and during the day threw shells into Knoxville from a battery posted on the Tazewell road, about a mile and a half from our main line. On the 20th the enemy's offensive lines began to show up, his right approaching the river near Armstrong's house, just west of Third Creek. From there he extended toward the left across the valley and along the ridge beyond, on a line nearly concentric with ours. The earthworks on each side seemed to grow like magic, but we were apparently doing more digging than they. Indeed, they never constructed any works of consequence east of the Jacksboro' road.

A large brick house, with two log barns, stood within the enemy's skirmish line in front of Fort Sanders, and served as cover for troublesome sharpshooters. Why these buildings were not destroyed by us as we fell back I do not know, but it soon became evident that it must be done now, and the 17th Michigan infantry was detailed for the purpose. At 9 P. M. the regiment, passing to the rear and left of Fort Sanders, advanced to our skirmish line, where they halted a few moments to adjust the line, and again moved forward. The enemy soon discovered the movement and opened fire, whereupon our men charged at a run, and quickly gained possession of the buildings. The house had been the station of the picket reserve, and in their hasty retreat they had left behind overturned chairs, an officers sword hanging in the parlor, blankets and other equipments, as well as a baking pan full of warm biscuits, all indicating the completeness of the surprise. A party of five volunteers under charge of Major F. W. Swift had been formed to set fire to the buildings. As one of these entered the house a confederate soldier escaped from it by dodging under his arm. The house was

soon ablaze, but the destruction of the outbuildings was more difficult. However, after a time, these were effectually fired, and our men half way on their return to our lines before the light of the burning buildings revealed them to the enemy, who then opened a cannonade upon them and hastened their movements to the shelter of the nearest rifle-pits, where they remained until it became safe to resume their position in the trenches. It is told that Major Swift upon being detected with his pockets full of warm biscuits remarked, "I never felt so bad in my life as when I saw those biscuits in danger of burning." The affair was perfectly successful, and accomplished with small loss. The next morning General Burnside issued an order complimenting the regiment.

The siege and defensive operations progressed in the usual manner until the 22d, when we received information that the enemy was constructing a raft at Boyd's Ferry, on the Holston, about six miles above Knoxville by the course of the river, intending to set it adrift in the hope that it would reach our ponton bridge and carry it away, thus breaking our communication with the south side. About dark we began stretching an iron cable boom across the river above the bridge, with a view to catching the raft. The cable was about a thousand feet long formed by linking together any iron bars we could get, and was borne by wooden floats. Under my personal supervision the boom was completed by 9 o'clock next morning.

On the evening of the 23d the enemy advanced upon our skirmishers in front of Fort Comstock and drove them back, but not until they had set fire to all the buildings in the immediate vicinity. We regained the position next morning. Nearly due west from Fort Sanders the enemy had advanced his line to within about 600 yards of the fort, and had thrown up a continuous line of infantry trench, with its right resting on the railroad and extending about 300 yards to the left.

Early in the morning of the 24th a detail of 169 men of the Second Michigan infantry attacked and carried this work. After holding it for some time without reinforcements, the enemy made a counter attack in largely increased force, with most lamentable results to us, our men being driven back with a loss of nearly half their number.

Strange as it may seem, this sortie was made without my knowledge, and although I made considerable effort afterwards to ascertain who was responsible for it, I never succeeded. It would be difficult to conceive a more ill-advised movement. It would have been proper if we had intended to bring on a general engagement, in which case the sortie should have been supported with our whole force. If such was not the intention, the sortie should not have been made at all. Carried out in the manner it was, the affair was simply murderous. This is strong language, but every word of it is justified by the unnecessary loss of about 83 of our very best troops, and the notes which I made at the time show that if I could have found any one to stand sponsor for the order, my condemnation of it would have then been quite as decided as now.

About the same time the enemy crossed the Holston below his lines, and unsuccessfully attacked our forces on the south side of the river. He established batteries of rifled guns on the heights nearly opposite the mouth of Third Creek, (never occupied by us,) distant about 2300 yards from Fort Sanders, rendering it necessary to defilade this work against them.

The reports concerning the construction of a destructive raft at Boyd's Ferry were renewed, and another protective boom was stretched across the river, located above the first one, and made of long timbers fastened together at the ends by fifth-chains taken from the wagon trains. This boom was 1500 feet long.

Prior to our occupation of Knoxville the enemy had begun the erection of an earthwork, called by them Fort Loudon, on the site afterwards occupied by Fort Sanders. A second growth of pines, averaging about five inches in diameter, thickly covered the hill side in front, and were cut down by them, leaving stumps perhaps eighteen inches high, the ground between them being littered by the pine leaves which had fallen off and become of a rusty-brown color. The necessity for using every possible means of obstructing the approach over the sector without fire in front of the north-western bastion of Fort Sanders, included in the area covered by these stumps was evident to every one, and became more pressing as the probability of an assault at this point grew more apparent. At this time Mr. Hoxie, in charge of the railroad property at Knoxville, informed me that he had a lot of old telegraph wire at the depot which he thought might be of service to us as an obstruction. Its use as a net-work entanglement, by carrying it from stump to stump over the sector without fire referred to, was so obvious that no time was lost in putting it in place. It served a good purpose during the subsequent assault, but in my opinion the part it played in causing the repulse was much over-rated. Owing to its rusty color, nearly that of the pine litter just under it, and the imperfect light of the foggy morning, it doubtless did have some effect in breaking up the coherency of the assaulting column, and may possibly have detained it long enough to permit the defence to deliver a couple of rounds more, a matter of some consequence, when fired at such short range, by troops of the cool and vigilant character of those composing the garrison of the fort and the adjacent lines.

This specific account is given, because many erroneous statements have been made in regard to the matter, both in speech and print, and credit awarded where it did not justly

belong. Mr. Hoxie is entitled to whatever credit pertains to the use of this device. If he had not spoken we probably would not have known that there was any wire available.

During the 24th cannonading was distinctly heard to the south-westward. This was probably at Kingston, where an unsuccessful attack was that day made by General Wheeler with three brigades of cavalry upon Mott's brigade of the 23d corps. At the time, however, we were inclined to attribute it to the operations which we had reason to suppose were then in progress under General Grant at Chattanooga, and the absence of any elation upon the part of the enemy in our front led us to infer that Bragg had been defeated, and driven up the valley towards us until the sound of his guns was within the possible range of our hearing. We were only half right, but it was the important half.

The wet, foggy and generally disagreeable weather of the preceding days still continued, when, at about 11 o'clock on the night of the 28th our picket lines in front of Fort Sanders were attacked with such spirit as to indicate an important movement, and after sharp skirmishing for some length of time were finally carried. This was, in fact, the prelude to an assault upon the main work, and had for its immediate effect to put us on the alert, and keep us in readiness for the serious business which we knew was close at hand.

The enemy's arrangements for the assault provided that it be made in two columns, from McLaws' division, directed against the north-west angle of Fort Sanders—the one on the left to be composed of Wofford's brigade, in column of regiments, with the 16th Georgia leading, while the other, formed in like order, was to consist of Humphrey's brigade, led by the 13th Mississippi, and closely followed by three regiments of Bryan's brigade. The attack was to be made with fixed bayonets, without cheering or firing a shot, and the men were to be urged to rush forward with a determina-

tion to succeed. The sharpshooters were to keep up a continuous fire into the embrasures of the fort, and along the adjacent works, to prevent the use of artillery against the assaulting force, and to disturb the fire of all arms.

Anderson's brigade, following the main attack, was to carry the works about a hundred yards to the left, and in case the assault on Fort Sanders should prove successful, was then to wheel to the left, and, followed by Benning's and Jenkins' brigades, sweep down our lines to the eastward. But if the main attack should fail, Anderson was to wheel to the right and endeavor to carry Fort Sanders from the rear. Kershaw's brigade was to advance to the assault of the works on their right (southward) of the fort as soon as it had fallen.

The unassigned brigades of McLaws' and Jenkins' divisions, together with the brigades of Bushrod Johnson and Gracie, were to be held in readiness to follow up any success.

From the foregoing it will be seen that the plan of assault had been well studied, carefully elaborated and so clearly formulated that there could be but little chance of any misunderstanding.

The preparations for resisting it were the wire entanglements already described, a slight abattis, the strong profile of Fort Sanders, and the arrangements for both a direct and a cross fire in front of the salient, not only from the garrison of the fort itself, but also from the troops occupying the adjacent intrenchments.

Fort Sanders was laid out in strict accordance with the rules for constructing bastioned earthworks, but upon shorter exterior lines than were desirable. It was built upon an irregular quadrilateral of which the western side was 95 yards; the northern 125 yards; the eastern 85 yards, and the southern 125 yards; the northwestern bastion being traced in the right angle between the first two sides.

The western front was completed, and the two adjoining



ones had been carried far enough to give us the advantage of their flanking arrangements. The eastern front had been intentionally left open. Provision had been made by Pan Coupes for an artillery fire along the capitals of the two completed bastions, and a 12 Pdr. gun placed in the one attacked. The trace of the interior crest was so located on the slopes of the hill, that when a parade of about forty feet in width had been formed, the undisturbed ground behind it served some of the minor purposes of a traverse. The ditch was made twelve feet wide at the bastion faces, and from six to eight feet in depth, depending upon the accidents of the ground, the average being about seven feet. The result of this location of the interior crest and depth of ditch, was an unusually high relief to the work, especially at the north-western bastion. The scarps were practically vertical, and the berme at the foot of the exterior slope was cut away. The counter scarps were continued until they intersected, and all the material between them and the curtain excavated to the general level of the bottom of the ditch, thus obviating all dead angles. A banquette was formed in the counter-scarp at the north-western salient, of sufficient extent for the location of about forty men, whose fire could be delivered in the direction of the capital. In addition to the ordinary flank fire, three 12 Pdrs. were so located in notches in the immediate eastward extension of the northern front as to admit of their firing into the left flank of the assaulting columns; and a fire, more or less efficient, could be delivered over the same ground from our intrenchments as far eastward as Battery Zoellner. A similar fire into their front and right flank was obtained from our lines to the southward of Fort Sanders as far as Battery Noble.

The Garrison of Fort Sanders at the time of the assault, usually estimated at about 500 men, consisted of Benjamins' and Buckley's batteries and one section of Roemer's (four

20 Pdr. Parrotts, six 12 Pdr. Napoleons, and two 3 inch rifled guns,) and an infantry force made up of some 120 men of the 79th New York, 75 men of the 29th Massachusetts, 60 men of the 2d Michigan, and 80 men of the 20th Michigan.

About forty men of the 2d Michigan under command of Capt. Emil Moores, occupied and fired from the banquettes in the counterscarp salient as long as the position was tenable, and then ran through the ditch to the southward, entered the fort around the south-eastern angle as they had been instructed to do, and took further part in the defence.

Although these have all been included in the garrison, yet the fact is that the number actually within the fort at the moment of the supreme struggle and repulse probably did not exceed 440 men. The discrepancy arises from the different ways of reckoning the limits of the fort, due to the open eastern front. The smaller estimate includes only the troops that were within the bastioned trace. Yet some very effective work was done against the assaulting column, by the fire coming from the intrenchments beyond the original Fort Sanders, and it has always seemed to me only fair that the troops delivering this fire should be counted in estimating the strength of the garrison, in which case the total would be increased to more than three times the number given.

About six A. M. on Sunday Nov. 29th, the enemy opened a heavy artillery fire upon Fort Sanders, to which no reply was made, because our limited supply of ammunition made it necessary to reserve it for use at a more critical moment. The fire continued for about twenty minutes and then slackened, whereupon the columns moved to the assault, and were at once met by all the fire that could be concentrated upon them from our lines. Encountering the wire entanglements their organization was somewhat disturbed but the movement was not seriously checked thereby, nor did the slight abatis retard it. Although suffering from the terribly

destructive fire to which they were subjected, they soon reached the outer brink of the ditch, and if they thought of the matter at all, must have then realized for the first time the gravity of their undertaking. But there could be no pause at that point, and leaping into the ditch in such numbers as nearly to fill it, they endeavored to scale the walls. Having no scaling ladders, a portion of the men, scrambling over the shoulders of their comrades, planted the battle flags of the 13th and 17th Mississippi, and the 16th Georgia regiments upon the parapet, but every man who rallied to them was either killed or captured, and the flags themselves fell into our hands.

Meanwhile those who remained in the ditch found themselves under a deadly flank fire of musketry and canister, supplemented by shells thrown as hand grenades from inside the fort, without the slightest possibility of returning a blow. Advance and retreat were about equally difficult and it needed but a very short exposure to convince them that if any were to leave the ditch alive, it could only be by the promptest surrender. Those who were able to walk were brought through the ditch to the south-eastern angle, and there entered our lines as prisoners.

Such of the assaulting forces as had not entered the ditch fell back, at first sullenly and slowly, but flesh and blood could not stand the storm of shot and shell that was poured upon them, and they soon broke in confused retreat.

The assault had been gallantly made but was repulsed in little more time than is required to describe it. When the result became apparent, General Longstreet directed the withdrawal of the supporting brigade, but the order did not reach Anderson in time to prevent his troops from pushing on as though the assault had been successful. They swerved, however, somewhat to their left, and attacked a short distance to the eastward of the point which had been designated,

only to meet with as decided, though not as bloody a repulse as that of the other brigades.

The assaulting columns were rallied under partial cover some five or six hundred yards from Fort Sanders, and there reorganized, but no further open attempt to carry our lines was made.

Many reasons have been assigned for the failure of this assault, and there is some difference of opinion in regard to the matter. Some of those opposed to us, of unquestioned ability and fairness, have attributed it to the warning given us by taking our picket line the night before, the insufficient use of their artillery, and the improper direction taken by two of the columns, resulting in their intermingling and consequent confusion. The opinion has been confidently expressed that a subsequent assault would have been successful.

All this assumes that we were not already vigilant and waiting for the attack,—that a heavy and continued artillery fire would have greatly damaged and demoralized us,—that the confusion arising from the convergence of the advancing columns would not have occurred again,—that the works were “very faulty in plan and very easy to take by a properly “managed assault,”—and last, but not least,—that the troops of the enemy were better than ours.

The first of these assumptions is erroneous,—the second greatly exaggerated,—the third might have been verified, but again might not,—the fourth is correct only within the limits and to the extent already explained,—and the last has no evidence to sustain it. No one is more ready and willing than the writer to admit the quality of the troops that fought us at Knoxville. They had few equals, and I verily believe that none were superior. But in making this admission I do not abate one particle of my confidence in the valor and persistency of those which opposed them. They possessed these qualities in as high degree as Longstreet’s men

or any others, and the succession of events had only served to improve their morale. While no one is warranted perhaps, in saying that this or that result *would* have followed another assault, it may fairly be doubted whether any disaster to our arms was imminent.

Having had ample opportunity to acquire reasonably trustworthy information in regard to the matter, there may be no unjustifiable presumption in suggesting that the repulse might have been due to fewer faults in the plan of the works than supposed,—to the measures adopted by us to remedy the faults which did exist,\* —to the passive obstacles of wire entanglements, depth of ditch and unusual relief of the parapet,—to the enemy's error in deciding it unnecessary to provide scaling ladders for the storming party,—and finally and *emphatically*, to a sufficient garrison of the coolest, bravest and most determined men.

Each of these reasons seems to me to have contributed its share to the result, and some of them were surely of much graver moment than any of those assigned by the other side.

The successful resistance of the 29th did not lead to any remission of labor on our defences. Work was continued by the troops with all the energy that had characterized their efforts thus far, but the enemy gave little indication of a purpose to do anything further upon their works of attack. On the 1st of December large trains belonging to the enemy were seen moving to the eastward, and again on the 3d and 4th. We had not yet heard the result of General Grant's operations at Chattanooga,—but all the signs pointed to probable success.

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\* "On the morning of December 6th, I rode from Marysville into Knoxville, and met General Burnside, \* \* \* We examined his lines of fortification, which were a wonderful production for the short time allowed, in their selection of ground and construction of work. It seemed to me that they were nearly impregnable. We examined the redoubt named 'Sanders,' where on the Sunday previous, three brigades of the enemy had assaulted and met a bloody repulse."

(Extract from General Sherman's official report of December 19, 1863.)

Shorily before daylight on the morning of the 4th I entered the store room on Gay street occupied as administrative offices by a portion of our staff. There I met General Burnside, whose whole manner showed that he had news of the most satisfactory nature. Beckoning me to come with him to the farther end of the long, narrow, dimly lighted room, and pointing to an officer stretched on the bare, hard counter, in the deepest slumber of utter fatigue, he asked if I knew him. In the obscurity it was some moments before I recognized the sleeping man as Capt. Audenried of General Sherman's staff, and interpreted the full meaning of his presence. It meant that relief was at hand,—that our weary days and nights of labor and watching were ended,—that our brothers of the Army of the Tennessee had marched hundreds of miles to repay, with many fold interest, any indebtedness for the support which the 9th Corps had given them at Vicksburg five months before.

Why and how this particular force came to the relief of Knoxville may be briefly told.

About the middle of September, the 15th army corps, commanded by General Sherman and forming part of the army of the Tennessee, was lying in camps on the Big Black river some twenty miles east of Vicksburg. The aspect of affairs connected with General Rosecrans' campaign against Chattanooga had grown so serious that General Grant, then at Vicksburg in command of the department and army of the Tennessee, was instructed from Washington by orders dated September 13th, to send all his available force "to Memphis, thence to Corinth and Tusculumbia, to co-operate with General Rosecrans." Two days later he was further instructed that "all the troops that can possibly be spared in west Tennessee and on the Mississippi river should be sent without delay, to assist General Rosecrans," \* \* \* "Information just received indicates that a part of Lee's army have been

sent to re-enforce Bragg." (This "part of Lee's army" was Longstreet's command.) The telegraph line at the time only extended to Cairo, and the dispatches quoted were conveyed thence by steamer to Memphis and Vicksburg. They were unaccountably delayed on the Mississippi river and did not reach General Grant until the 22d. Orders for the movement were sent to Sherman at once, and in response, Osterhaus' division, marching from Big Black bridge, reached Vicksburg during the night of the same day, and within forty eight hours was fairly on its way to Memphis.

This was followed by two more divisions as soon as steamers could be obtained for transportation, and by October 4th, all had reached Memphis, four hundred miles from Vicksburg. One division of the 17th corps was there attached to the 15th to take the place of one left on the Big Black, and with certain other accessions from the Memphis district, the force thus organized marched and fought its way eastward along the line of the Memphis and Charleston railroad, rebuilding it as far as Tuscumbia, which they reached on the 27th October.

By an order dated October 16th, 1863, the president directed the organization of the military division of the Mississippi, to be composed of the departments of the Ohio, of the Cumberland and of the Tennessee, with General Grant in command; and assigned General Thomas to the command of the department and army of the Cumberland in place of General Rosecrans. Generals Grant and Thomas assumed their respective commands on the 19th. Grant's first order to Thomas was to "hold Chattanooga at all hazards," eliciting from the latter as his first official act in his new command, the significant response, "We will hold the town till we starve." They were men who never indulged in idle words, and meant all that the language implied.

Late on the 23rd, General Grant arrived at Chattanooga

to take personal charge of operations in that quarter, and on the 27th another presidential order was issued, assigning General Sherman to the command of the department and army of the Tennessee.

Sherman reached Bridgeport on the 13th of November, and was summoned to Chattanooga for conference with General Grant. He arrived there on the 15th and then learned the part allotted him and his army in the coming battle. He saw the deplorable condition of the army of the Cumberland, and notwithstanding his troops had been pushed as fast as seemed practicable during their march of three hundred and fifty miles from Memphis, he could only feel urged to greater endeavor.

By almost superhuman effort his command was in its assigned position, behind the hills opposite the mouth of South Chickamauga Creek, before dark on the 23d, sixty-eight days from the Big Black. By noon of the 24th, the entire force had crossed to the left bank of the Tennessee river, and then moved against the right flank of Bragg's line on the northern end of Missionary Ridge, attaining the desired position before 4 p. m.

At dawn of the 25th, Sherman attacked in accordance with his instructions. Bragg realized the full import of this movement, and knew that it must be checked if he would continue to hold Missionary Ridge. Forced to rely upon the great natural strength of his position reinforced by well built lines of earthworks, he withdrew from his centre the troops which he deemed necessary to stay Sherman's advance along the Ridge. This was the inevitable result of the attack, and no sooner was it observable than the waiting army of the Cumberland assaulted Bragg's weakened centre, broke through his lines and overwhelmed him in disastrous defeat.

The close of the pursuit after the battle of Missionary Ridge, found Sherman's command, consisting of two divi-



sions of the 15th corps, one division of the 14th corps, Howard's 11th corps, (greatly reduced,) and a small brigade of cavalry, on the 30th November, at Charleston, on the Hiawassee, thirty miles north-east from Chattanooga, nearly worn out. This was to have been the limit of their operations, where they hoped to obtain rest and replenish their exhausted supplies. Neither officers nor men had brought any baggage or provisions with them. The two divisions of the 15th corps had crossed the Tennessee seven days before with only two days rations, without a change of clothing, with but a single blanket or coat per man from the general down, and had meanwhile been heavily engaged in a most important battle.

Burnside's situation at Knoxville, one hundred and twelve miles north-east from Chattanooga, had been a cause of the most intense anxiety. The battle of Missionary Ridge (or Chattanooga) had not been fought for the relief of Chattanooga alone, but for that of Knoxville as well. All movements tending to hasten the time for attacking Bragg had this double object in view.

No sooner was success at Missionary Ridge assured than General Grant ordered the 4th corps (of the Army of the Cumberland) to march to Burnside's assistance. It was so tardy in starting that it did not move until the 28th, and then with so much dissatisfaction upon the part of its commander, that General Grant feared it would not reach its destination in time. The occasion was one that demanded the greatest alacrity,—the emergency was so pressing that no avoidable chances could be taken. Although reluctant to require further immediate exertion from troops which had so recently accomplished such difficult, toilsome and long continued service, yet, in his embarrassment, he felt impelled to again turn to Sherman, who had never failed him. Therefore, by letter dated the 29th, which reached Sherman on the 30th, he directed him to assume command of all the forces

then moving up the Tennessee, take such as he thought necessary and push on to the relief of Knoxville.

The weather was inclement, and it was much to require of these travel worn and tired men in their forlorn condition as to supplies, but they knew that eighty-two miles away another army of their fellow soldiers was reduced to the greatest straits, that help was needed—must be given in the shortest possible time—and that was enough. There was no hesitation about going. They went at once.

The relieving force was composed of the 15th corps: the reduced 11th corps (Gen'l Howard's); the 4th corps, (Granger's), and a small cavalry force, about twenty-five thousand men in all. Upon receipt of the order General Howard began the repairs necessary to render the railroad bridge over the Hiawassee passable, and completed them by daylight next morning, December 1, when the army crossed, and during the day marched sixteen miles to Athens.

On the 2d, the march was twenty-one miles to Philadelphia. During the night of the 2d, General Sherman sent Capt. Audenried with an order to Col. Long, commanding the cavalry, directing him to select a sufficient detachment of his best men and horses, and, following roads south of the Holston push into Knoxville, forty miles distant, in the shortest possible time and at whatever cost of life and horse-flesh. Capt. Audenried was directed to accompany Col. Long's movement. The command reached Knoxville late in the night of the 3d, and Audenried, after delivering Sherman's message to General Burnside that he was rapidly approaching Knoxville with an adequate force to raise the siege, dropped asleep as related above.

A messenger from General Burnside reached General Sherman on the morning of the 5th, near Morgantown, with information that Col. Long had arrived at Knoxville, and that all was well there.

On the night of the 5th, all the heads of columns communicated at Marysville, and General Sherman was there met by Major Van Buren, of General Burnside's staff, who announced that Longstreet had withdrawn from in front of Knoxville, moving off to the eastward.

Thereupon Sherman despatched his hearty message: "I am here, and can bring twenty-five thousand men into Knoxville to-morrow; but Longstreet having retreated, I feel disposed to stop, for a stern chase is a long one. But I will do all that is possible. Without you specify that you want troops, I will let mine rest to-morrow, and ride in to see you. Send my aide, Capt. Audenried, out with your letters to-night. We are all hearty but tired. Accept my congratulations at your successful defence and your patient endurance."

On the 6th he rode into Knoxville, and after consultation with General Burnside, left him all the troops which the latter deemed necessary, that is, the two divisions of Granger's corps. The rest returned to Chattanooga and beyond.

As early as the 29th of November, General Longstreet had heard officially of Bragg's defeat at Missionary Ridge, and had meanwhile been kept duly informed concerning the advance of the Federal forces under command of General Sherman, intended for the relief of Knoxville. Their occupation of all roads by which he could have rejoined Bragg, compelled him to raise the siege and move to the eastward. His trains had been sent ahead to cross the Holston at Strawberry Plains, and the troops followed during the night of the 4th, and early morning of the 5th, taking up their line of march by the north bank of the Holston. The time and manner of their leaving are sufficiently indicated by the following extract from the entry made in my note book that morning: "The enemy's infantry left in a body, showing no signs of haste, the rear of their column passing the Taze-

“ well road about 7 a. m.”

After some delay our forces followed on the 7th, and within the next week several minor combats occurred, the most important being a successful attack upon us at Bean's Station, an incident of which was the capture of a supply train of twenty or twenty-five wagons laden principally with coffee and sugar for the 9th corps. This occurred at the northern foot of Clinch Mountain, about six miles from the station.

Longstreet then moved the main body of his force to the south side of the Holston, and, taking post in the vicinity of Russellville, remained all winter to the great annoyance of the Union cause. In the following spring he rejoined Lee's Army of Northern Virginia to take part in the memorable campaign of 1864.

On the 11th of December, General John G. Foster assumed command of the Department and Army of the Ohio, and the next day General Burnside and his personal staff left for the north. One of the earliest orders received at Knoxville after the siege was raised, directed me to report for duty at the headquarters of General Grant. Of course, this advancement was satisfactory to me, but it so happened that the day before the receipt of this order I had been granted a leave of absence by General Burnside, and General Foster desired me, in availing myself of it, to travel by way of Bean's Station and Cumberland Gap to look after certain matters which required attention there.

On this journey I was accompanied by Lieut. D. W. Poe and a colored servant. Some two hours after leaving Bean's Station for Cumberland Gap, we ran into, and narrowly escaped capture by the force which, half an hour later, “gobbled up” the wagon train above referred to. I have always attributed our good fortune to the probability that, in comparison with the train and the supplies which it

carried, we were considered of such insignificant value as not to be worth arrest at the risk of alarming the train guard, then in sight. Upon meeting the officer in command of the train guard, we warned him of the danger, but without effect, and the coffee and sugar intended for our hungry "boys" in Knoxville went to render less cheerless the Christmas bivouac fires of their dearest foes. I don't believe our men would have begrudged a liberal division, but they did think it savored of meanness in the enemy to take all.

The rest of the journey was made without material incident, and upon the expiration of my leave of absence I reported, in obedience to the order, at General Grant's Headquarters, then in Nashville.

The signal defeat of Bragg at Chattanooga, and the happy conclusion of the siege of Knoxville confirmed our hold upon the direct line of communication between the enemy's forces East and West, and achieved the permanent relief of the friends of our cause in East Tennessee. These results were considered of such importance that on the 7th of December, the President of the United States issued a proclamation recommending that all loyal people assemble in their places of worship and return thanks to God for "this great advancement of the National Cause," \* \* \* "under circumstances rendering it probable that the Union forces cannot hereafter be dislodged from that important position." And they never were.

The men who stood in the trenches at Knoxville, are entitled to all the commendation that ever has been, or ever shall be given them. They fully earned the grateful acknowledgment of their countrymen, as expressed in the President's proclamation and the formal thanks of Congress. Half starved, with clothing tattered and torn, they endured without a murmur, every form of hardship and exposure that falls to the lot of the soldier. Notwithstanding

their sorry appearance and empty haversacks, their arms were in constant readiness, and they had the spirit to use them effectively. It did not once appear to be a question with them whether they could withstand the assaults of the enemy, but simply whether sufficient food could be obtained to enable them to keep their places in line. That they were not reduced to the last extremity in this regard, is due to the supplies sent in by the loyalists of the French Broad settlements, who took advantage of Longstreet's inability to invest the place completely, and, under cover of the night-fogs floated down to us such food and forage as they could collect. Of course the amount was limited, and the rations were seldom more than enough to allay the worst pangs of hunger, yet without this help we surely would have been compelled to eat our horses and mules—and discouraging subsistence they would have been, for they were nothing but skin and bone.

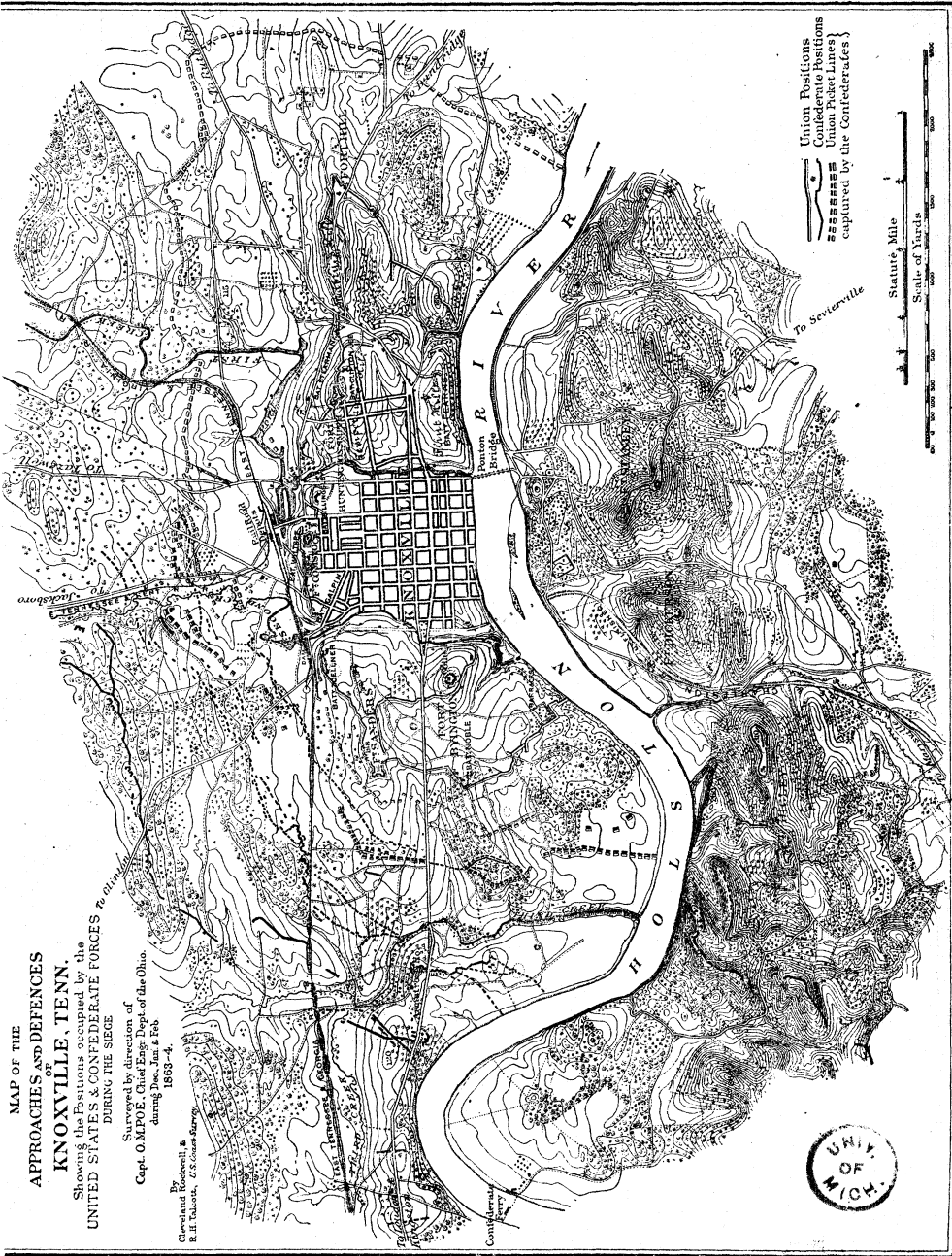
The next day after the siege was raised, several of the principal officers belonging to the forces which had come to our relief, visited the town. Advantage was taken of that occasion to show them our appreciation of their effort in our behalf, and at the same time celebrate the event, by giving them a dinner at General Burnside's headquarters mess. By the greatest effort we succeeded in getting a couple of turkeys, a few bottles of wine and such other articles as it was possible, to obtain. These when served upon clean china, upon a clean table cloth, undoubtedly seemed to our travel worn guests like a grand feast, and no end of jokes were passed at our expense. The dinner was afterwards made the text for some tolerably severe reflections upon us for reporting ourselves in danger of suffering from lack of proper food. The fact was either unknown or ignored that this dinner represented a supreme effort, having for its special object to do our guests

honor, and that its duplication would have been impossible at the time.

It was the old story of the poor Knight's only Falcon, killed and served to his Lady guest that she might neither suspect his poverty, nor doubt his hospitality.

O. M. POE.





MAP OF THE  
APPROACHES AND DEFENCES

OF  
KNOXVILLE, TENN.

SHOWING THE BARRIERS OPPOSED BY THE  
UNITED STATES & CONFEDERATE FORCES  
DURING THE SIEGE.

Surveyed by direction of  
Gen. J. H. Morgan, Jr., U.S. Army,  
during Dec., Jan. & Feb.  
1863-4.

By  
Cleveland Robinson, &  
R. H. Talbot, U.S. Coast Survey.

Union Positions  
Confederate Positions  
(Positions captured by the Confederates)



UNIV.  
OF MICH.





THE  
CAPTURE OF JEFF. DAVIS.

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A P A P E R

READ BEFORE MICHIGAN COMMANDERY

OF THE

MILITARY ORDER

OF THE

LOYAL LEGION OF THE UNITED STATES,

JANUARY 9th, 1889.

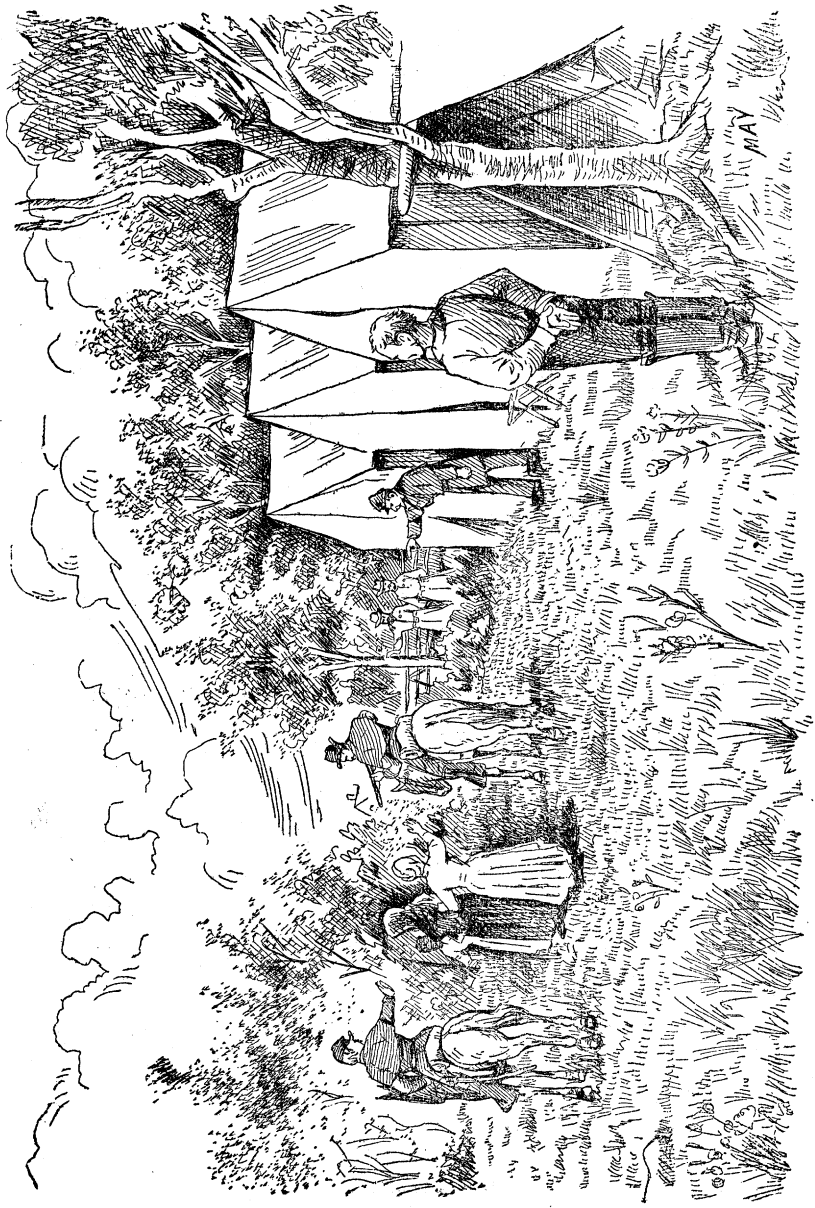
BY COMPANION

JULIAN G. DICKINSON,

*Late Adjutant 4th Michigan Cavalry and Brevet Captain  
United States Volunteers.*

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DETROIT, MICH.:  
OSTLER PRINTING COMPANY,  
1888.





## Capture of Jeff. Davis.

The 4th Michigan Volunteer Cavalry was organized, mustered, mounted, armed and equipped at the city of Detroit, in August and September, 1862, under the command of a superb veteran officer, Col. Robert H. G. Minty, and in October, 1862, joined the Army of the Cumberland in the field. In December, 1864, the regiment joined "The Cavalry Corps, Military Division of the Mississippi," assembled at Gravelly Springs, Alabama, under the command of Major-General James H. Wilson, preparatory to a campaign, ordered by Gen. Grant, "to capture and destroy the rebel armies and resources in Alabama and Georgia." On the 22nd day of March, 1865, Wilson's command, comprising a force of 13,000 cavalry, crossed the Tennessee river, and sweeping with marvellous energy southward through Alabama, routed the rebel cavalry under Lieut.-Gen. Forrest, took by assault the fortified city of Selma and captured the entire rebel force there except Gen. Forrest. Crossing the Alabama river at Selma, on our pontoon bridges, the command marched to Montgomery, Alabama, taking that city without opposition ;

thence to Columbus and Macon, cities which, though well prepared for defence, were successively taken by brilliant cavalry charges. On the 21st of April the campaign closed, and the 4th Michigan cavalry established a pleasant encampment near Macon. Our communications with the north and with the armies under Grant and Sherman had not become fully opened, and we were not definitely informed of events that transpired at Washington, at Richmond, and in the Carolinas. However, on the 1st of April, 1865, the memorable battle of Five Forks had been fought, and on the 2nd the outer defenses of Petersburg were carried, leaving open to Danville the only way of escape for the Confederate government at Richmond.

Jefferson Davis availed himself of that situation, and on the night of the 2nd, in company with members of his cabinet and others belonging to the rebel government, fled to Danville, where, temporarily, a new capital of the Confederate States was established; but the surrender of Gen. Lee at Appomatox rendering Danville untenable, Jeff. Davis fled to Greensboro, North Carolina, where he met his generals, Breckenridge, Johnston and Beauregard. The Confederate government, not finding a secure resting place at Greensboro, moved on to Charlotte, North Carolina, where the news of Johnston's surrender to Sherman overtook them. Then the rebel chieftain, accompanied by his cabinet and staff, left Charlotte under escort of a large cavalry force in flight. On the march, all the members of the cabinet, except P. M. Gen. Reagan, abandoned their chief. In the meantime, Major Gen. Wilson, at Macon, ascertained the flight of the fugitives from Charlotte, and that they were moving in a southerly direction with a cavalry escort towards the trans-Mississippi department and he received orders to intercept them. Col. Eggleston was directed to watch the country in all directions from Atlanta, Georgia; Brigadier-General A. J. Alexander

to scout the country northward to Dalton, and to detach an officer and 26 men to obtain definite information of Davis' movements. Lieut. Yoeman, of the 1st Ohio Cavalry, was detailed to command that party. Lieut. Yoeman's detail met and joined Davis' party, whom they found under escort of Debrill's and Ferguson's divisions of rebel cavalry, but failed of a favorable opportunity to carry off the rebel chief, and at Washington, Georgia, lost sight of the entire party; he became convinced, however, that they were trying to reach the gulf or south Atlantic coast to escape by sea, and he sent couriers with that information to Gen. Alexander, who transmitted the information to Gen. Wilson, to whom it became apparent that the flight must of necessity be in the direction indicated by Lieut. Yoeman, and he directed certain detachments to watch the crossings of the Ocmulgee river, which runs in a south-easterly direction from Macon, Ga. Gen. Croxton was ordered to select the best regiment of his division to scout in the direction of Jeffersonville and Dublin, Georgia, on the Oconee river, and the 1st Wisconsin Cavalry, under the command of Lieut.-Col. Harnden, was selected for that expedition. Gen. Minty, commanding the 2nd division of the cavalry corps, was directed to select his best regiment and send it south-easterly along the right bank of the Ocmulgee, to watch all the crossings between Hawkinsville and the mouth of the Ohoope river. Gen. Minty selected his own regiment, the 4th Michigan Cavalry, commanded by Lieut.-Col. Benjamin D. Pritchard.\* That was the occasion, on the morning of the 7th of May, 1865, of our bugle call to arms, and the awakening of our camp to further warlike events. The order from Gen. Minty directed the 4th

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\*I am indebted to Maj. Gen. J. N. Wilson's report to the War Dept., dated Jan'y 17th, 1867, for the facts relating to his information, orders and operations, preceding the capture of Davis, as published on pp. 779-780, Harper's History of the Rebellion.

Michigan "to move down the Ocmulgee river and take possession of all its ferries below Hawkinsville, to picket the river as far as the strength of the regiment would permit, and to scout through the country on both sides of the river, for the purpose of capturing Jeff. Davis and party, and any other government parties who might be fleeing in that direction."

The 4th Michigan left camp on the morning of the 7th and marched in a south-easterly direction. The exhilaration of such a march at such a time was delightful. It was the charming season of the year. The balmy breezes of that sunny clime wafting to us freely the fragrance of the magnolia which abounded in the glades and forests on every hand. The scenery was inviting and unmarked by any of the war's devastations. We were in new fields of observation and new prospects were dawning upon us. Though the purpose of the expedition had not been disclosed to any of our troopers, it became apparent before the termination of the first day's march, that many of them had grasped some knowledge of its purpose; it created some excitement among the men and occasioned remarks relative to the object of our pursuit, which threatened to render the success of the expedition problematical. On the evening of the 7th we went into bivouac for the night on a beautiful plantation near Hawkinsville. Our headquarters occupied the porch of the plantation dwelling, a fortunate situation for us, as a thunder storm broke over us that night, the lightning spreading havoc in the camp. On the 8th we resumed march; about noon, near Abbeville, Georgia, Lieut.-Col. Harnden, of the 1st Wisconsin Cavalry, came up unexpectedly to the head of our marching column, and informed Col. Pritchard that the 1st Wisconsin was then marching on a road running south-westerly from Abbeville, in pursuit of a train of ambulances and wagons, which were reported to contain the family of Jeff. Davis. He stated to Col. Pritchard substan-

tially that he did not know whether Jeff. Davis was with the train, but calculated that he would be likely to join it somewhere. Col. Harnden started away to join his command before we reached Abbeville. The 4th Michigan proceeded two miles beyond Abbeville when an incident occurred; we met on the road an aged colored man, with a broken down vehicle, which he was vainly endeavoring to restore to service. Col. Pritchard availed himself of the usual privilege to interview the colored man, and learned from him, that during the preceding night a body of mounted men crossed the ferries of the Ocmulgee, near Abbeville, Georgia; that the men were substantially mounted and equipped. They had liberally paid the ferrymen for their services, in gold coin, and had departed westward during the night. This information led to a successful scouting expedition, which was thereupon immediately organized. Col. Pritchard moved his command into camp, and directed me to make a detail for a detachment, comprising the best mounted portion of the regiment. I gathered 128 men and 7 officers. Col. Pritchard took command of the detail, and permitted me to accompany him. The larger portion of the regiment was left in the camp under command of Capt. John C. Hataway, with orders to picket the ferries and fords of the Ocmulgee river, and to send out scouting parties in various directions, with a view to making any captures designated in our general order. Our detachment then moved down the river road for about 12 miles, to a place called Wilcox's mill. It was nearly sunset when we reached there, and halted for supper and forage. Thence at night fall we struck out into a desolate pine forest, through which we could scarcely distinguish any road or pathway, but tracing the way cautiously toward Irwinville, Georgia, about one o'clock in the night succeeded in reaching that place, where our column halted. Irwinville was then a place of half a dozen dwellings—a sort



of four corners in the wilderness. We awakened most all of the inhabitants by rude rapping at the doors of their dwellings, but none ventured from their thresholds, and all seemed reluctant to give any information whatever; for a while we were at a loss to know what to do next. Many of our troopers, wearied by the night march, sunk to the ground for repose. Suddenly the stillness of the night was broken by the hallooing of some one at a distance towards the woods back of a neighboring dwelling. It seemed to be a woman's voice, and I started in the direction indicated, to ascertain what it meant. In a moment, however, two of our troopers came up with a lady whom they had taken from her perch on the fence in the rear of her dwelling, where she had been hallooing to some one, evidently far away in the woods. In her company was a negro whom I directed the men to bring to Col. Pritchard, a proceeding that was stoutly resisted by the lady in question, who claimed this man as the only slave left to her, and begged us piteously not to take him away; but he was included in President Lincoln's proclamation of freedom to the slaves, and seemed very willing to go with us; upon being questioned by Col. Pritchard, he stated that there had been several mounted men to the house during the afternoon, from a camp near the village, to purchase forage and provisions, and that their camp lay about a mile and a half out on the Abbeville road. Placing the freedman in advance for a guide, and directing the utmost silence to be preserved in the column, we moved out toward the camp on the Abbeville road. The night was rather dark, but very clear and quiet. We marched the distance of about a mile when we halted and made the necessary arrangements for the capture of the camp when the light should be sufficient to enable us to discern its situation and force. A detail of 25 men, under command of Lieut. Purinton, was sent to make a circuit of the camp and get a position on the road beyond, to send out

pickets, and to take precautions for preventing the escape of any of the occupants of the camp in that direction, awaiting our advance and capture of the camp.

We rested until the first appearance of the dawn of the morning of the 10th. The order was then quietly given to mount, and placing a small force under command of Capt. Charles T. Hudson, as an advance guard, with directions to charge forward upon the camp, our column moved in support. The charge was uninterrupted by any picket or camp guards, and we speedily took the camp by a surprise so complete that none of the occupants seemed to have been awakened. The advance guard moved directly and quickly through the camp toward Lieut. Purinton's picket. Our main column halted for a minute on the road before entering the camp, but in plain view of its situation. On the right of the road, in line facing a clearing or parade, stood three wall tents; beyond the clearing there was what appeared to me to be a swampy thicket. On our left, in the woods, at some distance from the road, was a miscellaneous collection of tents and ambulances. The extent of the camp could not, however, be distinctly seen from our position. At this moment some of our men appeared to be straggling from the column and Col. Prichard directed my attention to it and to the care of the camp, and as he moved forward with the column through the camp I rode out and took a position by the roadside until the column passed me. I then rode across the parade, in front of the three wall tents, on the right of the road. I saw no one about the tents and there was nothing indicating who occupied them, until as I passed the tents and started to move to the road beyond, I saw a man partially dressed, just emerging from a small shelter tent. I at once rode up to him and inquired what force was there in camp. He looked at me seemingly bewildered. Not hearing him reply to me, I repeated the question after a moment, and

while lingering for a response, I was suddenly startled by a familiar voice calling to me. I turned and saw Andrew Bee, our headquarter cook, who was standing close in front of one of the wall tents and pointing to three persons in female attire, who, arm in arm, were moving rapidly across the clearing towards the thicket, and Andrew shouted to me "Adjutant, there goes a man dressed in woman's clothes." The person indicated was quite apparent, and I rode at once toward the party, ordering them to halt, repeating the command rapidly, they seeming not to hear, or at least not inclined to obey me, until I rode directly across their pathway, when they halted. At that moment Corporal Munger, of Company C, came riding up from the thicket, and taking his position in the rear of the party brought his carbine to a position for firing upon the man dressed in woman's clothes, at the same time applying to him an appellation that was in vogue among the troopers as a designation of Jeff. Davis. I ordered the corporal not to fire, there being no perceptible resistance. The person in disguise was Jefferson Davis, and his companions were Mrs. Davis and her colored waiting maid. The scene thus presented was rendered pathetic by the cries of Davis' family at the tents and by the heroic conduct of Mrs. Davis who placed her arms around the drooping head of her husband, as if to protect him from threatened peril, while she too cried piteously, but made no other appeal to us. Davis had on for disguise a black shawl drawn closely around his head and shoulders, through the folds of which I could see his gray hairs. He wore on his person a woman's long, black dress, which completely concealed his figure, excepting his spurred boot heels. The dress was undoubtedly Mrs. Davis' traveling dress which she afterwards wore on her return march to Macon. At the time of the capture she was attired in her morning gown and a black shawl covered her head and stately form, while her waiting maid was complete-

ly attired in black. Glancing up from this party before me, and looking around the position, I was startled by the presence of several rebel officers who had in the meantime come upon the scene. The position they had taken clearly indicated they were interested in the movement of their chief. I ordered Davis and his party to retire to their tents and then moved toward the rebel officers in question, requesting them also to retire. I was promptly obeyed. I directed Corporal Munger to guard Mr. Davis and his party in their tents, and to take two men who came up with him for that purpose. I then rode forward to report to Col. Pritchard the episode that had taken place. In the meantime spirited firing had commenced, and the usual evidences of an engagement with an enemy appeared in the direction our column had advanced. As I passed Davis' tent, in going to the front, Mrs. Davis called to me, and I dismounted to hear her request. She asked what we were going to do with Mr. Davis and whether she and her family would be permitted to go away with him. I informed her that I could not tell what would be done with any of them until I had reported to my commanding officer. She then very earnestly said that we must not interfere with Mr. Davis as he was a very desperate man and would hurt some of us. She further requested that I would see to certain things that she had in the wagon, and I promised to attend to that. As I moved into the road I met one of our officers with something from the wagon, in the shape of a canteen of most excellent fluid, of which he freely offered me a share. I met Col. Pritchard just returning from an unfortunate conflict with the 1st Wisconsin Cavalry, that regiment having come upon our pickets and mistaking them for an enemy, retired and formed for a battle, which forced our column to form in line and skirmish with them, in the belief that we had met a force of the enemy. Col. Pritchard brought the engagement to a close by dashing into the lines of the 1st

Wisconsin and notifying them of the mistake.

The fact was that the 1st Wisconsin and the 4th Michigan expected to find a desperate force of the enemy; the 1st Wisconsin, however, was marching without any knowledge of the locality of the camp, and without any expectation of finding it at that time, having been in bivouac most of the night, a few miles from our picket. I reported to Col. Pritchard the capture of Jeff Davis in his attempt to escape from the camp in female attire, and that I put him under guard. In the meantime Mr. Davis put on his male attire—a suit of gray—and came out and took a position near where the Colonel stood. When he saw Col. Pritchard he shouted out some inquiry, which he followed up with the old familiar charge, “You are vandals, thieves and robbers.” He evidently had worked himself into a rage, for when I went to him soon after to get the names of the prisoners, he refused my request for his name, and I was obliged to receive it from his heroic wife, who spoke up proudly, in answer to my repeated question, “his name is Jefferson Davis, sir.”

The captured party consisted of Jefferson Davis, accompanied by Mrs. Davis and their three children; and John H. Reagan, Postmaster General; Col. Johnstone, A. D. C.; Col. Burton N. Harrison, Private Secretary, and Col. F. R. Lubbock, A. D. C., of Jeff. Davis' staff; Major V. R. Maurin, of the Richmond Battery of Light Artillery; Capt. George V. Moody, Mollison's Light Artillery; Lieut. Hathaway, 14th Ky. Infantry; privates W. W. Monroe and F. Messick, 14th Ky.; privates Sanders, Ingraham, Wilbury, Baker, Smith, Heath and Alliston, of the 2nd Ky. Cavalry; privates J. H. Taylor and A. W. Brady, Co. E, 15th Miss.; private J. W. Furley, 13th Tenn., all of the late Confederate States army, and midshipman Howell of the Confederate navy; Miss Howell, a sister of Mrs. Davis, accompanied her. There were two colored women and one colored man, servants of

the Davis family ; of the three children of Mr. Davis' family the youngest was a baby, that became quite a favorite in our command. Once on the march I saw it handed along the line ; the oldest child was a little girl about ten years of age, and the other child was a boy of about seven or eight years. There was also with the party a little colored lad about the same age as young Davis, and the two created considerable amusement for us by their wrestling exercises. Burton N. Harrison, the Private Secretary, was the gentleman of whom I sought so diligently to elicit information immediately preceding the capture. There was not the slightest show of any resistance on the part of any of the captured party, and they were all kindly treated by their captors. That their wagons and tents were searched thoroughly, I have no doubt. Lieut. James Vernor obtained a trophy of Davis' wardrobe, a dressing gown, which he exhibits, but whether Davis wore it as part of his garments at the capture is not known. It might possibly have been worn under his disguise. Their horses were all taken by our men and considerable sums of money in gold were captured. The gold was taken, as I understood from Col. Johnstone at the time, in the holsters of the rebel officers, where it had been carried for safety and convenience. Who captured the gold is somewhat of a mystery to this day. At the camp, immediately after the capture, Col. Pritchard was informed that one of our men, a Tennessean named James H. Lynch, was possessed of most of the coin and the Colonel searched him but found none of the gold ; afterwards it is well known that Lynch distributed several pieces of gold coin among his companions and gave a few pieces to some of his officers. It is certain that the coin was never equally distributed.

In preparing for the return march their horses were all returned to the prisoners and Mr. and Mrs. Davis and their family were allowed the use of the ambulances, which they

occupied most of the time on the return march.

On the 12th of May, returning, we met Major Robert Burns, A. A. G. of Minty's staff, from headquarters at Macon; who brought us President Johnston's proclamation, offering rewards for the capture of Jeff Davis and others. That proclamation was the first intelligence we received of the assassination of our president, Abraham Lincoln, and of any reward for our prisoner. I have now in my possession the copy of the proclamation which was handed to me at that time. It was issued on the 2nd day of May, 1865, was published to the Cavalry Corps, M. D. M. at Macon, on the 8th day of May, 1865, and reached our command, as I have said, on the 12th day of May. Mr. Davis was securely guarded during our return march. Perhaps his guard was more strict than it would have been had he not given notice that he would make his escape if possible. Before reaching Macon, Col. Pritchard received orders to make a detail from his regiment in readiness to take his prisoners to Washington, and so after we reached camp, he proceeded upon that service and conveyed Jeff Davis to Fortress Monroe.

The Secretary of War directed Col. Pritchard at Washington to obtain the disguise worn by Jeff Davis at his capture; and Capt. Charles T. Hudson undertook to procure it from Mrs. Davis. In his account of the affair, Capt. Hudson has related in a letter to Major-General J. H. Wilson, that Mrs. Davis stated to him that she attired Mr. Davis in her own dress, and she surrendered a certain garment which Col. Pritchard afterwards described in his report to the Secretary of War as a "waterproof cloak or dress." Though I did not examine the texture of the dress worn by Davis at the capture, and cannot say whether it was waterproof or not, it was beyond all question a lady's dress, and precisely like the dress usually worn by Mrs. Davis after the capture during our march back to Macon. I am very sure that not any

gentleman's garment that could be described as a waterproof cloak was found or seen in the possession of Davis at his capture, or while on the march to Macon.

Burton N. Harrison, Jeff Davis's private Secretary, in his paper in "The Century," November, 1886, on this subject, states that Davis was not disguised at all, and that he wore a waterproof cloak which he usually wore on the march, and by further statements seeks to discredit other witnesses present at the capture, by assuring the public there was only one of our troopers present there, and that he and Mrs. Davis and that one trooper, were the only persons who saw Davis at his capture, when the truth is, that while Davis was standing in his disguise in my presence, three of our troopers saw him there, besides Andrew Bee, who pointed to Davis as "a man dressed in woman's clothes." And there was also present not more than two rods from the disguised figure, Capt. Moody and within about four rods from him, Col. Lubbock and other Confederate Army officers, who undoubtedly saw what took place. My record of the event was made at the time in the line of my duty, and I correctly and officially reported the fact of the disguise. I was not aware of any dispute as to the facts as I have stated them, until nearly ten years afterwards.

Detroit, Jan'y 9, 1889.

JULIAN G. DICKINSON,

Late Adj't, 4th Mich. Cav., and Brevet Capt. U. S. Vol.





“My Experience as a Prisoner of War,  
AND  
Escape from Libby Prison.”

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A PAPER

READ BEFORE THE

COMMANDERY OF THE STATE OF  
MICHIGAN,

Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the U. S.

BY

COMPANION WM. B. McCREERY,

Late Colonel 21st Regt. Mich. Vol. Infantry.

AT

DETROIT, MICH., FEBRUARY 6, 1889.

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DETROIT, MICH.

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## “My Experience as a Prisoner of War and Escape from Libby Prison.”

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It was my great privilege as an officer with the Twenty-first Michigan Infantry to follow for a time the varying fortunes of the Army of the Cumberland. During that period we wielded a more potent weapon than the pen—a musket and a sword. Had I wielded a pen, I could have written my heart out in admiration and love for the fortitude and valor of those loyal soldiers of ours, splendid in doing and grand in suffering.

The struggle at Chickamauga has gone down into history as one of the bloodiest battles of the war, and now that the quiet days have come, men make pilgrimage and women smile again among the mountains of the Cumberland, where this great battle was fought, but they need no guide or protector. Rust has eaten the gun, the graves of the heroes have subsided like waves weary of their troubling. The soldier and his leader have lain down together, but there, embossed upon the globe, Chickamauga, the “River of Death,” will continue to flow on, murmuring a quiet requiem to the memory of the heroes who struggled and died there, that the cause for which they fought might live forever, and that “the government of the people, by the people, and for the people, shall not perish from the earth.”

It is not my purpose—indeed, it would be impossible for me—to describe this great battle where I was taken prisoner, but rather to narrate in a plain and simple manner some of my personal experiences while a prisoner of war.

About 5 o'clock on that memorable Sunday afternoon, September 20, 1863, recovering consciousness, I found myself within the rebel lines, three times wounded and unable to move, my dead, dying and wounded comrades lying thick around me. The rebel battalions passing over me in splendid battle array were pressing our retiring forces. A throng of rebel stragglers soon began to make their way to the front. Calling to one of them, I asked, "Will you not give me a drink of water from your canteen? I am very thirsty." He approached me, and I feared at first I had called upon the wrong man, as he seemed wonderfully elated at what he deemed the beginning of the grand march of the Confederate army to Nashville. He finally gave me a drink of water and asked if I had a jack-knife I would give him. Thinking that I should not feel the need of one, at least for some time to come, I told him to put his hand in my pocket and if he could find one he was welcome to it. He found the knife, and from that moment he was my friend.

Fearing that I was seriously wounded, I asked him to see if he could find a surgeon. He left me and soon returned, bringing with him a rebel chaplain, and a stretcher upon which they placed me, and carried me some half a mile to the rear, where the wounded of both armies were being collected. The chaplain was very kind and after a little time, with some assistance, placed me upon his horse, taking me almost two miles farther to the rear to a place he designated as their hospital headquarters, which proved to be nothing more nor less than an apple orchard containing some eight or ten acres.

I was deposited under an apple tree, on the bare ground, with no covering, and told to make myself as comfortable as possible, and after receiving what I supposed to be good rebel advice from the chaplain, and a hearty "God bless you" from my newly-made rebel soldier friend, I was left to my own thoughts.

It was now after dark, and I began to feel as though something real good to eat would not be objectionable. A wounded Union soldier soon came to me, whom I asked to get me water and something to eat. He left me for that purpose, soon returning with water—I thought the best I had ever drunk—and two ears of corn, saying he was very sorry; but he could find nothing else to eat.

Seven or eight hundred wounded Union soldiers at this place alone, with nothing to eat but corn in the ear, God's blue sky for covering, a stone for a pillow, and Mother Earth for a bed.

My soldier friend kindled a good fire at my feet, roasted the two ears of corn from which I made my supper, and I soon fell into a sound slumber. I did not awaken until daylight the next morning, when I found sitting at my side one of my own regiment, James Mead of Company F, who had been slightly wounded the day previous. "A friend in need is a friend indeed." Mead had already built a fire at my feet and was making a cup of coffee from the last he had in his haversack, which, with a little hard bread from the same source, made us a good breakfast. He proved to be a most excellent provider. I don't think he would steal, even from a rebel, but he had what the old soldiers used to call a "terrible long reach," which proved to be of great benefit to me personally.

Breakfast over, I began to look around me. Near by, the surgeons had improvised an operating table, with a barn door for a bed. They lay aside their sashes and tinselled coats, roll up their sleeves, spread wide open the cases filled with the terrible glitter of silver steel, and make ready for the work.

The boys begin to come in from the battlefield, where they had lain all the night before, slowly at first, one boy nursing

a shattered arm, another borne by his comrades, a whole load in an ambulance, another on a stretcher, then faster and faster, lying here, lying there, each waiting his terrible turn.

The silver steel grows cloudy and lurid, the knives are busy, the saws play—it is bloody work.

I see pale faces, bloody garments. True right arms that had offended by reason of their loyalty to the old flag are lopped like slips of golden willow. Feet that never turned from the foe, for ever more without an owner, strew the ground.

I do not hear a moan—the very silence oppresses me—no sound save the gnawing of those terrible saws. It seems as if an accent of pain from some weary sufferer would be a welcome sound, and I think of a brave bird, wounded unto death; that I have held in my hand, its keen eye undimmed and full upon me, throbbing with the pain and the dying, and yet so silent.

I retained my headquarters under the apple tree several days, Mead and myself alternately in command, when we were loaded into an army wagon with two wounded officers and taken to Dalton, some twelve miles distant, where about four hundred of the Federal prisoners of war were loaded into cattle cars, and the train pulled out for Richmond.

Arriving at Atlanta, we were taken to the prison pen and kept for two days awaiting transportation, when we were again loaded like sheep into cattle cars and shipped to Augusta, where we remained one day. At this place we were not permitted to leave the cars, but were guarded by the citizen soldiery of Augusta, men of sixty years of age and upwards. The young men were all at the front with the Confederate army.

By this time my wounds had become feverish and painful, and learning that the Sisters of Charity had established a

hospital in a church near by, I obtained permission from the lieutenant in charge to be taken to the hospital, under guard, and have my wounds cared for. I shall never forget the kindness with which I was received, and the tenderness and care with which my wounds were dressed, by these Sisters of Charity. It was the only ray of sunshine that broke through the sombre clouds during all my journey from the battlefield to Richmond. May Heaven bless the Sisters of Charity!

Companions, how many noble women, both North and South, have threaded like a sunbeam the heavy cloud of war! Women of this nineteenth century, the peers of Rachel and Ruth, and Florence Nightingale. Some one has truthfully said no better epitaph could be placed upon their tombstone than this: "Each soldier's sister, and each sufferer's friend." When the scenes, amid which we labor and wait, shall have passed into the grand eternity of the historic page, the heart of the world will warm to these women of the now re-united States. The womanly deeds of kindness and the deeds of soldierly daring, both North and South, will be blended forever.

We continued our journey, traveling on a free pass furnished by the Confederacy (good only on cattle cars), to Richmond, via Raleigh, North Carolina. Arriving at Richmond, those of us who were so severely wounded as to be unable to walk from the depot, were loaded on drays and taken to that prison-house of torture and slow death, familiarly known as the "Libby Prison."

On our arrival at the prison our names, rank, regiment, company and place of capture were duly recorded by the clerk, Sergeant Ross, and each one was then searched for money or valuables, and if either was found they were taken by the rebel authorities. The private soldiers were then taken to Belle Isle, and the officers and those slightly



wounded were placed in the prison proper, and the remainder were admitted to the hospital.

The hospital at that time was overcrowded, and I was sent to the Pemberton building near by, an adjunct of Libby, where I was assigned a cot, and very soon received medical attention. It was a paradise to what we had experienced, and personally I felt very comfortable.

Upon inquiry I found that each officer was allowed to write two letters every week to friends at home, to contain not more than six lines each. These letters were unsealed and all were examined by the prison authorities, and if found to contain nothing more than a statement of the condition of the prisoner's health, were sent twice each week by the truce boat to City Point, and delivered to the Federal authorities, but any complaint in regard to harsh treatment, made by the writer, consigned the letters to the waste basket. Letters were also received from our truce boat, addressed to the prisoners of war, opened, examined, and delivered in case they contained no abuse of the Confederacy.

A poor, weary sufferer, a lieutenant in a Kansas regiment, occupied the cot next to mine. He had been very severely wounded, and a few days before my arrival, had suffered the amputation of both feet just above the ankle. He was patient, cheerful, very intelligent, and hopeful that he would recover, but it was apparent to me that he was failing every hour. He talked to me much of his widowed mother, and wondered why he did not hear from her.

One morning I noticed in him a marked change, and on the daily round of the surgeon I asked him if he did not think the lieutenant rapidly failing. He replied, "Yes, he will soon be gone." I said to him, "Lieutenant, you do not seem quite as strong this morning as you did yesterday." "Oh, yes," he replied, "I feel pretty well, but I do so wish I

could hear from my mother.” I said to him, “Lieutenant, we may neither of us live to see mother or home again. But in case I should survive you and live to return, is there any message you would like to send to your mother?”

He remained silent a moment, then replied in a feeble voice, “Yes! Tell her—tell her, I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord.” These were his last words, and his spirit had soon gone to dwell with the All-Father, in Whom he had so freely trusted. Until then, I never knew the meaning of the words, “Where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest.” Until then, I never felt the wealth of the assurance, “He giveth His beloved sleep.” He knew it not, but his mother was already awaiting his arrival on the shining shore. The surgeon afterward informed me that a letter addressed to the lieutenant had been received, announcing the death of his mother, but, in consequence of his feeble condition, it had not been delivered to him.

But our prison experiences were not all of a gloomy or mournful character. I remember an incident which illustrates what a loyal, liberty-loving, family-worshiping soldier can do in an emergency.

Among the inmates of this hospital was Major Halstead, of a New Jersey regiment. Before the war he was a tailor doing business in the City of New York. He visited my cot frequently and I became well acquainted with him. One day he became very confidential and informed me that he was to start for home the next night. I inquired if he had been exchanged. He replied: “Yes, I have my papers. It is a special exchange and I will tell you confidentially all about it. The surgeon and I are great friends. There is nothing I would not do for him. But for his kindness I should be in the prison. I am entirely well and really have no business in

the hospital, but he has taken a fancy to me and allows me to remain here. Indeed, he has been very kind to me and I feel very grateful to him for all he has done for me; but, under all the circumstances, how can I repay him? I have thought of it a long time, and said to him a few days ago, ‘Doctor, I have been trying to think of something I could do for you; to express, even in a slight degree, the gratitude I feel for all the kindness you have shown me. With my present surroundings there is only one thing I can do. I am a first-class tailor, and can cut, fit and make as good a suit of clothes as any man living. If you will bring me a good piece of Confederate grey cloth for a full suit—coat, vest and pants—with whatever trimmings you may select, I will gladly take your measure and cut, fit and make the suit with my own hands.’ He finally accepted my kind offer, brought me a piece of fine Confederate grey cloth, together with the trimmings, shoulder straps, etc. I took his measure and have made the finest Confederate major’s uniform you ever saw, *to fit my own dear self*. It is already completed, and I start for home to-morrow night to see my wife and babies.”

The next evening he visited my cot, bade me good-bye, donned the grey, and passed the sentinel in safety. A few days afterward I received a letter postmarked New York, containing this suggestive announcement: “The tailor is himself again.”

The next morning at roll call the major was missing, and the surgeon was mourning the loss of his new uniform and cursing the “d—d Yankees.” In consequence of his having been frequently seen at my cot in familiar conversation, I was suspected by the surgeon of having something to do with the disappearance of his goods and chattels, and informed that I would be removed to the hospital at the Libby prison. I remonstrated with the surgeon, but all to no purpose—to the Libby I was taken under guard.

“Libby Prison” proper was used before the war as a tobacco warehouse. It is a massive brick building, fronting on Cary street, say one hundred and forty feet front by one hundred feet in depth. The front is three stories high, and separated on the first floor into three warehouses, underneath which was a basement. The rear is four stories high, fronting on the canal dock, the canal being on the bank of the James River.

The prison was surrounded on all sides by streets upon which, at intervals of about thirty feet, paced armed sentinels day and night. The first room on the east was devoted to the hospital, the next or middle room was used by the prisoners as a cook room, while the room on the west was used as an office by those in charge of the prison.

In the hospital were four rows of cots, extending the entire length of the room, and at this time they were nearly all occupied by our sick or wounded officers. In one corner of the room a partition had been built, enclosing a small space where the medicines and hospital stores were kept. Underneath was the basement, divided into two rooms, the one fronting on the canal being used as a cook room for the hospital, to which all the inmates had access. The other room, fronting on Cary street and used as a storeroom, was the one from which the tunnel was dug.

We were tolerably well provided for in this hospital, and at this late day, it is at least charitable to say that they gave us all the attention that it was possible for the Confederacy to furnish.

At this time an arrangement had been made by our government, with the Confederate authorities, by which the United States Christian Commission and friends at the North were permitted to send boxes of food and clothing to our prisoners of war. The boxes were

opened by the prison authorities, and, if found to contain nothing contraband of war, were for a time delivered to the parties to whom they were addressed. The contents of the boxes sent by the Christian Commission were divided among those receiving no boxes from home, and the sick and wounded in the hospital, but, unfortunately, the delivery of these boxes was soon discontinued, and we were placed on very low diet.

My wounds were healing rapidly, and I soon began to long for liberty. Near me Captain Skelton from Iowa, and Lieutenant Williams from Indiana, occupied cots. They had been for a long time in confinement, and seemed to think of very little else than making their escape. From morning until night, and almost from night to morning, they were busy with some new scheme.

They came to me one day and said, "If you can raise sixty dollars in greenbacks, we three can purchase our liberty by bribing the guard." They had no money, but had been for some time cultivating the acquaintance of the sentinel at the hospital kitchen window, and thought they could trust him. I was invited to join them in an interview with the sentinel. I found him a bright fellow and evidently not in hearty accord with the Confederacy. Negotiations were made and concluded on the basis of liberty for three, price twenty dollars each in greenbacks.

When captured, I had with me three hundred dollars in twenty dollar treasury notes, which, while under the apple tree near the battlefield, I had taken the precaution to have Mead sew into the waistband of my drawers, and at the time I was searched on my arrival at Libby they had escaped seizure, so that I was in funds. I told my comrades that I could furnish them the money, but feared I was not strong enough to endure the exposure of a seventy miles tramp to Williamsburg.

They waited several days for me to gain sufficient strength to undertake the journey, but I finally told them I would not make the venture, but that they could draw on my bank for the necessary funds to enable them to start for God's country, and that very night I gave the sentinel two twenty dollar greenbacks, bade the boys God-speed, and saw them safely pass the guard. Subsequently I met Skelton in Washington. On his arrival there he was discharged from the service in consequence of injuries received at the time of his capture, and at the personal request of President Lincoln he had been given a clerkship in the Treasury Department. Lieutenant Williams immediately joined his regiment at the front.

The next thing was to see that the authorities did not discover their absence until they were safely on their journey. Every morning the clerk of the prison, Sergeant Ross, came into the hospital and requested each of the inmates to occupy their respective cots while he called the roll. This he did by passing along the aisle between the cots and counting those first on his right hand and, in returning, those on the opposite side. I had arranged with one of the boys to aid me in keeping the count good. As soon as Ross had passed my cot and I had been counted, I quickly crossed the aisle while his back was turned and stretched myself at full length upon one of the unoccupied cots, so that I was again counted on his return. My associate in this fearful crime pursued the same course, and thus for four days the count was found to be correct.

On the fifth day Ross discovered me and suspected something wrong. The roll was then called by name and Skelton and Williams found to be absent without leave. Having been detected in my endeavor to shield them, I was charged with aiding them to make their escape and was very soon sent for to report to the office to be interrogated by Captain

Turner, the commandant of the prison, as to what I knew about it.

I have never been vain enough to suppose that I knew a great deal, but upon that occasion I positively knew less than at any other time in my whole life. Captain Turner became very angry with me, but I tried to keep cool and succeeded for a time, but under continued and terrible abuse my temper finally gave way.

I said to him: "Captain Turner, I am a Union soldier, but by the fortunes of war your prisoner. I am entitled to your protection and not to your abuse. I have committed no crime, I have violated no law, and I have no apologies nor explanations to make either to you or to your pretended government, and I ask for no favors other than those granted to my comrades. You ask me to tell you how Skelton and Williams made their escape and where they now are. I have only this to say. The roll call seems to disclose the fact that they are not here, and while I do not claim to be able to point out to you the exact spot where you will find them, I believe they are now safe under the protecting folds of the Star Spangled Banner, and if I ever have an opportunity to join them I shall most certainly do so without calling at your office and notifying you of my intention."

The captain was disgusted and very angry. Calling to the sentinel, he said: "This man needs cooling off! Give him exercise! Set him to walking a crack, and if he don't walk right lively, give him the bayonet," and without further ceremony I was conducted into the hall and told to walk a crack in the floor. I walked; and as I walked, I was reminded of the truth of the saying, "Discretion is the better part of valor."

If you have a good thing to say (and it may be the whole truth), wait awhile—it will keep under certain circumstances.

I continued my walk about two hours, and on the return of Captain Turner from dinner, he passed near me. Calling to him, I said, "Captain, don't you think I have had about enough exercise for one day? You know, I did not eat a very hearty breakfast." He deigned to smile, and replied, "Yes, Sentinel, take him upstairs." I did not fancy the idea of going into the prison, and said, "Captain, I belong in the hospital." "You have been there too long already," he replied. "But I would like to get my things." "What things have you in the hospital?" he said. I could think of nothing, as everything I had in the world was on my back. I finally stammered out, "My night shirt." "Night shirt be d—d!" he said, and disappeared.

Arriving on the inside of the prison I found many old friends and acquaintances, and was invited to mess with Col. Heber Le Favour, Capt. A. M. Keeler and Lieutenants A. L. Matthews and Lewis Drake, all of the Twenty-second Michigan Infantry.

There were at this time between ten hundred and eleven hundred officers in the prison, who occupied six rooms, each forty-five by one hundred feet, also the lower middle room which was used as a general kitchen. These rooms were all connected so that we could visit in any part of the prison except the hospital. In the basement under the kitchen was a cell for the confinement of offenders. There were no beds nor chairs, and all slept on the bare floor, with blankets for covering if they were fortunate enough to obtain them. Our bread was made from unsifted cornmeal. We were sometimes furnished with venerable fresh beef—beef so venerable that it ought to have exacted reverence from all beholders. Sometimes we were furnished with vegetable soup and rice; occasionally we had a small piece of bacon issued to us, but it was generally so full of animated life and industry that we could not use it except at a time of great need.



The officers formed themselves into messes, and each one took his turn in preparing such food as we could obtain. As I have before mentioned, kind friends in the North sent us boxes of food, which, if they were delivered to us, were shared with our more unfortunate comrades.

There was no glass in the windows, and for some time no fire in the rooms, thus making it very cold. The worst difficulty we had to contend with was the vermin, which were ever present with us. They were the most revolting feature of our prison life, and the one to which it was the most difficult to become reconciled. Only by examining our clothing once or twice each day could they be kept from swarming upon us. In the language of Richardson, "for the first few days I could not think of them without shuddering, but in time I learned to make my entomological researches with calm composure."

To improve or kill time we played cards, chess, checkers, opened a theatre, organized a band of minstrels (the best I ever heard), delivered lectures, established schools for teaching the bible, music, dancing, Greek, Latin, German, French, Spanish, mathematics and, in fact, almost everything. Occasionally moot courts would be held, which developed a good deal of originality and wit. Many of the officers became experts in cutting out finger rings, breastpins, crosses, paper knives, etc., from the beef bones extracted from our rations.

A manuscript newspaper was published, which was very amusing.

When one of our number died his remains were placed in an open wagon, in a box of rough boards, and rapidly drawn over the stony streets. There were no flowers from mourning friends to shed their perfume around and make radiant with their beauty the impressive scene, and there was no mourning pageant; but a thousand loyal hearts in Libby followed the gallant dead to his place of rest.

I soon found that nearly every one was projecting some plan for escape—in fact, I had given the subject some little consideration myself.

An officer from a Connecticut regiment, who had preceded me from the hospital, had a very severe attack of the escape fever. He said to me one day: “I am going to get out of this living hell; will you join me in an attempt to escape?” I replied, “Yes, I am willing to take any reasonable risk for the sake of liberty. What is your scheme?” “I have had several interviews,” he said, “with one of the sentinels, and I think he is a safe man. He has agreed to let me out for three silver watches, and I think there will be no difficulty in arranging for you to accompany me. There are some of my officers here who have managed to save their watches from the search, and I can easily borrow them. The sentinel will be on duty to-night at twelve o’clock, and we will have an interview with him.”

We met at the appointed time, and I was not long in making up my mind that the sentinel was not the man into whose hands I would be willing to trust my life, and so informed the colonel. But he seemed to have the greatest confidence in him, and upon my refusal to join him in the enterprise he assured me that he should most certainly take the chances.

A few nights afterward he invited me to be at the window and see him off for home. I was on hand at the appointed time and found the colonel with three of his officers, who had loosened two of the iron bars so that he could squeeze through the window. He had made a rope out of his blanket, which was fastened about his body under his arms. We bade him “good-bye,” and he was lowered one story, by this rope, to the pavement beneath.

He untied the rope, which was drawn back into the prison,

and was immediately asked in a low voice by the sentinel, "Where are the watches?" He took them from his pocket and gave them to him. The watches once in his possession, the sentinel brought his musket to the position of "charge bayonet," and said: "You d—d Yankee scoundrel, I will give you just two minutes to get back into the prison."

There was no mistaking the situation. The rope was lowered, the colonel again tied it around his body and was drawn up into the prison, greatly to the amusement of the guard.

Once safely in the prison, I ventured to ask him how he found his friends up in the "Nutmeg State." He good-naturedly replied that, so far as he knew, they were all well, but he wanted one thing distinctly understood—the very next rebel he confided in would be a dead one.

Col. Thomas E. Rose, of the Seventy-seventh Pennsylvania Infantry, than whom no truer, braver man ever lived, was the originator and chief engineer of the celebrated tunnel through which we made our escape, and to him is due the credit of its final success. Others aided in its construction, but he furnished the brain power.

One hundred and nine officers passed through this tunnel, of which number fifty-one reached the Union lines in safety. The remainder were recaptured and returned to Libby.

Our kitchen contained two fire-places and three or four large kitchen stoves upon which we cooked our food. The store-room underneath the hospital, which I have described, fronted on Cary street, and was so situated that it was possible to reach it by digging downward and rearward through the fire place and wall. From the basement it was proposed to construct a tunnel under the street to a point beneath a shed which was connected with a brick block on the opposite side, and from this place to pass into the street under an archway.

A knowledge of this plan was confided to about twenty officers, and nothing was known of the proceedings by others until the day before the escape.

A table knife, auger, chisel and wooden spittoon were used for working tools, when operations commenced. Enough of the masonry was removed from the fireplace to admit of the passage of a man, through a diagonal cut, to the store-room below, and an excavation was then made through the foundation wall toward the street, and the construction of the tunnel then proceeded night by night. But two persons could work at the same time. One would enter the hole with the tools and a small tallow candle, dragging behind him the spittoon attached to a rope. The other would fan air into the passage with his hat, and with another string attached to the spittoon, would draw out the dirt-car when loaded, concealing its contents beneath the straw and rubbish of the cellar.

Each morning the working party returned to their quarters, after carefully closing the mouth of the tunnel and skilfully replacing the bricks in the chimney.

As the work progressed and there seemed to be a reasonable prospect of success, it occurred to me that it would be desirable, were I permitted to take a stroll about the outskirts of the city, and learn, if possible, the location of the rebel forces and the lay of the land generally, so that, in the event the tunnel should prove to be a success, I might know how best to make my exit from the city. With this in view I addressed a letter to Mr. Sidden, rebel Secretary of War, stating that I had influential friends at the North who would make any reasonable effort to secure for me a special exchange; such an one as I thought might be advantageous to the Confederacy; and respectfully requested to visit, under guard, General Robert Ould, the Confederate Com-

missioner of Exchange, where I thought satisfactory arrangements might be made looking in that direction.

A few days afterward, to my great surprise, I was sent for to report to the office, when Captain Turner, more courteous than when we last met, informed me that he had been instructed by the Secretary of War to send me under guard to General Ould, and inquired if I was ready at that time to go. Replying in the affirmative, I was placed in charge of two soldiers, who received their instructions from Captain Turner. I had plenty of Confederate money in my pocket, which I had received from the guard in exchange for greenbacks at the rate of twenty-five dollars for one, and on leaving the prison I made up my mind that, as long as the money lasted I would have a good time with the two rebel soldiers in whose charge I had been placed.

I very speedily made their acquaintance, and on our way to General Ould's headquarters we called at several places where cigars, etc., were kept for sale, and the boys *seemed* to enjoy themselves at my expense. By the time we had arrived at headquarters the guard were in *most excellent spirits* and evidently thought me a pretty good sort of a fellow, even though I was a Yankee. My interview with the general was very pleasant and entirely satisfactory. I was instructed to write to Senator Chandler and others, asking that they intercede with Secretary of War Stanton in my behalf, and after being promised another interview at an early day, the general passed me over to the guard, instructing them to conduct me to the place from whence I came, the then Federal headquarters at Richmond.

I had very little trouble in persuading the guard to return to the prison by a roundabout way through the outskirts of the city, was which to me the objective point. En route we called at the Spotswood Hotel, the principal one in the city,

where I took a look at many of the "F. F. V's" and Confederate officers. Here the boys regaled themselves for the last time at my expense, and I was soon at home with my loyal mess.

An error occurred in the prosecution of the work on the tunnel which nearly proved fatal to the enterprise. By a miscalculation a shaft was run to the surface of the ground just before we reached our objective point, and while the officer was working a small amount of the surface earth caved in, and through the opening he could distinctly see two sentinels apparently looking at him. One of them said he had heard strange noises in the ground, but the other replied it was nothing but rats. The damage was soon repaired by Colonel Rose, and the work proceeded.

The tunnel required about thirty days of patient, tedious and dangerous labor. It was eight feet below the surface of the street, between fifty and sixty feet in length, and barely large enough for a full grown person to crowd or crawl through flat on his face by pulling and pushing with his hands and feet.

A guard was kept each night at the fire-place, the entrance to the store-room, to see that the scheme was not discovered by our comrades. One night, by some mistake, Colonel Hobart had been assigned that duty by one of the party, while I had been assigned to same duty by another. Everything was very quiet in the kitchen and it was very dark. While upon this duty I heard a noise near the chimney, and cautiously made my way in that direction. Colonel Hobart had made the same discovery. We were both on guard, neither knowing the presence of the other—and we were both loyal to our trust. We grappled at the fire-place, and both went to the floor. Hobart spoke; I recognized his voice; explanations were soon made; he laid down to rest while I continued on duty for the night.

When the tunnel was completed the company was organized into two parties, one of which was under command of Colonel Rose and the other of Colonel Hobart. Colonel Rose's party was to leave first. Most of the escaping party, among them myself, had provided themselves with citizens' clothing, my own having been sent from home, and, filling our pockets with whatever we could find to eat, we were ready for our journey.

About 7 o'clock on the evening of February 9, 1864, I passed through the tunnel with Major Terrence Clark, of the Seventy-ninth Illinois Infantry, now of Paris, Ill.; as my companion. The major preceded me and I found him waiting at the mouth of the tunnel. We locked arms and marched out into the street under the archway near which was burning a bright street gaslight. As we passed out one of the sentinels guarding the prison not sixty feet away, cried out, "Post No. eight, seven o'clock, and all is well." We agreed substantially with the sentinel that up to that time all was well. At first we took the center of the street, but gaining confidence in the rectitude of our intentions, we ventured upon the sidewalk. We had not proceeded far when we were ordered by a sentinel, at what proved to be a hospital, to halt, and in reply to his interrogatory, "Who goes there?" I answered, "We are citizens, going home," to which he replied, "Take the middle of the street! You know that no one can walk on this yer' sidewalk in front of this yer' hospital after dark." We were again in hearty accord with the sentinel, and taking the middle of the street passed directly in front of the hospital without further annoyance.

At the first open lot we left the street and soon found ourselves in a ravine, through which ran a small stream of water, where we halted a few moments to rest. We soon began to

climb a steep hill in our front. The ground was frozen and very slippery. I had not proceeded far when my foot slipped, and I found myself in the creek at the bottom of the hill. Emptying the water from my boots, we made another effort, and arriving at the summit of the hill we found ourselves near what is known as the "Rockets" and in the midst of a Confederate camp of soldiers. We could not well retrace our footsteps, and concluded to pass directly through the camp. No one spoke to us, and as we had no pressing business with any of the Confederate soldiers we did not stop to exchange salutations with them.

We were soon outside the city, and choosing for our guide the north star we pursued our journey. The heavy earthworks erected by the rebels for the better defense of the city during General McClellan's Peninsular campaign were soon passed.

Our object was to cross the Chickahominy as high up as possible, then cross the Yorkville Railroad, and follow down near the Williamsburg pike. Of one thing we were certain; if we continued our course between the James and York Rivers, and were not molested, we would ultimately reach Fortress Monroe.

We were soon among the trenches in which the Confederates had buried the Union soldiers killed at the battle of Fair Oaks, and, although it was midnight, a strange feeling of security came over us, as if we were among our friends. It was the step and voice of the living that we dreaded.

Before daybreak we had passed the Chickahominy on a fallen tree, and, secreting ourselves in a thicket, we lay down on the frozen ground to rest for the day. The weather was cold, but we dare not build a fire or stir from our chosen place of concealment.

When night came we pursued our journey, avoiding all



houses, clearings and roads, and whenever it became necessary to cross a road we always walked backwards.

Just at daybreak the next morning we thought we could hear the approach of footsteps, and, passing quickly into an old fallen treetop, we fell flat on the ground and awaited developments. A short time elapsed and we saw two figures stealthily approaching. The Major whispered, "There are only two of them, and unless they are armed we can and will dispatch them if they discover and undertake to molest us."

The two men came nearer and nearer to us, and I soon recognized them as Col. H. C. Hobart of the Twenty-first, and Lieut.-Col. T. S. West of the Twenty-fourth Wisconsin Infantry, our fellow-prisoners at Libby. We arose from the ground, they quickly recognized us, and right there in the valley of the Chickahominy we had a love feast. We then and there agree that no one of the four should be recaptured while any of the others remained alive.

By this time the entire population had been informed of the escape, and the country was alive with pursuers. We could distinctly hear the *reveille* of the rebel troops and the hum of their camps.

We divided ourselves into reliefs, each one taking the lead an hour at a time, always traveling in the night and hiding in some thicket during the daytime.

Crossing the railroad from Richmond to the White House, we came upon a rebel sentinel asleep at his post. The morning's dawn brought the notes of the enemy's cavalry to our ears, in the pine forests close by us. We fled into the woods at the top of our speed, expecting every moment to hear the crack of a musket or the sharp command to halt. The only time we looked back was when we about faced to cross a road, and threading our way into a jungle we threw ourselves upon the ground completely exhausted.

As soon as friendly darkness returned we moved forward, weary, hungry and footsore, still governed in our course by the North Star. But few words passed between us and we talked only in whispers.

So untiring was the search, and so thoroughly alarmed and watchful were the population that we felt that our safety depended upon a mere chance.

On Saturday night it was the turn of Colonel Hobart to act the part of picket and pilot, and while rapidly leading the way through a forest of low pine we suddenly found ourselves in the presence of a rebel cavalry reserve. The men were warming themselves around a smouldering fire, and their horses were tied to trees around them. Turning to us, the colonel gave the signal of danger. Surprised and alarmed, we remained motionless, but perceiving that our presence was unobserved, we very noiselessly withdrew. We knew that there must be vedettes sitting somewhere near at the front in the darkness, and to escape discovery we retraced our steps about two miles to a plantation which we had passed a short time before.

After consultation we decided to visit a negro cabin and, if possible, ascertain the location of the picket line in our front. Colonel Hobart was selected to visit the cabin and interview the inmates, while we lay down upon the ground at the door to listen to what was said. He knocked at the door, but receiving no response lifted the latch. The door opened and an old negro jumped from his bed and inquired: "What do you want?" The colonel replied: "I am a traveler and have lost my way, and am here seeking information." The negro replied: "Go to Massa Dibble at the white house on the hill and he will direct you."

By this time the negro had dressed himself and, approaching the colonel, said: "Are you not one of the Union soldiers

recently escaped from Richmond?" He replied in an instant: "Yes, I am, and there are three more at the door. We are here because we know that every black man is the friend of the Union soldier and of the cause for which we contend. We are here because we know you will not betray us. We are in trouble and seek information in regard to the rebel picket line. Can you and will you aid us?" "Yes, I can and will," he replied, "but if it should ever be known my life will pay the forfeit. I am a slave and have a wife and two children who look to me for protection. I will do all I can for you, but remember, I am in great danger."

After giving us a bowl of milk and a piece of corn bread, he bade us follow him, and leading the way, brought us to a thicket in the woods, where we sat down on a log and listened to all he had to say. He was intelligent, thoroughly acquainted with every foot of the country, and knew the location of every picket post, but he would not for some time consent to act as our pilot, fearing that he might be discovered. We at last prevailed upon him to go with us, and, after following his lead for three miles in silence, he said: "You have now passed the picket line and will soon reach Diascum Creek, which you will cross on the bridge. Once across this bridge, you will be on neutral ground and comparatively safe. Look out for the rebel scouts, who visit the creek every morning."

We gave the negro all the money we had and, bidding him good-bye, he started for home and we for the Union lines. If good deeds are recorded in Heaven, this slave's name appeared in the record that night.

We followed the pike until we reached Diascum Creek about daylight Sunday morning. The bridge across the creek had been burned. We tried to wade, but found the water too deep. Our anxiety was increased by the fear that we were

discovered by some of the residents in the vicinity. We at length waded waist deep, and on reaching the land found ourselves on an island in the stream, with deep water between us and the mainland.

Expecting every moment to see the enemy's cavalry, we were much disheartened when we saw a rebel soldier coming up the stream in a row boat, with a gun. We concealed ourselves in the bush and took a view of the man. Colonel Hobart accosted him as he approached, "Good morning, my friend, I have been waiting for you. They told me up at those houses on the hill that I could get across the stream, but I find the bridge is gone and I am very wet and cold. If you will take me over I will pay you for your trouble."

The boat was turned in to the shore, the Colonel stepped into it, and we knew it was safe, as we noticed he took up his position very near the musket. He said to the soldier, "There are three more of us," and we immediately arose and made our way into the boat.

"Where did you all come?" said the boatman, seeming to hesitate and consider. We told him we were farmers residing near Williamsburg, and that we had been down to Richmond with produce and that the government, being in great need, had confiscated our teams, and we were obliged to walk home.

"The officers don't like to have me carry men over this river," he said, evidently suspecting who we were. "That is right," we replied, "you should not carry soldiers or suspicious characters. Pass your boat along."

With a little assistance it sped to the other shore.

We knew we were discovered, and that the enemy's cavalry would very soon be in hot pursuit, therefore we determined, after consultation, to go into the first hiding place and as near as possible to the stream. The wisdom of

this course was soon demonstrated. The cavalry crossed the stream, dashed by us (we being in a thicket not more than forty rods from the road), and thoroughly searched the country at the front, not dreaming but we had gone forward.

We did not leave our seclusion until nearly midnight, and then felt our way with the greatest care. Our proximity to Williamsburg was apparent from the destruction everywhere in our path. There were no buildings, no inhabitants, and no sound save our own weary footsteps—desolation reigned supreme. Lone bare chimneys stood along our way like sentinels over the dead land, and over the whole scene war had traced its devastating autograph.

For five days and six nights, in midwinter, our feet frost-bitten, with very little to eat, and no fire, hunted and almost exhausted, with the silent stars for our guide, we had picked our way through surrounding perils toward the camp fires of our friends. We knew we were near the outposts of the Union troops, and began to feel as if our trials were nearly over, but we were now in danger of being shot as rebels by scouting parties from our own army.

To avoid the appearance of being spies we took the open road, alternately traveling and concealing ourselves that we might reconnoitre the way.

To my dying day I shall remember that, to me, eventful night. I lead the advance, and about 3 o'clock in the morning, coming near the shadow of a dark forest that overhung the road, we were startled and brought to a stand by the sharp command, "Halt!" Looking in the direction whence the command proceeded, I discovered the dark forms of a dozen cavalymen, drawn up in line across the road. A voice came out of the darkness, saying, "Who comes there?" I replied, "We are four travelers." The same voice said, "If you are travelers, come up here and that very quick."

Moving forward the cavalry surrounded us, and carefully looking at their clothing I at first thought it was grey, and was nerving myself for recapture.

It was a supreme moment to the soul! I at length gathered sufficient courage to inquire, "To what regiment do you belong?"

In broad United States accent the answer came back, "To the Eleventh Pennsylvania Cavalry."

In an instant their uniforms turned to glorious blue, and taking off our hats we gave one long, exultant shout. We were again under the protection of that dear old flag whose every fold is priceless.

It was like passing from death unto life, and our hearts filled with gratitude to Him whose sheltering arm had guided and protected us during all that weary journey.



THE  
Michigan Cavalry Brigade

IN THE  
WILDERNESS.

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A PAPER

READ BEFORE THE  
MICHIGAN COMMANDERY OF THE LOYAL LEGION.

BY

GEN. JAS. H. KIDD.

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## The Michigan Cavalry Brigade in the Wilderness.

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On the 27th day of May, 1864, the First Michigan Cavalry having, early in the morning, effected a crossing at Dabney's Ferry, on the Pamunkey River, General Custer ordered me, then in command of the Sixth Michigan, to take the road leading from Hanover town and push on in advance toward Hanover Court House. We had gone but a mile or so when, in the midst of a dense wood, a force which proved to be dismounted cavalry was encountered, strongly posted behind earthworks which had been hastily thrown up for the purpose. The regiment was dismounted on the right of the road, and the First Michigan, following closely, went in on the left and the two regiments made a vigorous assault, but met with too stubborn a resistance to carry the works at once. A band in the rear of the enemy's line was playing "The Bonnie Blue Flag," indicating the presence of a brigade at least in our front. Noticing that a portion of the enemy's fire came from far to the right, I sent the sergeant-major to the rear with word that my flank was in danger and that the line ought to be prolonged in that direction. The non-commissioned officer returned and reported that the message had been delivered to the brigade commander, but that it was overheard by the major-general commanding the division, a

pompous infantry officer but recently assigned to a cavalry command, whose arrogant bearing made him exceedingly unpopular with Buford's and Kilpatrick's veteran troopers, who had been accustomed to serve under men who could do harder fighting with less airs. This officer exclaimed with a good deal of impatience and undisguised contempt: "Who in h—ll is this who is talking of being flanked?" I was mortified at this and resolved to never again, under any circumstances, admit to a superior officer that the idea of being flanked had any terrors for me, a resolution which was religiously adhered to so long as I was privileged to have a command in the field.

Custer, however, did not wait to strengthen his line in front, but, taking the other two regiments of his brigade (the Fifth and Seventh Michigan) made a detour by way of Hawes' Shop, and came in on the flank of the force which the First and Sixth were ineffectually trying to dislodge from its strong position, and which held on tenaciously so long as it was subject to a front attack only. But as soon as Custer made his appearance on its flank, the enemy, a brigade of North Carolinians, under the rebel General Gordon, abandoned the earthworks and fled precipitately, the First and Sixth promptly joining in the pursuit. Custer's approach was heralded by an amusing incident. The band that had been challenging us, with its lips of brass, close to the rear of Gordon's line, abruptly stopped in the midst of one of its most defiant strains, and the last note of "The Bonnie Blue Flag" had scarcely died on the air when far to our left and front were heard the cheery strains of "Yankee Doodle." No other signal was needed to tell of the whereabouts of our Michigan comrades and, in an instant, our line was rushing forward, only to see, as it emerged into the opening, the tarheels of the South making swift time toward Crump's Creek, closely followed by a mounted charge of Custer and his

Michiganders. The latter had easily accomplished without loss, by the flanking process, what he had tried in vain to do with hard fighting and severe loss by the more direct method.

This incident is narrated to accentuate what follows :

The fear of being flanked was an ever-present terror to the army of the Potomac ; and it was by no means confined to the battalion commanders, either. The apparition which appeared to McDowell at Manassas ; to Pope, at the Second Bull Run ; to Hooker, at Chancellorsville, flitted over the Wilderness, and was one of the causes, if not *the* cause, why that campaign was unsuccessful.

There is no doubt, either, that General Meade placed too low an estimate upon the value of cavalry as a factor in battle, and failed to appreciate the importance of the presence of Sheridan's troopers upon his left. If Meade and Hancock had known Sheridan as they knew him a year later when he intercepted the flight of Lee's army at Five Forks and Sailor's Creek, there would have been no nervous apprehension that Longstreet might re-enact in the Wilderness the part played at Chancellorsville by Stonewall Jackson.

On the 6th of May, 1864, the strategy of Grant and Hancock's heroism were paralyzed by false rumors to the effect that Longstreet was menacing the safety of the Potomac army by moving against its left and rear. If such a thing was seriously attempted, it was met and thwarted by Custer and Gregg who, alone and unaided, successfully resisted every effort of Stuart's cavalry to break the Union lines by way of the Brock and Catharpin roads.

The noise of the successful battle which the Union cavalry was waging, instead of reassuring the Federal commanders, as it ought to have done, served to increase the alarm which extended not only to General Hancock, but to army headquarters as well. Instead of that, if a proper rating had been placed upon the services the cavalry was capable of rendering,

was, in fact, rendering, it would have quieted all apprehension. Barlow, who was on the extreme left of the infantry, would have moved promptly to the front as ordered, and Hill and Ewell might have been crushed before Longstreet was in position to save them, and turn a Federal victory into a Federal defeat.

This paper, however, was not intended for a criticism upon the tactics of the battle, but, rather, for a sketch of the part performed by the cavalry, and especially the Michigan Cavalry in the Wilderness.

It is now two or three years since the writer was seized with an ambition to commit to the keeping of the types some of the fugitive pieces which he had prepared, rather for employment in his leisure hours, than with any idea of contributing to the accredited literature of the war.

This ambition was stifled soon after its birth by an experience, at the time rather more galling to his pride than was the caustic remark of the major general of division at Hanover town.

It happened in this wise:

A paper on the part taken by the union cavalry in the battle of Cedar Creek, prepared with conscientious care and scrupulous fidelity to facts as the writer understood them, was mailed to Brig. Gen. Wesley Merritt, U. S. army, with the request couched in modest and courteous phrase, that he point out, after having read it, any errors or inaccuracies of statement that he might make a note of, as the writer intended the article for publication.

General Merritt replied, in a style that was bland, that he had "long since ceased to read fiction;" though he had departed from the rule in the present instance so far as to look over the article in question; that he no longer read even the "Century" war articles; and that the writer of the paper on Cedar Creek narrated as facts things which could not

possibly have happened as stated; he (the writer) according to the same authority, did not know by whose orders he moved his own command from right to left in that battle, and was, in fact, ignorant of the salient features of what he saw with his own eyes and heard with his own ears.

This was notice, plain as holy writ, that no mere amateur in military matters may presume to have known and observed things in the war which did not, at the time, come within the range of vision of those who had a recognized status as professional soldiers, and find its way into their official reports.

It is evident that this rule, though, perhaps, a proper and necessary one to protect the literature of the war against imposition and fraud, may very easily bar out much that is valuable and well worth writing, provided it can in some way be invested with the stamp of truth.

It was quite possible for brigade and even battalion commanders, not to draw a line finer still, to have experiences on the battle-field of which their immediate superiors were not cognizant; nor is it necessary to beg the question by arguing that all officers were allowed to exercise a discretion of their own within certain limits. Especially could this be the case when a battle was fought in a jungle like the Wilderness, where one could see, at most, but a few hundred yards in any direction.

Official reports were often but hastily and imperfectly sketched, amidst the hurry and bustle of breaking camp, or, on the eve of battle, when the mind might be preoccupied with other things of immediate and pressing importance. Moreover, they were, not seldom, written long after when it was almost as difficult to recall the exact sequence and order of events as it would be after the lapse of years. Besides, the "youngsters" of those days, those at least who had not been trained as soldiers, failed to realize the value their

reports might have in after years, as a basis for making history. No one could be more unwilling than myself to suspect that General Custer was the man to wittingly do an injustice to any command that served under him. Yet, there are in his official reports many inaccuracies, not to employ a stronger term. It will be sufficient for our present purpose to instance two. In his report of the battle in the Wilderness he stated that "the rebel onset was met with a charge of the First Michigan." The First and Sixth both charged together, the former leading, the latter proud to follow where its gallant comrades led. He also said that "the Seventeenth Pennsylvania cavalry was sent to reinforce the Fifth and Sixth Michigan which were hard pressed" in the woods on the right. It was the Sixth Michigan that was "hard pressed." The Fifth Michigan and Seventeenth Pennsylvania, both under General R. A. Alger, then colonel of the Fifth Michigan, came at the same moment of time to the rescue of the Sixth Michigan.

General Sheridan's report gives a very meagre and inadequate account of the cavalry fight in the Wilderness. In his book, he dismisses it with a paragraph. That was to be expected. His corps was scattered over a wide area, its duty, to guard the left flank and all the trains, and he was not present in person when Custer put an abrupt stop to Hampton's impetuous advance. It is now known that Sheridan was so hampered by interference from army headquarters that his plans miscarried, and the relations between himself and his immediate superior became so strained that the doughty little warrior declared to General Meade that he would never give the cavalry corps another order. But, by General Grant's intervention, these difficulties were reconciled and Sheridan was soon off on his memorable raid, which resulted in the bloody battle of Yellow Tavern, and the death

of the foremost of the Confederate cavalry chieftains, General J. E. B. Stuart.

The Michigan Cavalry Brigade (by which name it will be known in history), whose exploit in the Battle of the Wilderness it is the purpose of this paper to give, somewhat more in detail than it can be found in the official records, was organized early in the year 1863. It consisted at first of five regiments, viz: The First, Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Michigan, and First Vermont regiments of volunteer cavalry. During the campaigns of that year it was known as the Second brigade, Third division, Cavalry corps. General Judson Kilpatrick was the division commander, and George A. Custer had the Second brigade. It was his first command, and one which he assumed on the battle-field of Hanover, Pennsylvania, during the Gettysburg campaign, June 30, 1863. Previous to that he had been a subaltern of the staff and in the United States regular cavalry. Though his rise in rank was so rapid, he leaped at once to the front rank of the generals of brigade, and became the idol, as well as the ideal, of his men. There are those who think that the prestige which the Michigan brigade attained in the Potomac cavalry was due, in great part, to the genius of its commander. Such a judgment, however, does injustice to the officers and men who served under him, who are justly entitled to a share in the honors which fell to his lot.

When the cavalry corps was reorganized under Sheridan, the Michigan brigade was transferred and became the First brigade, First division, the First Vermont, much to the regret of the brave Green Mountain boys, and of their Michigan comrades as well, remaining behind in the Third division, then commanded by General James H. Wilson.

The regiments, taken by number, were commanded respectively by Lieut.-Col. Peter Stagg, Col. Russell A. Alger, Maj. James H. Kidd and Maj. Henry W. Granger. Although the



movement of the Army of the Potomac began May 3, it was the morning of May 4 when the Wolverine troopers left their camp near Culpepper and headed for Ely's Ford, on the Rapidan River. The Second and Third divisions had the honor of leading the advance, and preceded the infantry at the crossing the day before. At 3 o'clock on the morning of the 5th, the march was resumed, and crossing at Ely's Ford, the First division moved to Chancellorsville and was encamped that night at the Furnaces, south of the Orange plank road, about midway between Wilderness Church and Todd's Tavern, in the rear of the left of the Union line.

Early on the morning of the 6th "boots and saddles," and "to horse" summoned the brigade to arms, and at 2 o'clock a. m. it was on the march by the Furnace road towards its intersection with the Brock turnpike. Gregg was at Todd's Tavern, at the junction of the Catharpin and Brock roads. Custer was to be the connecting link between Gregg's division and Hancock's corps. Devin, with the Second brigade, was ordered to report to Custer. Wilson had been out on the previous day on the Orange plank road and pike, where he encountered Stuart's cavalry, and was roughly handled. While moving up in the darkness towards the position at the cross-roads, we came upon the scattered troopers of the First Vermont, moving to the rear. They were greatly chagrined over their defeat of the day before, and declared that they did not belong to the Third division, but were the "Eighth Michigan." "Come along with us, boys," said their old Michigan friends. "I wish we could," they all replied. Wilson had Kilpatrick's fatuity for getting into scrapes, but lacked his skill in getting out.

Arriving at his destination before daylight, Custer posted his troops so as to be ready to meet the expected attack. Two squadrons, one from the First Michigan, the other from the Sixth, commanded respectively by Capt. George R.

Maxwell and Capt. Manning D. Birge, were sent out to picket the front on the Brock road. The line of battle was formed in the woods, facing a cleared space of open country, beyond which dense timber served as a screen to prevent the enemy's approach from being seen. The right was held by the First and Sixth Michigan, formed in two lines, regimental front, the Sixth in rear, the men standing "in place rest" in front of their horses. It was prolonged to the left by the Fifth and Seventh Michigan and Devin's brigade, composed of the Fourth, Sixth and Ninth New York, and Seventeenth Pennsylvania. Devin, however, did not arrive on the ground until the battle was well under way. The right of the line was "in the air," so far as was at that time known, the infantry not being in sight. The open or field directly in front, extended some 200 yards beyond our position to the right, and it was, perhaps, 500 yards across it to the woods. The timber, in which we formed, extended from the rear, clear around the right and across the front. In other words, the patch of open ground was surrounded, on three sides at least, by dense woods. The alignment faced in a westerly direction, and was back in the timber far enough to be hidden from an approaching foe. To the right of us, and as it turned out, somewhat to our rear, lay the Army of the Potomac, which had been battling with Lee all the previous day; and orders had been issued for the fighting to be resumed at 5 o'clock in the morning.

Thus we stood, prepared, in a state of expectancy, awaiting the sounds that were to summon us to battle.

The brigade band was posted near the left flank of the First Michigan.

General Custer, alert and wary, with a portion of his staff, was out inspecting the picket line.

The horse artillery had not yet arrived.

Every trooper was on the alert, ready for whatever might come.

The field, of which mention has been made, was bisected by a ravine, nearly diagonally from left to right, the ground sloping into it from front and rear. This ravine was to play a prominent part in the fight that ensued.

Suddenly the signal came. A picket shot was heard, then another, and another. Thicker and faster the spattering tones were borne to our ears from the woods in front. Then it was the rebel yell, at first faint, but swelling in volume as it approached. A brigade of cavalry, led by the intrepid Rosser, was charging full tilt towards our position. He did not stop to skirmish with the pickets, but, charging headlong, drove them pell-mell into the reserves, following closely at their heels, with intent to stampede the whole command.

It was a bold and brilliant dash, but doomed to fall short of complete success, for, "when Greek meets Greek then comes the tug of war."

Rosser had met his match.

When the rebel charge was sounded, Custer was near his picket line, and, scenting the first note of danger, turned his horse's head toward the place where he had hidden his Wolverines in ambush, and, bursting into view from the timber beyond the field, we saw him riding furiously in our direction. When he reached the edge of the woods, circling to the front as he rode, he bade the band to play, and, with sabre arm extended, shouted to the command, already in the saddle, "Forward, by divisions."

As the band struck up the inspiring strains of "Yankee Doodle," the First Michigan broke by sub-divisions from the right, the Sixth following, and the two regiments charged with a yell through the thick underbrush out into the open ground, just as the rebel troopers emerged from the woods on the opposite side. Both commands kept on in full career

until they reached the edge of the ravine, when they stopped, the rebels, apparently surprised by our sudden appearance and audacity, Custer well content with checking Rosser's vicious advance. Some of the foremost men kept on and crossed sabers in the middle of the ravine. One squadron of rebels, charging in column of fours, went past our flank, about one hundred yards to the right, and then, like the French army which marched up a hill, turned and charged back again, without attempting to turn their head of column towards the point where Custer was standing at bay, with his Michiganders clustered thick about him. Pretty soon the rebels ran a section of artillery into the field and opened on us with shell. Every attempt to break our lines failed however, the Spencer carbines proving too much of an obstacle to be overcome.

The Fifth and Seventh Michigan were doing excellent service on the left, forging to the front and threatening the right of the rebel position. But it was evident our own right was vulnerable, and Custer ordered Major Kidd to take the Sixth, move by the rear to the woods on the right, dismount the men, and, as he expressed it, "Flank that battery." The regiment had become much scattered in the charge, but the rally was sounded and as many men as could be quickly gathered were withdrawn from the field, and, obeying the order with as much alacrity as possible, in a few minutes were in position and moving briskly forward through the thick woods. But they had not proceeded far when a strong force of dismounted cavalry was encountered. Both commanders seem to have ordered a simultaneous movement with a similar purpose, viz: to flank and attack the other's rear. The two forces met, very nearly on the prolongation of the line held by the mounted men of the First, Fifth and Seventh Michigan, east of the ravine. The rebel line extended beyond our right as far as we could see, and it was evident that we were

outnumbered at least three to one. But the little force stood bravely up to their work, using their Spencer carbines with deadly effect, and checking the advance of the enemy in their immediate front. Seeing that the left of the rebels were passing around us, the captain of the left company was directed to hold his position at all hazards. The right was swung back to protect our rear. At the same time an officer was dispatched to General Custer with an appeal for reinforcements.

The entire of the Second brigade was now up, and a battery, which arrived after the withdrawal of the Sixth, had been placed in position and opened on the enemy. The battle was still raging in the field, but General Custer sent the Fifth Michigan, Colonel Russell A. Alger commanding, and the Seventeenth Pennsylvania, Lieutenant Colonel J. Q. Anderson commanding, to the relief of the Sixth. The reinforcements came none too soon. The rebels confident in their superior numbers, were pressing us hard. In a solid line of two ranks, with Spencer rifles full shotted, the two magnificent regiments deployed into position on our right. Then moving forward by a left half-wheel, the tables were turned on the too exultant foe, and he was forced gradually back. Close up to the line, cool as if on parade, rode the commander of the Fifth Michigan, Colonel Alger, now in command of the entire line. "Steady men, forward," he was heard to say; and with a responsive shout, the men swept on through the woods, driving everything before them. At the same time the mounted men of the First and Seventh charged the force in their front. The enemy gave way in disorder, was routed and fled, leaving his dead and wounded in our hands. His repulse was complete and crushing, and we saw no more of him that day. The Michigan brigade had won a signal victory, momentous in its consequences, for it saved the union left from the disaster which was so much dreaded, the fear of which neutralized

half of Hancock's command during the entire of that day. No one who witnessed it will ever forget the superb courage and conduct of General Alger and his command, when they swung into line on the right of the Sixth Michigan and instantly turned a threatened defeat into a magnificent victory.

In the mean time what was the infantry doing? After the repulse of Rosser it was found that there was a line of infantry not far to our right and rear. Attention was called to the fact when some of the cavalymen who had been straggling in that direction returned and said that the Twenty-sixth Michigan infantry was a little way off, and a good many of the men went over for a brief hand-shake with friends therein.

The Twenty-sixth Michigan was in Barlow's division. They had been interested listeners to, if not spectators of the cavalry fight. The contest between the dismounted men in the woods had been almost, if not quite in their front, and occasional shots had come their way.

Why did not Barlow, or, indeed, Gibbon's entire command, move up at the time when the Sixth Michigan was contending alone with a superior force directly in its front?

The answer to that question is in the sealed book which contains the reason of Grant's failure in the Wilderness.

Let us see.

Grant's orders to corps commanders were to attack Lee's army at 5 A. M., May 6.

Longstreet had not arrived, but was expected up in the morning, and prisoners reported he would attack the union left. Hancock was ordered to look out for his left. Barlow's division was posted for that purpose. Hancock's corps was divided into two wings, the right wing under Birney, consisting of the three divisions of Birney, Mott and Getty; the left wing, of Gibbon's and Barlow's divisions under Gibbon. Barlow, as has been seen, was to look after the extreme left.

Wright and Warren attacked Ewell at the hour, but were unsuccessful. Hancock's assault upon Hill was completely successful. But Longstreet arrived in the nick of time to save Hill. But Hancock's attack was with Birney's command, and when Longstreet arrived he struck the left flank of Birney. Where were the two divisions of Gibbon, posted for the very purpose of looking out for Longstreet?

In General A. A. Humphrey's Virginia Campaigns, page 40, we read:

“At 7 A. M. General Hancock sent a staff officer to General Gibbon, informing him of the success of his right wing, and directing him to attack the enemy's right with Barlow's division. This order \* \* was only partially obeyed. Had Barlow's division advanced as directed, he (General Hancock) felt confident that the enemy's force would have been defeated. The cause of his failure was probably owing to the expected approach of Longstreet on his (Barlow's) left.”

Again:

“At 8.50 A. M. Hancock began an attack, with Birney's wing and Gibbon's division of the left wing.”

Gen. Grant, in his Memoirs (pp. 196-197):

“Hancock was ready to advance, but learning that Longstreet was threatening his left flank, sent a division of infantry, commanded by Gen. Barlow, to cover the approaches by which Longstreet was expected.”

Gen. Sheridan, (Memoirs, Vol. 1, pages 362-363) says that:

“On the Sixth, Gen. Meade became alarmed about his left flank and sent a dispatch saying: ‘Hancock has been heavily pressed and his left turned. You had better draw in your cavalry to protect the trains.’”

And again:

“On the morning of the Sixth, Custer's and Devin's brigades had been severely engaged before I received the above note. They had been most successful in repulsing the enemy's attacks, and I felt that the line could be held. But the dispatch from Gen. Hancock was alarming, so I drew all the cavalry close in around Chancellorsville.”

And:

“The firing had hardly begun when Hancock was informed

that the left wing was seriously threatened, so as to fully occupy Barlow. The enemy's dismounted cavalry opened on him with artillery and pressed forward their skirmish line. The rapid firing of Sheridan's attack helped to confirm the impression that this was a serious flank attack by the enemy. These repeated reports prevented Hancock from throwing his full strength into the attack along the plank road."

From these considerations it appears plain that the failure of Barlow and Gibbon to advance permitted Longstreet to swing in front of those two divisions and attack Birney's left, thus neutralizing Hancock's victory over Hill; whereas, if they had advanced as ordered, they would have struck Longstreet's flank and probably crushed it.

Second — The attack on Birney caused Sheridan's cavalry to be drawn in from a position they had successfully held against every assault; from which, indeed, they had driven the enemy's cavalry in head-long flight.

Third — This was the dismounted cavalry that attacked Barlow, and the only force that threatened him; the same with which the Michigan brigade was contending in front of Barlow, and which was so handsomely repulsed by General Alger after his arrival with the reinforcements. The artillery was doubtless the same battery spoken of, which was run into the field at the time of Rosser's charge.

All of which demonstrates that in battle, as in the ordinary affairs of life, imaginary dangers often trouble us more than those which are real.





WAR PAPER No. 13.

# My Escape from Belle Isle.

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A PAPER

PREPARED AND READ BEFORE

MICHIGAN COMMANDERY OF THE MILITARY  
ORDER OF THE

LOYAL LEGION OF THE UNITED STATES,

DECEMBER 5, 1889,

BY COMPANION

LIEUT. HORACE R. ABBOTT.

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## My Escape from Belle Isle.

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At the time of my capture I was nineteen years of age, and was 1st Sergeant, Company "E," 2d Regiment Ohio Volunteer Infantry, First Brigade, First Division, 14th Army Corps, Army of the Cumberland.

Many of you are too familiar with the details and incidents of the battle of Chickamauga to need any attempted recital or description on my part. It ended in disaster, and to me the bitterness of defeat was deepened by the gloom of captivity. All day the battle had raged, now advancing, now retreating, with the varying fortunes of the day. Late in the afternoon found our slender line desperately struggling to hold its last position at the edge of a narrow clearing, across which we had sent reeling back into the shelter of the woods on the opposite side the last fierce charge of the rebels. Four times that Sunday afternoon had the rebel lines charged over that narrow strip, and as many times had been driven back again.

The slaughter had been frightful,—the ground was covered with the wounded, the dying, and the dead. Men went down so thick and fast that their souls must have jostled each other in their flight into eternity.

At length there was a lull in the contest—a calm, ominous in its intensity, followed the roar and crash of a few minutes before. The men knelt close behind the hastily constructed breastwork of logs and rails, every nerve is stretched to its

utmost tension, and a line of pale, set faces peered eagerly out into the gathering dusk to note the first approach of the coming storm. It came quickly enough, and the shrill yell of the charging column as it broke from the shelter of the woods was drowned by the crash of musketry that met its advance. Another line burst from the woods, and another, and the three grey lines, far outreaching our either flank, came sweeping down upon our slender line like great waves of ocean. Our ammunition was almost exhausted; for a moment our line wavered; the familiar command, "Steady, men, steady!" ran down the line, which bravely recovered and braced itself to meet the shock. In a moment they were upon us, and in such overwhelming numbers that we were forced back. The line broke, and singly and in groups, still fighting from behind trees, bushes, and every vantage ground that offered, the men drifted back into the darkness and cover of the woods; the firing grew less and less, like the last mutterings of a storm whose strength is spent.

In the confusion and darkness I became separated from my comrades, and directed my way to where I supposed our right was stationed. The woods grew thinner and I soon found myself crossing a large field which, as well as I could see in the uncertain light, seemed to be bounded on all sides by the forest. Off to the left a battery was still pounding away, the shells shrieking over my head and bursting in the woods beyond. Thinking they were our own men, I thought it strange they should keep on firing into our own lines — little dreaming of the extent of the disaster that had befallen the right wing of the army. So, keeping as much as possible out of the line of fire, I went on until within some twenty feet of the woods, when I noticed a group of horsemen just within the edge, one of whom rode towards me, and to my astonishment I saw that he was a rebel officer, and I knew then that our right must have been driven back and that the

enemy was in our rear. His order to "Halt, and throw down that gun!" was accompanied by the click of a revolver, and as my musket was empty, having fired my last round, and the persuasive influence of a revolver pointed directly at my head, and but a few feet from it, made me conclude that "discretion was the better part of valor." I was about to comply with his demand, when another of our men came running past, and the officer turning to take him in also, for the moment uncovered me from his aim, and I made a dash for the woods, but a few feet away. I heard the "Halt, there!" quickly followed by a shot; but the darkness saved me, and I dashed on into the woods, only to run squarely into the arms of the 34th Mississippi regiment, which was guarding a large number of our men who had been captured earlier in the day. There was no time to "fall back in good order"; my musket was taken from me by one, with the remark that he "didn't think I would need it any more," and my knapsack by another who was aggravatingly polite, requesting the pleasure of relieving me of it," and that "if I would leave the address of my hotel in Richmond, he would send it to me." It never came. Fortunately for me they seemed well supplied with blankets, and so left me mine.

I found myself near the fire at the headquarters of the rebel General Humphreys, commanding the brigade to which the 34th Mississippi was attached, so, wrapping myself in my blanket, I lay down near it upon the ground, but not "to pleasant dreams." Although worn out with excitement and fatigue, sleep seemed impossible. My mind was filled with anxious forebodings as to my own fate, and with tender solicitude for the mother at home, when the news of the battle and its disastrous ending should reach her. My fate was uncertain. In the confusion of the last charge, the desperate struggle with clubbed guns and bayonets, the fast-gathering darkness, and the enemy holding possession of our

lines, many were missing at the close of that day whose fate it was impossible to tell,— whether they were numbered with the wounded or the dead. At length tired nature asserted itself, and I fell into a heavy slumber, from which I was awakened early in the morning by the abrupt command to “fall in,” and without food of any kind, I and my fellow prisoners were started on the way to Dalton. We had not gone far when we were reinforced by another large batch of prisoners amongst whom I recognized quite a number of the men of my own company. Fortunately their haversacks had not yet been taken from them, and I was able to get some bacon and hard tack to satisfy my hunger. Their story was soon told: In falling back they had become separated and bewildered, and wandering about had run straight into the rebel lines as I had. We resolved to keep together, if possible, that we might render assistance to each other in case of sickness, or, in the event of the death of any, take charge of any effects or messages they might wish to send home. We reached Dalton about noon, and were there packed into dirty stock-cars and at once started for Atlanta. Our guards were changed here, and a regiment of Georgia militia placed in charge. The doors of the cars were closely guarded and we were not allowed to approach them. Most of us had been without food for twenty-four hours and were very hungry, but the only response to our importunities for food was, that we would have to wait until we reached Atlanta. We did not reach Atlanta until the next day, and after some time were taken from the cars and marched to a kind of stockade prison, where we had rations of bacon and corn meal issued to us, and were told that we would remain for some time. During the afternoon a raid was made upon us and the few effects we had left, including our blankets and some of our clothing, taken from us. I considered myself fortunate in having my blanket only taken from me, as

some of the men had their blouses and even their trousers taken, and were compelled to put on the cast-off clothing of the raiders. Ever since our capture our destination had been the subject of much anxiety, and it was evident that all feared the worst, and that was *Andersonville*. A gloom settled down upon us, and for the first time we lost hope and courage, as the full realization of our position and its possibilities dawned upon us. My depression was very great, and it was with a heavy heart that I lay down to sleep.

Early the next morning we were awakened and told to "fall in" for rations, and we were given to understand they were to last until we got to Richmond. *Richmond!* and not *Andersonville!* it seemed to lift a load from every heart; some of the old snap and fire came back, and we moved about as if there was something yet left to hope for. Our rations were soon distributed—hard tack and bacon—and we were marched to the station, put into box cars and started for Richmond.

The journey was uneventful, each day a repetition of the others; we passed through Augusta, Branchville, Columbia, Sausbury, Raleigh, and Petersburg, arriving at last at Richmond one evening at dusk. We were taken at once from the cars and marched to one of the military prisons, called at that time "Castle Pemberton" or "Warehouse Prison." As it was dark I could not see much on our way, but the guard near me was very communicative, and calling my attention to a building we were passing, said: "That is 'Castle Thunder,' and that" pointing to a building which loomed up in the darkness, "is 'Libby Prison.'" It was too dark to see more than its outlines, but we were put into a building almost opposite. I knew I should have ample opportunity to see this famous prison in the future.

Happening to be at the head of the column, we were among the first to enter "Castle Pemberton" and were quartered on



the first floor. The building was rapidly filled—the men being crowded into the various rooms; but large as it was it could not contain them all, and the rest of the column moved on out of sight. Tired and worn out I lay down and fell asleep. I awoke in the morning feeling stiff and sore from contact with the hard floor, and looked curiously around my new abode. The sight was anything but pleasant or reassuring. The room was large and bare, and dreary in the extreme. The building had been a tobacco warehouse, and one side of the room was filled with the old presses; at the further end were the sinks and a hydrant from which we obtained our water supply. In size the room was about thirty by seventy feet, the walls and floor were foul with dirt and vermin, and into this place were crowded—*by actual count*—three hundred and seventy-eight men. We had none of the commonest necessary articles for the toilet, such as soap and towels, and were obliged to use our coats and handkerchiefs—those of us who were fortunate enough to still possess them,—to dry ourselves after washing. Under such circumstances, the men soon became indifferent and hopeless as to personal appearance, and our condition soon became disgusting and pitiful in the extreme.

I was appointed to draw the rations for our floor, and every afternoon, with a detail of men, would go with the details of the other floors, across the street to the commissary under “Libby Prison,” and there get the miserable pittance that was to keep body and soul together until the next day. The so-called food generally consisted of water in which meat had been boiled, with a few fragments left floating in it, that it might, by courtesy, be called “soup.” A small ration of bread accompanied it—about enough to give each man perhaps half-a-pound, and once in a great while, a few potatoes. A few tin cups and plates were given to each mess, and we took turns in using them. This life soon became so

monotonous, as to be almost unbearable, and the men became so clamorous to get out from the dreary place into the pure air of heaven, that I made out a list of the names, and endeavored to give each one his turn in the "ration detail." The brief respite was eagerly seized and enjoyed, and whether in the bright sunshine or the pitiless rain, we would gladly stand drinking in the fresh air, and looking with longing eyes towards "God's Country," where freedom and our dear ones were. For a while we had been buoyed up by the hope and assurance of an early exchange, but as the days grew into weeks, and the weeks into months, and no sign of release came, hope changed to despair, and we grew moody and despondent. Thus the days passed wearily, each day the same dreary round, without one gleam of brightness to lighten the gloom that settled down upon us.

One day a ripple of excitement ran through the room at the news, that a Sergeant Bell, of the 18th regulars, from one of the other floors, had succeeded in making his escape from the ration detail one dark evening, but that he had been recaptured and was to be shot *as a spy*. It soon died away, however, and we sank again into indifference and gloom. A few days after this, as we were waiting on the pavement outside the commissary for the other details to come out, my attention was attracted by a singular looking white stone, which I picked up and after examining it and showing it to some of the men, threw it away again. Just then I saw an officer accompanied by a man in citizen's dress, come out from the Libby Prison Office and walk rapidly towards us, the man in citizen's dress talking eagerly all the while. I looked at them curiously, wondering what was the matter, and as they came up to us, to my amazement the man pointing to me said: "This is the man." They seized me by the arms and I was taken into the office and ordered to "*give up the note*" that I had picked up. I replied that I had not picked

up any note, and explained what it was, and told them to call in some of the men to corroborate my statement. The man stoutly maintained that he had seen one of the officers confined in Libby Prison, throw down a note from a window and that I had picked it up. I as stoutly protested my innocence, and having grown indifferent,—from the suffering and wretchedness of the past months of imprisonment,—as to anything worse that could befall, I told them to search me and make the most of it. The reply was more forcible than elegant, and the officer in charge, calling in a sergeant and file of men, said, “We’ve got a way of dealing with such men as you,” and ordered the sergeant to “put this fellow in No. 1.” Up to this moment I had been rather indifferent as to what might happen, but when I saw the sergeant step behind the desk and take down one of four keys which hung upon the wall, the significance of it flashed upon me, and like an incoming wave of the sea, all the wretchedness and indignities of the past surged over me, and my heart sank within me. I had tried hard to be brave and cheerful,—to speak and act as hopefully as possible, for the sake of my fellow captives, when my own heart was heavy as lead; but now the revulsion of feeling was more than I could bear and I felt that I was on the verge of breaking down, but by a strong effort I controlled myself and waited for what was to come. Lighting a lantern and going in advance, the sergeant motioned to the men, who roughly pulled and pushed me out of the room, and down into the middle cellar underneath the prison. Going to the upper left-hand corner, the guard stopped before a door, that, by the light of the lantern, I could see was strongly barred, and unlocked it.

The door was opened and with an oath I was pushed in, stumbling over something on the floor that I felt was a human being, and the door was locked upon me. The sense of companionship, and that I was not utterly alone in my wretched-

ness, somewhat comforted me, and in response to the exclamation "Hello! who are you?" I replied, "Sergeant Abbott, of the Second Ohio; who are you?" "Sergeant Bell, of the 18th Regulars, and two men of the 74th New York." Bell was the man whom we heard had escaped, been recaptured, and condemned to be shot. Our stories were soon told. He had gotten as far as Petersburg, had been taken sick, and while hiding in the woods had been discovered by a scouting party of rebels, brought back to Richmond and put into this cell. As to the report of his being shot, he knew nothing of it. The other two men had been confined for an attempted escape from some other prison. Their first inquiry was, "Are you not hungry?" and upon my replying that I was almost starved, said they had "plenty to eat," and gave me some bread and meat. I asked how it happened they fared so well, and was told to wait and see. After a while, as we sat and talked, I heard the sound of a bolt pushed softly back, and a low "Hist!" Bell grasped my arm and led me to the door, and feeling over it,—the place was dark as night,—I found a small opening, and putting my face near it, something was thrust in which proved to be bread, and a voice that I at once recognized as a negro's, asked if we had enough water? Bell said that we had, and closing the opening the man went away. I was then told that ever since they had been there this faithful negro had brought them food and water every day. Every morning our food was brought to us and put through the hole by a guard. The cell was about eight feet square, two sides being built of heavy planks built against the stone walls of the corner of the cellar, which were covered with slime and moisture. One corner was foul with filth, and the whole place alive with vermin. We passed the time in sleeping and talking—we could see nothing,—it was one long night, and we could only tell when it was day by the

tread of feet overhead and the rumbling of wheels along the street. One day we were aroused by the tramp of feet outside and the jingling of accoutrements; the door was thrown open, the light from lanterns flashed into the darkness, and we were told to come out. Drawn up in front of the cell was a guard of soldiers, two of them having a colored man between them. We wondered what it all meant, and in answer to our looks of surprise the sergeant, a tall, brutal looking fellow, said, "This nigger here has been bringing food to you fellows, and we're going to show you how we treat your friends." A wooden bench was then brought and placed before us, and the sergeant, after stripping the shirt from the poor fellow's back, strapped him securely upon it; then taking a rope he whipped him until his back was a mass of raw and bleeding flesh. The poor wretch did not utter a sound, and, enraged at the courageous endurance which his inhuman treatment could not conquer, the monster seized a handful of salt and roughly rubbed it into the raw wounds his cruel lash had made. A low moan of agony broke from the lips of his victim, which rings in my ears to-day, and sick and faint at the horrible sight we staggered back into the cell, only too glad to shut our eyes to its horror. The poor fellow, more dead than alive, was taken up, his shirt thrown to him, and he was ordered with a curse to "go about his work." Our hearts were hot with impotent rage at our helplessness to prevent or avenge the brutal act, and we sat in silence, each one wrapped in gloomy and despairing thoughts. How long we sat thus I do not know,—some hours, probably,—when suddenly the soft slipping back of the bolt of the opening in the door and the familiar "Hist!" broke the silence. I could hardly believe my ears, and in amazement sprang to the door to find the faithful black fellow there with bread and meat as usual. Astounded at his courage and devotion, I begged

him to go away and not to come again; his *only* answer was, "It's all I can do, mar'se,—it's all I can do." He was "only a negro," but with a soul so heroic that it seems to me it was of *such* stuff the martyrs were made.

The next afternoon the tread of marching feet again aroused us, and as we wondered what new misfortune awaited us, the door of the cell was thrown open, we were ordered out and taken up to the street and into the light of day once more. There we found a large number of other prisoners with whom we were soon on our way to Belle Island. It was a bright, cool day, and I think the sun never seemed so bright, or the sky so blue, as they did that Sunday afternoon. The streets were full of people, who gazed at us as we tramped along, some indifferently, some with taunts, and a few with pity. We soon reached the long bridge, and crossing over to the Manchester side, continued on our way until we came to another bridge leading over to Belle Island. This bridge was strongly guarded at both ends, and as we emerged from it we found ourselves in the yard of an iron works establishment, and passing through it came into a street lined on either side with the houses of employes. Suddenly we came upon a corner of the prison, not a building as I had expected, but an earthwork, about five feet high, with the ditch on the inside. We came to a halt at the entrance which faced Richmond and the river, the Tredegar Iron Works being immediately opposite, and as we stood there waiting the conclusion of the formalities between the officer in charge of us and the prison officers, I looked curiously at the place I was to be put into—for God only knew how long. From where I stood, I could only see the tops of tents, and just above the edge of the earthwork, a line of gaunt, hollow-eyed faces, that looked more like death-heads than human beings. As I looked, one among them called my name, an arm was waved, and pointing towards the gate, disappeared. Won-

dering who was there who knew me, I turned to Bell, who was sitting on the ground with his head resting dejectedly upon his knees, and in reply to some inquiries of mine, only said: "It will be worse than Libby in there." It was but the echo of my own thought, and I stood and waited in silence. At last we moved forward to the gate, over which Dante's inscription—" *All hope abandon, ye who enter in,*"—might well have been written.

As I passed in, the ghastly sight that met my eyes almost made my heart stop beating. Ranged on each side of the entrance was a line of men—so dirty and ragged,—so hollow-eyed, and wasted in form and features,—so pitifully abject in their misery, that I doubt if even a mother's love could have recognized a son in any of these poor wretches. A confused murmur of voices filled the air, and as we stood undecided where to go, or what to do, a figure burst through the line, and running up to me grasped me by both hands and looking eagerly into my face, expressed his sorrow—and gladness—at seeing me. I looked at him in puzzled astonishment, and seeing that I did not recognize him, he staggered back exclaiming: "My God! don't you remember Will Robinson?" What wonder that in the begrimed and haggard face, the changed voice, the filthy rags, that I failed to recognize an old school-boy friend. Taking Bell with us, we went to his tent, and there told our stories. He had been captured at the battle of Stone River, and confined here ever since. His recital of the horrors of the place was enough to make us wish ourselves back in the darkness of the Libby Prison dungeon; It was a paradise compared with this hell-hole. The tent he was in was filled to its utmost capacity, so there was no room for us; and in all the other tents we visited, one after another, the result was the same. Coming at last to the ditch inside the front of the enclosure, we saw that numbers of the prisoners had dug holes in the sides of it

for shelter, and finding that no other resource remained, concluded to do the same and immediately fell to work with sticks and an old tin can. We soon had a hole made in the soft sand, large enough to contain us both, and crawling in, endeavored to forget our troubles in sleep. In the morning we made a complete tour of the place. Everywhere the same scenes of suffering and wretchedness met our eyes, and we returned to our burrow sick at heart with the utter and hopeless misery of it all, but with our minds made up to *attempt an escape*, no matter how great the risk, or what the result might be.

The prison was situated on the extreme lower point of the island, and, as I have said, consisted of an earthwork enclosing an area of about an acre and a half; this space was almost filled with old tents which afforded shelter to those who were fortunate enough to be able to get into them. The majority of the prisoners, however, were entirely unprotected, and were compelled to sleep upon the ground or in holes which they burrowed in. In shape the earthwork was an oblong rectangle, and being built on the point of the island, three of its angles faced the river about 150 feet from its edge. The sinks were situated at the water's edge on the south side, with a board fence to shield us from observation from the bridge and the opposite shore. At dusk the guards were removed from them, and no one was allowed out afterwards.

The tents of the officers in charge, the guard-house, the commissary and cook-house were on the side facing Richmond, and just above them, where one of the angles of the prison approached quite near the river, were some boats, kept by persons living on the island, and used by them in going to and from the city. The guards were stationed about fifty feet apart, and in three places the guard line ran down to the river's edge,—one at the boats I have mentioned, one at one end of the sinks, and the third beyond the sinks



and on a line with the other angle of the prison. The dead line was the top of the works.

The first day after our arrival the guards made a raid upon us and helped themselves to whatever we had that they considered desirable. Bell and I were unfortunate enough to have our shoes taken from us, receiving their worn out ones in return; they were little better than none, but in our forlorn condition we were thankful to get even those. Rations were very inadequate and issued to us very irregularly. Some days we had none at all, and I think I can truthfully say that in the seven days I was in that prison the entire quantity of food that I received was not enough for three average meals. The usual diseases resulting from the want of wholesome food were rife in the place, and the scenes were horrible. The cruel indignities and sufferings undergone by the prisoners warped and deadened all the generous impulses of one's manhood, until men seemed changed into animals that fought and plundered in the fierce struggle for life. The sick received little attention, and lay upon the ground, wallowing in their filth, and dying like dogs. No wonder men lost their reason, and one day a poor fellow, crazed by hunger and despair, deliberately crossed the dead line, only to meet the bullet which mercifully released him from his sufferings. Young and strong as I was, I felt myself rapidly growing weak and feeble, and could see in the pinched and sunken face of my companion the reflection of my own, and knew that unless we could make our escape our fate would be that of many around us, whose days were evidently numbered.

The weather by this time was raw and cold, we had had sharp frosts and a light fall of snow. The river was full of thin, floating ice, so that swimming was out of the question, even if we had succeeded in getting out of the prison. Our first plan was to dig a tunnel on the side next to the village,

which was quite close to the prison, and come up in one of the yards beyond the guard line, but on telling Robinson of it, he at once said it was of no use, as it had been tried again and again and had failed every time, the men being recaptured almost at the moment of emerging from the tunnel; some one had evidently informed on them, probably in the hope of getting some food as a reward; so we gave it up, but watched every opportunity that chance might offer. I had noticed an old tent-fly lying on the ground near the tent of the commanding officer, and I had made up my mind to ask the officer for it at the first opportunity. I knew the terrible risk I ran, and Bell tried to dissuade me, but we suffered so much from the cold and exposure that I resolved to try it.

The officer's tent was just across the guard line, and one day as he stood by the door, just after his dinner, I waited until the guards had turned and gotten some distance off; then with a quick dash I sprang across the line and before the guards could realize what I was doing, was close beside the officer and too near him for them to fire at me without danger of hitting him. I took off my cap and politely made my request. He looked at me a moment before he said "Yes, you can have it"; and added, in a low tone, "I wish that I could do more for you." He then directed the guard to let me pass, and, thanking him most earnestly, I returned with my coveted prize to my comrade.

After dark we took two boards from the frame of an old well that had been abandoned on account of its filthiness, and putting them across the ditch, threw the fly over them, pulling it down at the sides and tucking it under us, made a much more comfortable shelter than our poor old hole in the ground. Here we passed the greater part of the time devising ways and means of escape, only to resign them as impracticable. As the days dragged their weary length

along and the chance of escape seemed as distant as ever, hope died within us, and our hearts grew sick with repeated disappointments.

Going out one day, we wandered around the prison and down to the sinks, and as we stood there it occurred to us that if we had some ropes and could fasten them outside the fence we might hang by them until the guards were taken off for the night and then take our chances. Returning to our hole, we tore strips of canvas from the old tent fly and twisted them into ropes, and also took pieces to throw over us for concealment as well as for protection.

The next day was Sunday,—the 15th of December,—just one week from the time of our arrival at the Island, and we were eager for night to come that we might put our plan into execution. The day had been cloudy, but towards evening gave promise of clearing, and hiding our ropes under our improvised blankets we sauntered down to the sinks, and after a while succeeded in hanging them outside the fence, at the same time realizing the utter impossibility of escaping detection while getting into them. To attempt it was certain death.

For some reason the guards were left on unusually late that evening, and as we stood there I noticed that under the board on which the guard walked out to the fence and back—at the end where it left the bank—was a space large enough for a man to squeeze into if he lay partly in the water. Hurriedly calling Bell's attention to it, he at once saw the impossibility of both of us hiding there, and as we had agreed to go or stay together, we were about to give it up, when looking across the guard line and just beyond it, we saw a slight elevation in the bank partly concealed by a bush, and Bell, saying he would hide there, waited until the guard had turned, and then rapidly crawled over the line and lay flat

upon the ground, his grey blanket blending so perfectly with the color of the sand that I could hardly detect him myself. Turning to see what my chances were, I saw two of our men near by watching us. Not knowing what kind of men I had to deal with, I implored them not to betray us. Providentially they were men not lost to the impulses of humanity, and saying they would help us all they could, wished us "God speed," and going to the upper end of the guard's beat, kept his attention engaged until I had crawled under the board. I was in the water almost to my waist, and my shoulders were tightly pressed between the board and the ground. I had scarcely concealed myself when I heard the sergeant of the guard ordering the men into the prison, and then his footsteps as he came down the line towards my hiding-place. As he stepped on the board his weight depressed it so much that my shoulders seemed crushed into my body, and I could with difficulty repress a cry of agony. He came back, stepped down over me, and walking a few paces, turned and faced me. At this moment the moon shone brightly out and full upon me. I closed my eyes, expecting every instant to be shot; but fortunately he did not see me, and, calling the guard, went off, and we were safe so far. After waiting a few moments, I crawled out, and lying on the sand rubbed my almost frozen feet to restore circulation. Everything was quiet save the measured tread of the guards and the confused hum of voices from the prison beyond. Cautiously looking about, I gave a low "Hist!" for Bell, but there was no response; again, but still no answer; and just as I was beginning to fear that he had been seen and recaptured, a low whistle reached my ears, and Bell came crawling over the line to me. The ground sloped gradually up from the river to the prison, and from where we lay we could see the top of the walls and an occasional head

beyond them, and the guards as they paced back and forth upon their beat. Ahead of us the guard line ran down to the water's edge, and behind us and around the point of the island was the guard-house with its fire lighting up the surroundings. Escape that way was impossible, and how to cross the guard line above without being seen was the problem we had to solve. As we lay there thinking what to do, we noticed that every once in a while the guard stopped as if talking with some one in the prison or looking at what was going on, and we came to the conclusion that our only chance was to take advantage of one of these pauses and try to crawl past him.

Time was precious, so lying flat on our faces, with our bodies partly in the water, we crept through the filth and water and at last emerged from the sinks. Slowly we worked our way along, stopping when the moon came from behind the clouds, and then going on again, gradually drew near the dreaded line, stopping again as the guard, carelessly singing to himself, came down the line. My heart was nearly bursting with suspense, but providentially the moon remained hidden by the clouds until the guard, turning about, returned to the upper end of his beat and stopped to talk to some one within the prison; it was our opportunity, and hurriedly crawling on we crossed the line and concealed ourselves behind some trees that grew there. Going on, we came to a boat secured by a lock and chain, and in trying to knock the staple out, made so much noise that we aroused a dog that came barking towards us; and fearing that we would also arouse the inmates of the house, crept around it and up to the top of a slight elevation where there was a battery which commanded the prison, and sat down under a bush to consider our situation. We knew the bridge was strongly guarded, the boats were near the guard-house, the river wide

and icy cold, and Bell could not swim ; even if he could, we should have perished with cold and exhaustion before getting half way across. It almost seemed as if nothing was left us but to give ourselves up. Life was dear, and while it lasted there was hope ; so with our hearts filled with bitter disappointment we concluded to return to that living death of the prison. Before doing so, however, we thought we would go to one of the houses and see if we could get something to eat, and wrapping our coverings about us, went down into the street of the village. As we walked along, hesitating which house to try, we met a man, and telling him we belonged to the guard, I asked him if he could not take us over into the city as we wanted to get some bread to trade to the "Yanks." He replied that he could not, but, pointing to a house, said that the man who lived there—the foreman of the mill—was going over after some flour, and that probably he would take us over, and passed on. We approached the gate, and Bell, saying that it was his turn to take the next risk, left me standing at the gate and went up to the house and knocked at the door. It was opened by a kind-faced woman, disclosing a room bright with light and warmth, and the table set for supper. Bell went in, closing the door behind him, shutting out from my sight what seemed like a vision of Heaven. As I stood there waiting, a relief guard came marching by and I began to whistle "The Bonnie Blue Flag." As they came up one of them laughingly said, "Hello, pard ! waiting for biscuit?" Afraid of my voice betraying me, I only murmured "yes," and they passed on. The time seemed very long, and I was growing anxious and impatient, when the door opened, and Bell putting out his head, very cautiously called my name. Something in his voice assured me that things were all right, and going up the path I went in. Standing in the room was the woman I had seen at the door,

and beside her was an elderly woman rocking herself to and fro with her face covered by her hands. Poor Bell was at the table ravenously eating ; tears running down the faces of them all ; and in answer to my look of bewildered inquiry, Bell managed to say, "They are Union people, Horrie ; they are Union people." The revulsion of feeling was too much for me, and breaking down completely, I cried like a child. The woman came close to me and said, "Thank God you came here, my poor boy ; you're hungry ain't you?" And pushing us towards a bench partially concealed by the staircase leading to an upper room, she sat down at the table so that she screened us from any chance visitor, and gave us warm biscuit and meat. They were the most delicious I have ever tasted. Bell told me that he had repeated my story, but the woman at once said, "No, you are not ; you have escaped from the prison." The rest you know. Our kind hostess anxiously watched the door, and presently some one knocked. In answer to her "Come in," the door opened and a rebel soldier appeared. Without waiting for him to speak, she said, "Corporal, the biscuit will not be ready for some time ; you must come again." He turned and went away. A few minutes later the door again opened and two men entered, one of whom I at once recognized as the man whom we had spoken to on the way, and the woman, springing up from her chair, ran to him, saying, "Oh, John, these poor fellows have escaped from the prison ; we must save them." The man's face became very grave as he spoke kindly to us, and then sat down to his supper. We anxiously watched him as he ate, and talked of the difficulties and risks to us and to himself. He concluded by saying, "I have always been a Union man, and this is the first opportunity I have had to do anything for my country. I will take you over if I can." I shall never forget the look of tender love that

shone in that wife's face as she went to him, and putting her arms around his neck, kissed him and said earnestly, "Save them, John." The plan was quickly made, and bidding our kind friends "Good-bye," we went out the back way with our guide, and the door closed on brave John Murphy and his devoted and heroic wife.

Our guide cautiously conducted us as far as he dared to go in the direction of the boats where we were to await Murphy, whom we shortly afterwards saw approaching from the farther corner of the prison. Every guard halted him for the countersign, and as he drew near we sauntered towards the boats to meet him. We reached the boats without being noticed and I got into the right one, but Bell by mistake got into one alongside, and in scrambling from it into Murphy's slipped and almost fell, making considerable noise, which attracted the attention of the nearest guard, who approached the boats and asked Murphy whom he had with him. The reply, "Some of your men going to the city with me," apparently satisfied him, and, leaning on his gun, he watched us drift out of sight.

We landed at the yard of the Tredegar Iron Works, and, bidding the noble fellow good-bye who had risked his life for us, started on our perilous way.

Our plan was to follow the York River Railroad until we came to the river, where we felt sure we would meet some of our gun-boats. To do this it was necessary to traverse the heart of the city, so, climbing over the fence of the yard, we came to the canal, which we crossed on the tops of the boats lying there, and came up into the city almost opposite the Spottswood hotel. It was about nine o'clock in the evening and the streets were full of people, and instead of creeping along the alleys we kept boldly in the streets, and to this fact, probably, owe it that we were not molested. We passed



within sight of our old quarters—Libby Prison,—and turning to the left soon reached a less frequented part of the town. We hurried on, looking anxiously for the railroad that Murphy told us was somewhere in this direction.

On our way we met a man and asked where the railroad was. He told us we had passed it a few squares back, and asked why we wished to know, as that road was no longer in use. In a moment of rashness I told him who we were, and a moment later could have bitten my tongue off for my folly; for at that moment we heard the beat of a drum and at the distance of two blocks the head of a column of soldiers suddenly turned into the street. We turned and dashed back in a wild run through the streets and alleys, scarcely knowing or caring what direction we were taking, until we came upon a bridge spanning the street, and there, under it, lay the road we were looking for. Without stopping to calculate the distance, we jumped over the bank and went tumbling down on to the road. We were badly shaken up, and in the fall our rags of shoes were torn off and we stumbled painfully along the road in our bare feet. We were soon tired, and before long stopped to rest, as we fortunately heard no sounds of pursuit. Our feet were cut and bleeding, and we tore strips from our canvas “blankets” and wrapped and tied them up as best we could. Across the road were some large heaps of smoking ashes—from the city gas-works, I think,—and we burrowed into one of them and enjoyed the warmth and rest for a little while. Starting on again we left Richmond behind us, and soon found ourselves in the open country and near the fortifications that surrounded the city. Looking carefully on all sides for pickets and seeing none, we passed through the earthworks and finding the road-bed in good condition we pushed rapidly on, making considerable progress during the night.

The faint light of approaching dawn found us close to the Chickahominy river, and feeling sure of finding rebel pickets there, we crept cautiously along anxiously scanning every object and listening to every sound. We soon came to the edge of the swamp which borders the river on either side, and in the fast increasing light could see the bridge or trestle stretching across the stream and not a picket or guard to be seen. Anxious to put the river between ourselves and Richmond, we hurried across, and, as it was now getting too light to proceed further in safety, we looked about for a place of concealment. About half a mile ahead of us was a high bank covered with bushes; we made rapidly for it and clambering up the slope and under the bushes lay down and fell into a heavy sleep. When we awoke the sun was setting; our limbs were stiff and numb with cold, and our feet so bruised and swollen and their coverings so stiff with blood and dirt that every movement pained us exceedingly. Creeping to the edge of the bank, we waited until it was dark enough to continue our journey. While we were thus waiting two negroes returning from their work came along and, hailing them, we told them who we were, and asked them if there were any pickets about that neighborhood. They said they had come into the road just a short distance beyond and did not know. We asked if they had anything to eat; they said they had nothing but two raw sweet potatoes, which they tossed up to us, and on which we made our supper.

After dusk we resumed our way and had gone perhaps a mile, when, turning a sharp curve in the road to the right, we saw a picket fire and guards standing about it. Leaving the road we made a wide circuit and came up beyond them on to the road again. To our dismay we found it badly torn up, and our progress was necessarily slow and painful. We

limped along until we came to more open country, and striking a wagon road running along the railroad, took it, and found the walking much easier. Seeing a house a little distance off, we went to it, intending to go to the negro quarters and ask for some food, but some dogs rushed out barking loudly and drove us away. Going back to the road, we followed it until we came to a large open space bounded on the further side by a dark line of forest, and as we drew near it we heard the sound of approaching wheels. There was no place or time to hide, so plunging into a field at the side of the road we threw ourselves flat on the ground. Our situation was so critical, being so exposed, that we were on the point of making a run for it, when out of the woods came a cart followed by others and guarded by a few soldiers. It was too late now to attempt any change, and we lay with anxiously beating hearts watching them as they drew near. In the dim, uncertain light they probably mistook our silent figures for logs or stones, and fortunately for us passed on and were soon out of sight.

Resuming our weary journey we stumbled on until I became so exhausted that I could scarcely drag one tired foot after the other, and finally dropped to the ground and begged Bell to leave me to my fate and save himself. The brave fellow—suffering, too, as he was,—tried to cheer my fainting spirit, and left me to look for a place where we could hide and rest. He soon came hurrying back to tell me we were near the river, and cheered by the hope that our pain and weariness were nearly over, we struggled on and soon stood on the bank of what we supposed was the York river. We looked eagerly up and down the stream for the hoped for gun-boats, but none met our view, and, sick with “hope deferred,” we sat down upon the bank to consider what was best to do. The bridge had been burned, and only the

charred and swaying timbers remained. Cross it we must, so clinging to each other, crawling and swinging from one timber to another we at last reached the other side almost frozen by the icy water. We took off our wet and ragged clothes, wrung the water from them as well as we could, and putting them on again, ran up and down the shore trying to get some warmth into our shivering and benumbed bodies.

Some boats were drawn up on the bank, and concluding to go the rest of the way by water in hopes of meeting our gun-boats, we selected one that was tolerably fitted out with oars and paddles, pushed out into the water and started down the river. It was a fatal mistake, and, as we were told afterwards, had we adhered to our original plan and followed the railroad until we came to the York river, we would have found our gun-boats patrolling the river, and been saved days of privation and suffering and toilsome wandering ; but forgetting that the Pamunky river was between us and the York, we supposed this to be the York, and so made the mistake. The boat leaked badly, and we were compelled to stop frequently and bail it out with our caps. Our spirits rose as the miles slipped by, and we kept on until the growing light in the eastern sky warned us that it was time to stop and hide. We vainly sought a suitable place on the side opposite that we had left, and were finally obliged to return to that side where a fringe of bushes on the bank offered some slight protection. Drawing the boat up we concealed it as best we could beneath a fallen tree, and finding a slight depression in the bank partially hidden by the bushes, we gathered some weeds and brush together and crawling in covered ourselves, and huddling close to each other for warmth, endeavored to sleep. We were very hungry, and so stiff from cold and sitting so long in the wet boat that it was long before sleep came to our relief. We awoke late in

the afternoon, and seeing four persimmons on a little tree overhead eagerly siezed and ate them, but they only seemed to make the pangs of hunger the keener. Famishing and desperate for food, we determined to stop at the first house we came to, and if food was not given us, to take it at all hazard.

We could hear a distant sound of chopping in the woods and the barking of dogs, and knew that a habitation of some kind could not be far off; so, waiting until it was fully dark, we pushed our boat out into the stream and started again down the river. Keeping in the shadow of the bank we slowly pulled along, and had gone but a mile or two when we came to a house and two or three boats pulled up on the shore. Pulling in, I left Bell in the boat and went up to the house. Several dogs rushed out barking, and as I hesitated whether to go on or turn back the door opened and a man with a gun in his hand appeared and called the dogs off. He asked what I wanted, and I told him that we were two rebel soldiers who had escaped from Yorktown; that we were making our way to Richmond, and that we were starving for food. Coming out and looking cautiously around, he told me to go in and see the women folks, and as I entered the house he followed me in. I repeated my story to the two women sitting by the fire, who, saying that they could only give me some corn-bread and fish, set about getting the food for me. Still holding his gun and keeping his eyes upon me, the man sat down and began to tell me how they lived,—that they were peaceable folks, etc., “that a good many ‘Yanks’ as well as rebels often stopped at the house, but that if they did not interfere with him he wasn’t going to do anything to them.” He repeated this last expression so often and, as I thought, laying particular stress upon the “Yanks,” that I began to wonder whether there was any hidden significance

in his words. Just then the door opened and another man, also with a gun, came in, and presently the two went into an adjoining room where I could hear them talking in low tones. I felt sure they knew who and what we were, and was considering how I could escape from the house, when they returned and sat down just as the woman announced that supper was ready. Here was my chance, and getting up from my seat I said that I would go for my friend, intending not to return, but to get out of the neighborhood as soon as possible ; but one of the men bade me sit still and he would bring my friend, and going out soon returned with Bell. Nothing more was said while Bell and I ravenously devoured the corn dodgers and cold fish upon the table, and having finished our meal, and thanking them for their kindness, we rose to go, and to my surprise were allowed to depart. The two men, however, followed us down the path and sitting on an upturned boat watched us get into our boat and push off. I had hurriedly whispered my suspicions to Bell and received a significant nod in reply, so after getting into the boat we started *up stream* in hopes of deceiving our watchful friends as to our real movements, but we had hardly taken a couple of strokes when one of them said quietly, "Boys, that ain't the way you want to go ; you want to go *down* the river." Perceiving that further attempt at concealment was useless, we ran the boat ashore, and approaching the men I said, "I see that you know who we are. What are you going to do with us?" The quiet reply—"Help you, if you will let us ; we are Union men ourselves,"—struck us speechless with surprise and thankfulness ; but the sudden change from suspense and fear to hope and safety was more than we could stand, and we burst into tears. Taking us up in their arms like two children, they carried us back to the house, exclaiming as they entered, "There, mother ! didn't we tell you they were?"

In reply to our eager questions, our kind friends told us that the river we were following was not the York, but the Pamunky, and that some miles below it emptied into the York, where the rebels had a chain of picket boats, and it would be impossible for us to pass them. That our best plan was to abandon the river and take the river road, or, as they called it, the "telegraph road," until we came to Clark's Mill, where an old darky, known as "Blind Charlie," would tell us what to do. They specially warned us not to take any roads leading to the right, and to keep away from the houses, as the people in that neighborhood were bitter rebels and some of them very bad characters; that by keeping to the road we ought to reach the mill by daylight, and that Blind Charlie would take care of us. They had given us the last bit of meal in the house, so could give us no more food; but giving us an old quilt, took us out and putting us on the road bade us "good-bye" and left us.

The night was cloudy, and the road running through dense woods, the darkness was so intense we could not see our hands before our faces. We groped our way along, feeling for the smooth telegraph poles in the darkness to know if we were on the right way. After going on for a long time we became aware that we had not recently felt any telegraph poles, and the unwelcome conviction forced itself upon us that we had lost our way. The woods just before us seemed thinner, as if there might be an opening of some kind, and presently we came to the edge of a clearing with some houses dimly outlined in the distance. Everything was quiet as the grave, and a foreboding sense of danger fell upon us. Uncertain what to do, we at length concluded to risk a visit to the negro quarters and learn where we were. I was to watch the house while Bell went to the cabins, and dropping on his hands and knees he cautiously crept away in the direction of

the buildings. Presently a low murmur of voices reached me through the stillness of the night, and I knew he had found some one. Just at that moment I heard a sound like the distant click of a latch, and looking intently towards the large house I thought I could discern a square of deeper darkness than before, which strongly suggested an open door. Crouching down behind the fence, I hurriedly made my way in the direction in which Bell had disappeared, and found him talking to an old colored woman sitting up in her bed at her cabin window. I had no sooner told Bell my fear that some one had heard us, than the old woman exclaimed, fearfully, "Run, massa; for God's sake, run!—that's Mar'se Jenkins, who keeps the dogs to hunt you po' fellows. Run! Run!" At that moment a low whistle, followed by the deep bay of a hound, broke the stillness of the night. For an instant the blood seemed frozen in our veins, then, realizing the danger of the situation, we dashed blindly away in a wild run for life. Our weariness was forgotten in the terror of the moment, and with superhuman strength we tore along, for how long a time I cannot say,—it seemed an eternity. At length, panting and gasping for breath, we stumbled into the edge of a swamp filled with a dense growth of bushes. It proved to be our salvation, and pushing in and struggling through it until we were up to our necks in water, at last stopped, not daring to go any further in the darkness. The yelping and baying of the hounds came to us on the night air, and we knew they were after us. We could hear them at the edge of the swamp, and then, losing scent of us in the water, their voices grew fainter and more distant, and finally died away altogether. We then slowly and cautiously began to feel our way, hoping to find solid ground, but bewildered and lost to all sense of direction, we wandered around for a long time before reaching the edge of the swamp and finding



ourselves in a dense forest. Anxious to put as great a distance as possible between ourselves and our pursuers, we kept on until we reached a deep ravine, when, utterly exhausted, we lay down by a tree and fell into a heavy sleep.

We were awakened by the sound of some one singing, and springing to our feet found the day just breaking. We were in a deep hollow close by a little spring-house, and just above the edge of the ravine a chimney and part of the roof of a house were visible. A young colored girl with a bucket was coming down the path to the spring, and it was her singing which had roused us. Waiting till she drew near, we stepped from behind the tree to ask her where we were. Terrified at our sudden and most forlorn appearance, she dropped her bucket and ran screaming towards the house. Knowing that her screams would alarm the people in the house, we clambered up the bank, and looking back, saw *the very house we had fled from during the night*. Wild with dismay, we dashed back into the woods, and ran we knew not in what direction, when we suddenly came out upon the road we had lost in the darkness. In spite of the daylight we recklessly kept on, impelled by the fear of pursuit, hoping that every turn in the road might reveal the mill and Blind Charlie's cabin.

Overtaking an old negro driving a cart, we asked him the distance to the mill. "Just a little further," was the reply; and telling him to drive on ahead and if he saw any one coming to begin singing, we followed on behind the cart.

We had gone but a little way when a cavalryman made his appearance around a bend in the road about a quarter of a mile ahead, and not waiting to hear the old darky sing, we ran into the woods and crouched under a pile of brush. The rider did not see us and galloped past. We crept from our hiding-place and plunged deeper into the woods, and heap-

ing the dead leaves up between two logs, lay down, and covering ourselves with the leaves, tried vainly to escape from hunger and cold in the blessed oblivion of sleep. The day seemed of interminable length, and when we rose at dusk to continue our journey our tattered clothes were frozen almost stiff.

Creeping to the edge of the wood near the road, we waited until it was dark enough to proceed in safety. As we waited a cart came along from the direction in which we wished to go, and we hailed the negro driver and asked him how far it was to the mill. He said "only a mile"; and upon our asking for something to eat, gave us two ears of corn which we eagerly devoured as we started on the road towards the mill. Our limbs were so stiff with cold, and our feet so bruised and swollen, that our progress was very slow and very painful. The "mile" seemed endless, and it was after long and weary walking and anxious watching, that we saw the dark form of the old mill loom up, and heard the sound of water falling over the dam.

Cautiously approaching, we looked for Blind Charlie's cabin. Not a house was to be seen but the mill and its outlying buildings. These we carefully examined but found no signs of life. Disappointed and discouraged, we were about moving on, when my eye caught a faint gleam of light, like the sudden flicker of a fire, across the road, and crossing over we saw a little log cabin just within the trees and partly hidden by them. We crept up to it and saw through the crack under the door the glimmer of a fire, and heard the heavy breathing of some one asleep. We knocked gently once—twice, before a voice which we at once recognized as a negro's, said: "Who's there?" I replied: "Two Union soldiers that have escaped from Richmond, and are starving for something to eat; are you 'Blind Charlie?'" A woman's

voice exclaimed: "Hurry up, ole man, and let 'em in." A quick shuffling of feet was heard within the cabin and the door was opened, disclosing an old grey-headed darky, in his night-shirt, bowing as profoundly as if in the presence of the adored "Mar'se Lincoln" himself, and saying, "Come in, Massa; come in," drew us in and shut and fastened the door. We found ourselves in the presence of two old negroes — one a bed-ridden old woman, and the other "Blind Charlie," who stood before us still bowing and thanking "de Good Lord" that He had brought us to them. He piled wood on the fire, and made us sit down and warm our frozen limbs, while he bustled around, eagerly preparing food for us. Brushing back the ashes he laid the cakes of meal on the hot stone, replacing the hot ashes over them. While waiting for them to bake we told him our story and how we had been directed to him, he in return giving us information that would be of use to us in making our way to the Union lines.

At length the cakes were done, and carefully brushing off the ashes, he gave them to us. It was the sweetest food that has ever passed my lips, and we ravenously devoured one "dodger" after another, until the hospitable old negro refused, for our own sakes, to give us any more. So we sat there before the fire, drying our wet rags, and warming ourselves, with such a blessed sense of comfort and shelter, that it made the humble cabin seem like Heaven.

At length, reluctantly forcing ourselves to move, we made ready to start again on our perilous way. Old Charlie had told us the road to take, and giving us two more cakes and a dried fish and a box of matches, the old folks prayed "de Good Lord" to bless and keep us, and thanking our kind black friends, we once more started on our journey.

Refreshed by the rest and warmth, and strengthened by the nourishing food, we pushed on through the rest of the night

without further adventures, and as the dawn began to break approached a small village. The road branched here to the right and left, and as our friends had told us to keep to the left we were about to take the road leading in that direction, when we perceived some distance down it the flickering of a picket-fire at the side of the road. Stealing quietly off to the right we went around the village and reached a wooded hill beyond it, and as it was now getting too light to go farther in safety, we concealed ourselves in a ditch running diagonally up the side of the hill, and slept soundly until about the middle of the afternoon.

When we woke we peered cautiously over the edge of our hiding-place, and could plainly see the village we had passed at dawn that morning, and occasionally a rebel horseman appeared in the street. The hill shut off our view to the right, so that we could not see where the picket post was stationed, but when it was almost dusk I crept to the top of the hill to reconnoitre, and see "how the land lay." From there I could see the fire of the picket post at the edge of the village just where the road entered it, and as I looked, two cavalry men rode off, presumably to relieve the outpost, which I felt sure must be concealed in a group of trees some distance beyond.

A short distance back from the brow of the hill, and where the land was cleared, was a large white house, with stables and negro quarters near it. I was just on the point of returning to my comrade when a negro boy on a mule and driving a cow approached the spot where I was. Dropping behind the fence and waiting until he came up, I told him who I was and asked how we could get around the pickets, and how far it was to Williamsburg. He told me that our men were in Williamsburg, and that "it was a right smart way down the road"; and also told me how to go to avoid the pickets.

While we were talking I heard some one exclaim : “ Who are you talking to there ? ” I looked up and saw a man coming towards us, and telling him not to betray me, I dropped down behind the fence, and the boy began to belabor the mule. I heard him say : “ I’m talkin’ to dis mule, Mar’s e— de ole fool won’t go. ” And riding on, they went to the house.

When I got back to the spot where I had left Bell, to my surprise and dismay he was gone, and as I looked anxiously about fearing that he had been discovered and captured, I saw a head stealthily appear from behind a tree and as rapidly disappear. With an instinct of self-preservation, I also sprang behind a tree and peered cautiously out only to see the same head jerked out of sight again ; this was repeated two or three times, when it occurred to me that it might be Bell himself, and that he had not recognized me, and stepping out from behind my tree, I said “ Bell, is that you ? ” and to my great relief Bell stepped from behind the other, and in spite of our wretchedness we laughed heartily over our mutual mistake. I think that was the only gleam of (rather grim) humor that lit up for a single moment the dreary time of all our wanderings.

We again started on our weary way ; we had long ago eaten the food kind old Charlie had given us, and the pangs of hunger made themselves painfully felt. Following the directions given by the negro boy, we kept in the woods until we reached an old deserted house, and then crossing a field, entered a lane that led to the road again beyond the pickets.

Listening intently to every sound and closely scanning every suspicious looking object, we slowly moved along until we came to a large building, apparently deserted, which we afterwards found was called “ Burnt Ordinary, ” and being very tired, we crept under it and tried to sleep. But a strange sense of danger took possession of me,—it seemed to

me I could feel it in the air ; and finding Bell of the same mind, we crept out and struggled on again until day began to break when we entered the woods and coming to a convenient hollow, lay down and tried to forget our misery in sleep. We were so hungry and cold, and so exhausted by excitement and fatigue, that when sleep did come it was so heavy that we did not wake until late in the night.\*

We had gone but a few miles on our way when day broke, but feeling confident that we could not be far from Williamsburg, and desperate with hunger, we kept on, within the edge of woods, as much as possible, and passing old picket posts, until suddenly we came upon the scene of a cavalry skirmish, which, judging from the condition of the dead horses, must have occurred only a few days before. The country was becoming more open, and some little distance ahead, and to the right of the road, we could see an orchard, and the roofs of some houses among the trees. Thinking we might find some apples or get some food at the houses, we went into the orchard and slowly drew near a house which looked deserted, but as we reached the front of it we saw a young fellow dressed in butternut clothes, standing in the door. Starting slightly at sight of us, he asked rather gruffly, what we wanted. We said, "something to eat." He replied that he had nothing, but I was sure that I smelt apples, and asked if he hadn't some. He said "Yes, a few," and turned into the house, into which we followed him.

The room we entered was bare of everything save an old box in one corner, and opening it he showed a few crabbed apples. While we were eating them he asked where we were going. We told him "to Williamsburg"; and upon his

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\* My presentiment was providential, as we learned afterward that this old house was the headquarters of rebel bushwhackers, who infested that neighborhood.

saying, "Why, the 'Yanks' are there," said that we knew it, and that we were "Yanks" ourselves. The man's manner changed instantly, and saying, "why didn't you tell me that before?" said that he had some bread up stairs, and turned to leave the room. As he turned I saw (what I failed to notice before) that he had spurs on his shoes, and hearing sounds overheard as if persons were moving cautiously about, I felt that we had stumbled into a trap, and giving Bell a warning glance, we both sprang to the door. The man ran up the stairs, crying "Yanks! Hurry down." We dashed for the road, and had run but a short distance when a shot from a revolver whistled after us, and looking back we saw three or four men standing by the door firing at us with their pistols, and as we looked, they ran around the corner of the house towards the stables.

Thinking they had gone for their horses, we dashed desperately on in a wild race for life, looking back from time to time for our pursuers. At last, after running I know not how far, nature could endure no more, and gasping for breath we sank exhausted to the ground, hopeless and despairing.

How long we lay there I do not know, but finally, hearing no sounds of pursuit, and hope that "springs eternal" rising once more in our breasts, we staggered up and on, clinging to each other for support, and anxiously looking before and behind us for the first sign of friend or foe.

Our condition was pitiable in the extreme. With clothes in tatters and covered with dirt, with faces wasted and hollow-eyed with starvation, we looked more like scarecrows than human beings.

Suddenly the road turned to the left and leaving the woods, crossed the open country, and there before us, lay Williamsburg—the goal of our hope, and from the top of a tall

church spire, beautiful as “God’s bow of promise,” floated the glorious folds of the “Stars and Stripes.”

Ahead of us, under some trees by the roadside, we could see the blue uniforms of our pickets. Cold, hunger and want, weariness — everything, was forgotten in the joy of the moment, and crying and feebly shouting, waving our arms and caps, we ran towards them, shouting, as we heard the command to “Halt,” followed by arms drawn up to fire, “Don’t shoot; we are Union soldiers.” A few moments more and we were welcomed back by loyal hearts, and tenderly cared for by the loyal hands of the One Hundred and Thirty-ninth New York, and at last were safe again under the folds of the dear old flag.





REMINISCENCES  
OF AN  
ARTILLERY OFFICER.

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A PAPER  
READ BEFORE THE  
MICHIGAN COMMANDERY  
OF THE  
MILITARY ORDER OF THE LOYAL LEGION OF THE U. S.

BY  
A. F. R. ARNDT,  
MAJOR FIRST MICHIGAN LIGHT ARTILLERY.

January 2nd, 1890.

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## Reminiscences of an Artillery Officer.

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All branches of our great army, except the artillery, have been heard from. The infantry has come in from the pickets and skirmishes, the cavalry from their outposts and charges; the engineer corps, ever ready to destroy and rebuild, has given us its report — yes, even the navy, slow but sure, has promised to be ready in the near future; and the artillery, the last but not least in time of war, I have the honor to bring before you this evening for inspection.

Michigan sent to the field one regiment and two independent batteries (fourteen batteries in all.) All of these batteries have seen more or less active service. Many of them became quite famous, and will ever be pleasantly remembered by the officers and men to whose command they were assigned to duty. I will not mention any particular battery, as the records show that none deserted their post nor disgraced the State. In this country, and particularly in the beginning of the war, batteries often worked under difficulties and at great disadvantage. They were attached temporarily to different commands, and often looked upon as a fifth wheel to a wagon, in fact only appreciated in time of immediate or prospective need. Hence it was a difficult task for the battery commander to keep his battery in first-class condition for active service. During the latter part of the war, however, batteries of each army corps were brigaded, and in command

of the chief of artillery, whose duty it was to see that they were kept in a serviceable condition. All the batteries being under his immediate command, if a battery or batteries were needed, it was for the brigade commander to select such a battery or batteries as he considered best adapted to the required service. For long range and accurate firing, the 10 pd. Roddman or 10 pd. Parrott gun is by far more desirable than the smooth bore 12 pd. Napoleon, and for short range and effective rapid firing, the Napoleon or Howitzer is by all means the gun. I have heard and read opinions of army officers, stating that the artillery during the late war was overrated, and not of as much importance in the field as was generally considered. This appears to me an error, as there are numerous well-known instances where artillery saved the day and gave us victory. History also cites numerous occasions in the Napoleonic and late Franco-Prussian war, where the artillery played a most important part. An artillery officer should, above all, remain cool and thoughtful during an engagement. A colonel of a regiment of cavalry or infantry, if he finds himself in close quarters, may withdraw his men, even if panic-stricken and confused, but a battery commander can only save his battery and men, if cool and collected, by giving the proper command, and each cannoneer obeying promptly and correctly.

The first engagement in which our battery participated was Shiloh, April 6th, 1862, where I was duly initiated into the realities of warfare. I was ordered with my section to the open field near the Shiloh church. Hardly had we come into action when the rebels advanced in line of battle, determined to capture our battery. I gave the command "Cannister—Double Charge." When they came within about 200 yards I gave the order "Low Range—Ready—Fire." This command was immediately repeated. By this time the advancing column discovered that "double-charge cannister" at

close range was altogether too unhealthy, and made a precipitate retreat. Had my guns been Roddman or Parrot, the rebels would have, in all probability, succeeded in persuading me to move my battery over to their forces. Each cannister holds 75 balls, double charge 150, two guns 300 balls; this scattered in the ranks of advancing troops is apt to hurt a few, and scare the rest. Besides a Howitzer or Napoleon gun is loaded more rapidly than a rifle gun.

Our battery rendered such excellent and efficient service during the rest of the day, that the rebels insisted on transferring it to their side. Late in the afternoon of that day, General Bragg, in person, accompanied by his staff and a cavalry escort, called upon me with the demand that this change be made. Although we preferred remaining with Uncle Sam's boys, yet his request was so urgent and pressing that I was unable to decline. My decision to yield to his solicitation was indicated by the command "Prepare to Mount—Mount—Forward March." Escorted by him, his staff, and a detachment of cavalry, we were taken to the rebel rear and turned over to Col. John C. Morgan, who with his command very kindly acted as our escort to Montray.

For eight months I was a guest of the Southern Confederacy. As such I was given a number of free excursions through that section, and entertained at various hotels of world-wide repute, such as Macon, Madison, Montgomery and Libby. Although during this time I was not on duty, yet I felt extremely pleased, joyful and happy when the time came to bid farewell to my Southern hosts and return home. Eight months of prison life! What that means only those can appreciate who have been there themselves.

After allowing us to spend a month or two at home with our friends, the Government, considering our services necessary in the field, ordered me with the battery to the front. We proceeded to Corinth, Miss., Pulaski, Tenn., La Grange,

Tenn., Huntsville, Ala., Chattanooga, Tenn., Snake Creek Gap, Dalton, Resaca, Rome Cross Roads, and Kingston, Ga. Gen. Jeff C. Davis with the Fourteenth Corps, having taken Rome, Ga., a brigade and my battery were detached to occupy and hold the place, while the army moved on Atlanta. There being no engineer officer with our command, it devolved upon me to build the many fortifications protecting the city. Of the manner in which this task was executed I shall express no opinion, but simply say, that the four forts and breast-works were constructed under my supervision.

During our occupation of this place General Wade Hampton paid us a hurried, although not altogether friendly visit. Our greeting was so very enthusiastic and so excessively warm that he concluded not to tarry, and left unceremoniously.

As one branch of the army has not, and perhaps will not, be heard from, in connection with this, I beg to call attention to the Signal Corps, which undoubtedly did some excellent service. I will mention here an instance where I found even an excuse of a Signal Corps a great benefit and of much importance. Our fortification around Rome being considerably scattered, some of them a mile and more from the city, and fearing that in case of an unexpected attack the communication between the forts and my headquarters might be cut off, I organized a Signal Corps of my own, and appointed Lieutenant Ernst, one of my officers, Signal officer and instructor. General Vanderver had given orders that all convalescents in the hospital should at once be placed in the rifle pits. The surgeon in charge argued that unless the men were permitted to remain in hospital they would be worn out and unfit for duty when needed. Feeling satisfied that such would be the case, I endeavored to find General Vanderver to ask permission to dismiss the men until such time as they might be needed. The General, however, could not be found.

I signaled from my headquarters to the Fort on Cemetery Hill across the Etuwah river (from the direction whence Hampton was expected) to find out if the General had passed the bridge across the Etuwah. In a few minutes the reply came that he had. I then sent an officer with the request of the surgeon to the General; in less than ten minutes I was directed by signal from the Fort to dismiss the men until further orders. Without this signal, the sick men would have been obliged to remain in the rifle pits, perhaps for many hours. Hampton's forces were repulsed before reaching the city, hence their services were not needed.

On the 14th of October, 1864, we were ordered to Cave Spring, Ga., via Calhoun, Resaca, Snake Creek Gap, &c. (having an engagement with the enemy at Turkey Creek Oct. 26th.) Leaving Cave Spring on the first of November for Smyrna, Ga., whence we started on the ever famous march to the sea. On this march we experienced the most severe loss of men and horses in one engagement, lasting only about one half day.

General Wheeler with his cavalry was annoying the rear and flank of our corps, which more or less disturbed our marching column. General Osterhouse ordered General Wolcott, with his brigade and one section of my battery, to make a stand at Griswoldville, to check Wheeler's move (had this been at the beginning of the war I am sure that our entire command there would have been easily captured), but immediately after having taken our position the infantry at once commenced to build temporary works, and not any too soon were they finished. Our infantry laid behind their works to the right of the road leading to Griswoldville facing an open field. My two pieces were in the road to their left. Expecting that if they would make an attack on us at all that they would come across this open field, I told General Wolcott that my battery would be of more service if I could



place one piece in the center of the infantry, which would enable me, in case they should charge across the field, to give them a cross fire. The General considered my proposition advisable and ordered the infantry to clear a road, so as to enable the piece to come into position, but before they could accomplish this, General Wolcott sent for me, calling my attention to the fact that the enemy were forming in the edge of the woods, to the right of a log house, and requested me to send a few shells in their ranks. This we did, and succeeded in driving them from their position. Seeing now that they were going to attack us across the field, I made haste to get my pieces into their places. Before this was fully done, and while I was crossing the road, I noticed a rebel battery advancing upon the field. I turned, intending to give orders to prevent the battery coming into position. An infantry officer stopped me, calling my attention to the approaching battery. I told him that I had noticed it, but before I could say another word, a rebel soldier leveled his gun at us, and the first thing I knew after that, was finding myself lying behind a stump, with one of my men leaning over me unbuttoning my clothes. Recognizing him as the gunner of one of the pieces, I requested him to return at once to his gun. Seeing the bullet had passed through my overcoat, blouse and vest, I could not think otherwise than that the ball had passed straight through my body, which apparently indicated the summons for me to appear for muster upon the other shore. Being resigned to my fate, I dropped back in my lying position, awaiting the end. In the meantime the rebel battery had taken their position on the field, and were shelling our forces, the shells exploding in all directions around me. At the same time their infantry came charging and re-charging across the the field, determined to capture our commands, which they would have done if it had not been for one regiment of infantry behind the works with

their 16-shooters, and the pluck and determination of General Wolcott to hold his ground. Here it was where my battery or the section which was engaged, suffered such a severe loss — two men lost each a leg, one man an arm, and several others were slightly wounded, besides we lost six horses, so that the men were obliged to draw the guns from the field by prolong. Expecting every minute that our men would be driven in, and that the rebels in driving them back would either trample over me or finish me with their bayonets, and imagining that I was swimming in my own blood, feeling in fact the blood oozing from each finger and toe, I managed to raise up and examine the fearful hole through my body. Pulling my shirt apart, I found a red spot to the left of my stomach, but could not find either hole or blood. I did not remain long behind that stump. The ball having struck my pipe in my overcoat pocket, glanced off and went through my blouse in a downward direction, then through my vest and under my vest struck the saber belt plate, which saved my life. I am positive that if I had not examined my supposed severe wound, I would have died right there, as I felt myself gradually sinking.

The march to the sea, with its engagements, the taking of Fort McAllister, and other incidents of interest, have been so fully recited by some of our most prominent officers of that army, that I will only, before closing my paper, mention a few engagements (showing the importance for artillery to be cool under fire), and close with our entry into Savannah; also cite an interview with a prominent Southern gentleman at Savannah.

On the march from Atlanta to Savannah, the Confederate army were firing from behind strong earthworks. I was ordered to take my battery upon a knoll, and assault fire upon their works. Before we were in position they opened quite a strong fire, throwing camp kettles (twenty pounders)

all around us. Their exploding shells cutting the branches off the trees to our right and left, it was indeed a most dangerous place, and took strong nerve to stand erect to load and sight the guns. All men save one behaved splendidly, but this one man, although one of my best and most trustworthy, became so nervous and excited, that it was absolutely impossible for the gunner to sight his gun (he was No. 5 with trail hand spike). I told him that he must coolly attend to his post, or I would have him tied to the tree, which had been partially cut down by pieces of exploding shells in the rear of the battery. Knowing the consequences he rallied, and endeavored to do his best. I felt indeed sorry for this man. Never before had he broken down nor seemingly feared danger more than the rest of the men. After the engagement I sent for him. Thinking perhaps that I intended to scold him for his action, he apologized, saying that he felt ashamed of his conduct, but that he lost all control of himself. I told him that I did not desire any apology, as I had always known him to be a brave and faithful soldier, and that I felt sorry for him at the time, and would have much preferred sending him to the rear, than to talk to him the way I did, but that he could easily see it was the only thing that I could do, under the circumstances, for had I sent him to the rear, every one of my men might have left their post, as all were exposed as much as he was, and feared death as much as he did. I found during the four years of my army life, that the most reckless and daring soldier, is not always the bravest and most trustworthy.

Before Savannah, the rebels were shelling General Sherman's headquarters, several shells striking near the General, when all at once one exploded uncomfortably close to the camp chair upon which he was sitting. This was more than the General could endure. Saying that the firing was too careless and might hurt somebody, he requested General

Osterhouse to order one of his batteries upon the open field, and silence the d— rebel battery. General Osterhouse sent for me, and upon reporting, was instructed to take my battery at once to the said field, and silence the rebel guns. Considering it impossible to get my battery into action, I told the General that I would have thanked him had he selected some other battery. General Osterhouse replied, "General Sherman requested me to order my best battery, and I have selected you." Thanking him for the honor, I assured him that I was not at all jealous, and would gladly see the honor bestowed upon any other battery commander, but he advised me that it was my battery he wanted. Reluctantly I obeyed; had my men fall in; told them the order I had received; at the same time impressing upon them that this order meant either victory or death; also the importance of each man being promptly at his post, so that the battery without delay might come into action immediately upon entering the field. We went in full trot to the front, and as soon as we reached the field, gave the command, "In battery trot—March." Hardly had we unlimbered, when they opened fire; but they had not long to wait before receiving response, and to my great surprise and delight our battery silenced their guns. As they had the advantage over us in every particular, we being in the open field, they under the cover of the woods, we without the slightest idea of the distance between us, they knowing the exact distance, I always looked upon our success then, and still do, as if the hand of Providence guided our shots, or to say the least, it was more blind luck than science. However, it added a big feather to my cap, which in reality belonged to my brave and faithful men. To-night, it is hardly necessary to assure you that I enjoy the atmosphere of my present surroundings decidedly better. Though Generals Sherman and Osterhouse perhaps credited me with more military ability and skill than you

may be willing to allow, yet it is a matter of no moment, as I am less ambitious now than formerly, and seek safe quarters to-day more than honors, which may cost life or limb.

On the evening of the 22d of December I received orders to open fire on the enemy's works early the next morning. Accordingly everything was in readiness, though before we did so one of my officers, Lieut. Ernst, called my attention to the fact that the rebel works had been deserted during the night. Further investigation proved such to be the fact. Soon orders were received from headquarters not to commence firing. Going to headquarters I found that General Osterhouse was preparing to enter Savannah with his staff and a cavalry escort, which I joined and without meeting obstructions or interference we marched into Savannah, while the Confederate troops evacuated the city in great haste. I took my headquarters on the corner of Taylor and Aberdeen streets. The second house from my headquarters was occupied by Mr. Couversie, a thorough gentleman, English by birth. The negroes, having entered the rear of their premises, helped themselves to whatever they could lay their hands on. Miss Ella Couversie, his daughter, a very beautiful and accomplished young lady, requested me to enter their house. Complying with her request, she took me to the back door, pointed to the negroes, and asked me if it was the desire of our Government and the army, that they should do so. I assured her that it was not, ordered them to put everything back where they found them, and told them they would be arrested and severely punished if found robbing and pilfering citizens. The young lady then asked me if I would please step into the house, as she desired to introduce me to her parents. Of course I accepted the invitation. Having had a friendly chat with her father he asked me if I ever indulged. I told him that I knew the time when I did, but that it had been so long, since, that I could hardly remember

the taste. He said that good liquor was indeed scarce even with them, but that he had a little left, which he only divided with his most intimate friends, and although he did not claim friendship, yet he considered me a gentleman, and would be pleased to divide with me, and requested me to follow him to his library. After having taken a smile, he confidently asked me what my opinion was about this war ; if I thought it was right of our Government to send an army to destroy and ruin their country, and kill their best sons. I told him that I was at a loss to understand him ; only a few moments ago he assured me that he considered me a gentleman. If such was the case, how could he ask such a question. My office and rank should be sufficient to answer that, for if I considered it wrong to come with an army to destroy their country, as he said, and still participated in the destruction, I could not possibly be a gentleman. In my opinion it was not a question if the South was right or wrong, the question was, if we could suffer to have this great country broken up, or if it was the duty of every loyal citizen to prevent this. The North surely did not commence this war. The South fired the first shot, determined to destroy this country. Our Government had endeavored to prevent this calamity, and appointed a peace conference desiring an amicable settlement, which they or their leaders absolutely refused to confer with, and to our great surprise insisted upon this unnatural war. Under these circumstances we were compelled to meet them. Personally, I assured him I had no ill feeling towards him, or any Southern man. He then assured me that his greatest and most sincere desire was peace—peace by all means. He said, “I am convinced we have been badly deceived by our leaders, our press, and army officers. Only last night I asked General Beauregard, whom I considered a personal friend, ‘General, how do we stand, and what are our prospects?’ and he replied, ‘Sherman with his army starved and demor-

alized lay in front of Savannah, Hood with his army is in their rear; it is only a matter of time when we will capture them all.' During the night I heard considerable moving and stirring about upon our streets, which satisfied me that our army was getting ready to make the attack upon your forces. In the morning when I got up and stepped to my window, I could hardly believe my eyes. In places where I had seen our stars and bars in the evening, I saw the stars and stripes floating, and where I saw our boys in gray a few hours ago, I saw your boys in blue. I am fully convinced now that if your army was able to march right through the very heart of our Confederacy without meeting any resistance, that our struggle is in vain, and we sacrifice our best blood for naught. Hence I wish this war to close. And I might say right here, that I and many of our best men of this State bitterly opposed war, and instructed our delegates to the Tennessee convention to vote against secession. Not at all because I loved the North so much, nor that I felt we could not live without you, but only because I knew that our struggles would be useless. However, our delegates were overpowered or misled and voted for secession, and when my State seceded, where my family, my relatives, my friends and my financial interests were, I had to go with my State. If I should tell you that I was pleased to see your army here, which means destruction to ours, and success to yours, I would lie, and God forbid I never knowingly told a falsehood. But I say this, and you can take my word for it, that I shall become a law-abiding citizen; humiliating as it may be, I will submit to those in authority."

He then said, "By the way what do you consider my duty under the following circumstances: I am the treasurer of the Georgia Central R. R., and have a large amount of money in my possession belonging to the Company. If your men should demand for me to turn this sum over to them, what

should I do?" I told him, that if his little son had something which he had given in his care, and a strong man should come and insist upon his turning it over to him, would he not advise him rather to give it up at once, than to have the strong man take it by force and abuse him for refusing to do so? And that his case was the very same. If an officer with authority comes and requests you to hand the funds over to him, I would advise you to do so at once, and ask him to give you a proper receipt for the same, to put you right with your Company. He thanked me and said that he should do so.

From Savannah I was ordered North to attend to some duty there connected with the army, and Lieut. Ernst took command of the battery. Returning to the field I was ordered on General John A. Logan's staff, and later took command of the artillery brigade of the Fifteenth. A. C. General W. B. Hazen commanding the Corps.





# RECOLLECTIONS

—OF—

## Stone's River.

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A PAPER

PREPARED AND READ BEFORE THE

MICHIGAN COMMANDERY

OF THE

Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the U. S.

BY

JOHN G. PARKHURST,

Col. 9th Reg't Mich. Inf'y; Br't Brig.-Gen'l U. S. V.,

*February 6th, 1890.*

DETROIT, MICH.:

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## Recollections of Stone's River.

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Recognizing the orders of this Commandery as obligatory upon all companions, and having some time ago been ordered to write a paper, and upon a named subject, I proceed to give my "recollections of the Battle of Stone's River."

As the writer had been boarding at the expense of Jefferson Davis' Government for some months previous to the Stone's River campaign, he will not be able to give many of the particulars of the preliminary arrangements for the battle.

Upon rejoining his regiment, the Ninth Michigan Infantry, at Nashville, on the 24th day of December, 1862, the regiment was assigned to General George H. Thomas as the provost guard of the center of the Army of the Cumberland.

The next morning he found his Christmas present in the form of an order placing him in command of the provost guard of the Fourteenth Army Corps, with instructions to report to General Thomas, and to advance to the front on the following morning with the center of the army.

The Army of the Cumberland had recently been placed under the command of General W. S. Rosecrans, and had been reorganized with a view to an advance toward that stronghold,—Chattanooga.

The right wing of the army was placed under the command of General A. McD. McCook, and was composed of the divisions of General P. H. Sheridan, General Jeff. C. Davis, and General R. W. Johnson.

The center of the army was placed under the command of General George H. Thomas, and was composed of the divisions of General Rousseau, General J. S. Negley, and General S. S. Fry.

The left wing of the army was placed under the command of General Thomas L. Crittenden, and was composed of the divisions of General H. P. Van Cleve, General T. J. Wood, and General John M. Palmer.

The cavalry was under the command of General D. S. Stanley.

The aggregate strength of General Rosecrans' army was not far from 48,000 men.

It was known to General Rosecrans that the rebel army under General Bragg was intrenched in the vicinity of Murfreesboro, thirty miles southeast of Nashville, and that Bragg had established winter quarters at that point with a force of about 45,000 men.

At 6 o'clock on the morning of December 26th, 1862, the army of General Rosecrans moved out of camp at Nashville, supplied with ammunition and ten days' rations, and advanced upon the position of the enemy.

This advance was made upon the Franklin, Nolensville, Wilson, Edmonson, Murfreesboro and Jefferson Pikes.

An evidence of the watchfulness of General Bragg is found in the fact that, in no direction had the army of Rosecrans moved two miles before it met with a stubborn resistance from the enemy; but the army of Rosecrans was so full of vigor and fight that, although the rain poured down in torrents, no complaints were heard, and the enemy was pushed back upon all the pikes.

On the 27th the right wing, under McCook, met with a strong resistance at Nolensville and at Triune, General Hardee having his corps in line of battle at the first named point.

The left wing also met with a strong resistance at Lavergne and at Stewart's Creek. The center threatening Hardee on our right, and sending troops in either direction, as they were required, to force the enemy back.

Thus the Army of the Cumberland pushed its way against and over the enemy for nearly thirty miles, and until he was driven into his line of intrenchments before Murfreesboro.

General Rosecrans having assumed an offensive position, Bragg looked for an attack upon his lines on the morning of the 30th, and made several demonstrations during the day to test the position and strength of the Union lines.

General Rosecrans divided his time during the 30th between developing the position of Bragg's troops and establishing his own line of battle. This he did by placing Wood's division on the left of his line, Wood's left resting on Stone's River, and his right on the Nashville Pike; Palmer's division, on Wood's right; Negley's division, on Palmer's right; Sheridan's division, on Negley's right; Davis' division, on Sheridan's right; and the brigades of Generals Willick and Kirk on the right and rear of Davis, with Baldwin's brigade held in reserve in rear of the right.

General Van Cleve was held in reserve on the west bank of the river in rear of the left.

General Rousseau was held in reserve in rear of the center.

The trend of this line was in a northwest and southeast direction, and conformed to the rebel line of battle.

Bragg's left wing was on the west side of Stone's River, and was commanded by General Polk, and consisted of the divisions of General Withers and General B. F. Cheatham.

Bragg's right wing was on the east side of the river, and consisted of the divisions of General John C. Breckenridge and General Pat Cleburn, and was commanded by William J. Hardee.

McCown's division was held in reserve in rear of the rebel center.

And Jackson's troops were held in reserve in rear of the rebel right.

Wheeler's rebel cavalry was operating on the right, and Wharton's rebel cavalry was held on the rebel left.

This was substantially the position of the enemy when General Rosecrans established his own lines and issued his order of battle, which contemplated engaging the enemy's left and holding it in position, while with his own left and center he would attack the enemy's right flank and center and drive him into the woods west of Murfreesboro, while he would move into the town and hold it.

On the morning of the 31st, General Rosecrans issued an address to the soldiers of the Army of the Cumberland, which was distributed to the troops, in which he said:

“Soldiers, the eyes of the whole nation are upon you, the very fate of the nation may be said to hang on this day's battle. Be true, then, to yourselves, true to your own manly character and soldierly reputation, true to the love of your dear ones at home, whose prayers ascend to God this day for your success. Be cool, do not throw away your fire, close steadily in upon your enemy, and when you get within charging distance, rush upon him with the bayonet.”

The Ninth Michigan Infantry, the provost guard, was in position at General Thomas' headquarters in rear of the centre, and the writer was occupied in reading this stirring appeal to the valor and patriotism of the soldiers of the Army of the Cumberland, and in listening to the raging battle, when his attention was directed to the approach of a lot of teamsters, riding their harnessed mules on a keen run to the rear, and in advance of the running mules was one particular negro, who, though very black, had an absolute pallor upon his countenance, and about four inches of tongue

protruding from his mouth, his eyes bulging nearly out of his head. If any companion has ever seen an intensely tired and frightened darkey he can draw the picture for himself. Following this advance of alarmist, crying "all is lost," came first, cavalrymen, then teams cut loose from wagons, with each mule bearing from two to three riders, then came panic-stricken infantrymen.

It being a part of the writer's duty to prevent straggling, and to keep men with their respective commands, he sent out details to pick up these terrified troops; but the picking up soon became pretty lively business, and he found it necessary to place the Ninth Michigan in line of battle across the Nashville Pike, extending its flanks to the utmost limit, and he was none too soon in this movement. Cavalry, artillery, infantry, suttlers and camp followers came rushing with the force of a cyclone, and the Ninth Michigan was ordered to fix bayonets and charge upon this panic-stricken mass of men.

The charge was made, and the result was gratifying, the stampede was checked and the fleeing mass of troops were halted, put in line facing the enemy, until a force of some thousands of infantry, eight pieces of artillery and several hundred cavalry were placed in a favorable position, from which this recently terrified force several times repulsed the charges of the pursuing enemy, and finally, after General Walker, with his brigade, including the Fourth Michigan Artillery, came forward from Stewart's Creek, we were enabled to drive the enemy back to his lines, and to some extent relieve the right of Rosecrans' Army, after which, the troops which had been driven from McCook's right, were enabled to rejoin their command, and subsequently, and before the battle ended, exhibited as much bravery, heroism and fighting qualities as the best American soldiers.



As indicated, General Rosecrans' intention was to attack and turn the rebel right.

General Bragg, somehow, seemed to have about the same idea of the direction of the impending battle that Rosecrans had, except that Bragg aimed to rush upon the Federal right flank and rear, and get on the Union line of communication with Nashville.

With this object in view Bragg, during the night of the 30th, withdrew Cleburn's division from his right and placed it upon the left of Cheatham, and withdrew McCown's division from the reserve and placed it on the left of Cleburn, and beyond McCown placed his cavalry under command of General Wharton.

Bragg also called Hardee from his right wing, and placed him in command of these troops on the left of Polk, with instructions to attack the Federal line on the right flank and rear at dawn of the 31st.

This new position of Bragg's troops extended his left at least a mile beyond the Federal right, leaving his own right to be protected and held by Breckenridge division, supported by Adams.

As early as 6 o'clock on the morning of the 31st Wharton's cavalry had, without being discovered, passed around Rosecrans' right, and reached the Wilkinson Pike nearly two miles in rear of the lines of battle as had been established by Rosecrans and Bragg.

From this position the enemy made a desperate charge, with a force of over 2,000 cavalry, upon the unprepared brigades of Generals Kirk and Willick.

This bold charge of the enemy threw Kirk's and Willick's brigades into disorder and confusion.

Willick was so far in rear of his command when this dash of the enemy was made upon his troops, that the resistance made by his brigade was without any order or concert of

action, and Willick himself, riding into the confused lines, began to give very imperative orders in his peculiar English, when (as it would seem), out of consideration for his rank, only his horse was shot, and it was intimated to him, by the troops to whom he was giving orders, that their commanding officer wore a different uniform, and that they had been instructed to provide quarters for him inside the rebel lines.

Willick was a prisoner, while he supposed himself commanding his own troops.

At the moment Wharton's cavalry rushed upon the rear of Willick's brigade, McCown's division of four brigades charged upon Willick's front, and at the same time Cleburn's division of four brigades came rushing with the usual rebel yell upon Kirk's single brigade.

Notwithstanding the overwhelming force of these brigades, the troops of Kirk were, for a time, kept in order and did some desperate fighting, but General Kirk was wounded and compelled to leave the field, and the regiments of Kirk's and Willick's brigades were overpowered by numbers, each regimental commander reporting that he was attacked in front and upon either flank, and cut off from all support.

The troops of these brigades which had not been killed, captured or wounded were rallied upon the reserve brigade of Baldwin, Colonel Gibson succeeding Willick, and Colonel Dodge succeeding Kirk, and, under the direction of General Johnson, the division inflicted considerable punishment upon the enemy, but were finally forced back a distance of two miles to the Nashville Pike.

Following the defeat of Johnson's division the troops of Cleburn fell upon Davis' flank and rear, while Cheatham assailed his front. Being attacked from three directions, Davis with a good deal of difficulty fell back and formed his division on a line at right angles with Sheridan.

At the angle of these lines the enemy brought to bear his heavy forces, including several batteries, and seemed to put forth his greatest efforts.

Several desperate charges were made which were handsomely repulsed. It was in charging upon this point that the rebel General Vaughan lost over a third of his brigade, and every horse but three in his command. But the strength of the rebel lines was too great to be longer withstood, and, being again flanked, Davis with much difficulty drew out of the conflict, which left Sheridan's division to suffer similar treatment, having to meet attacks from all directions, which it did manfully, frequently repulsing the enemy and inflicting terrible punishment upon him, until, getting out of ammunition, Sheridan's division had to cut its way through the enemy and fall back upon the Nashville Pike.

The most desperate fighting now occurred on the flank and front of Negley and Palmer, upon whose divisions the enemy seemed to throw all his available force.

The right wing of Rosecrans' army, which was to hold Polk's corps in check, while with his left he was to gobble up Bragg's right and center, having been driven from the field, Rosecrans began to realize the imminent danger of losing the battle and his army. He therefore abandoned the offensive, and hastened to the center to establish a defensive position, where, with General Thomas, he arranged for establishing a line of defense running nearly parallel with the Nashville Pike and perpendicular to his original line.

As soon as Thomas had selected the ground for the new line he ordered Negley and Rousseau (who had been placed in position to aid the withdrawal of Sheridan) to withdraw to the new line, and at a time when it seemed that the entire force of the enemy had enveloped and were' about to annihilate these divisions.

The task was a fearful one, but these divisions cut their way through the ranks of the enemy to the line where General Thomas had placed his artillery.

This new line with Negley on the right of Palmer, Rousseau on Negley's right, and a portion of Van Cleve's and Wood's division, which Rosecrans had hurried from his extreme left, had barely gotten in position, when the enemy, encouraged by his success and certain of victory, made the most desperate charge of the day upon this new position.

But the divisions of Thomas, assisted by troops of Van Cleve and Wood, and by the double-shotted guns of Loomis and Guenther, repulsed this charge with gratifying destruction of life. Four times the enemy attempted to drive Thomas from his position, and as many times was he sent in a dizzy whirl back into the cedars. Thomas held his position, maintained his line, from which, for the balance of the fight, he put the enemy on the defensive, thus saving the day and the Army of the Cumberland.

Bragg becoming satisfied that he could not carry the new line, next made several attempts to turn Rosecrans' left, as he had driven his right, but Rosecrans now having his centre and right in a firm position, gave his attention to his left and repulsed the enemy as often as he attacked him, and the left of Rosecrans' army, by desperate fighting, was maintained during the day.

The success of Bragg in driving three of Rosecrans' divisions a distance of over two miles, and in driving three other divisions from their lines, was alarming. This was not accomplished, however, without terrible loss of life on both sides.

The enemy lost in this day's battle 7,500 men in killed and wounded, while our loss in killed and wounded was over 8,000, including 500 officers, 100 of whom were killed. A

single federal brigade suffered a loss of 22 officers and 518 men in maintaining the new line established by Rosecrans.

After such a day of bloody fighting, with such a fearful loss of life and exhaustion of troops, the commander of each army was satisfied to take a rest and reflect upon the situation.

Bragg hoped Rosecrans would retreat to Nashville, and sent his cavalry round to his rear to intercept his troops and destroy his trains. Rosecrans expected Bragg would renew the offensive on the following morning, and, considering the losses sustained, and the unexpected result of the day's battle, was quite undetermined as to his orders for the morrow. It may be regarded as somewhat significant, however, that, at three o'clock on the morning of January 1st, orders were given the Ninth Michigan Infantry to take headquarters train to Nashville, and to clear the road of all obstructions, except moving trains.

General Rosecrans, having adjusted his lines and provided for the safety of his headquarters, determined to await the action of the enemy. Nothing was done on the first but the strengthening of lines by Rosecrans, and some rather heavy demonstrations by Bragg to find Rosecrans' position.

A little after noon on the second of January, General Bragg, to attract the attention of the federal army, commenced a heavy cannonading on Rosecrans' right and centre, and soon thereafter moved Breckenridge's entire force in heavy masses, and with great vigor, upon Rosecrans' left, which was now established on the east side of the river; this attack was made with such force and such masses as to send Beatty's, Price's and Grider's brigades, of Rosecrans' left, back to the river in confusion.

As Breckenridge's troops came rushing and yelling after the retreating federals, to the river bank, they were confronted by Negley's division, and Hazen's and Cruft's brigades of

Palmer's division, and 58 guns which Rosecrans had placed in position.

The storm of iron and lead from these fifty-eight guns at short range, and from these troops, sent the enemy reeling in retreat, and Rosecrans charged the panic-stricken rebels with Miller's and Stanley's brigades, capturing four guns, the colors of a regiment, and many prisoners; the gallant Stoughton of the Eleventh Michigan bringing in, as a trophy, the sword of the captain of a rebel battery.

Rosecrans held this advanced position and intrenched his lines on the east side of the river. This action terminated the fighting for the day, and no heavy fighting was done thereafter.

Notwithstanding the peril in which the enemy had put Rosecrans' army, during the night of the third Bragg withdrew his army from the front of Murfreesboro, and retreated south of Duck River, leaving Rosecrans the victor, and the possessor of Murfreesboro and some 3,000 wounded rebels.

Why was Rosecrans put to such straits, and a large part of his army driven from its position, and some of it in a rout, in the early part of the battle of the 31st?

Among the reasons given are :

First—The line of McCook, the right of the army, was in great fault, and he was too obstinate to correct it when his attention was called to it by Rosecrans.

Second—There was no adequate cavalry on the federal right to observe the movements of the enemy, the most of the federal cavalry having been sent under Stanley to the vicinity of Lavergne to protect the trains.

Third—Rosecrans' contemplated movement upon the rebel right was delayed too long by Crittenden, but Crittenden's delay, in this case, may perhaps be said to have been fortunate. Time will not permit a discussion on this point. It was an agreeable surprise to Rosecrans when the report came

on the morning of the 4th that the rebel army had retreated, giving him the victory of the battle.

The reason for Bragg's retreat, after having achieved what he regarded as a great victory, has never been satisfactorily explained.

I trust it will not be regarded immodest in the writer, at this remote period, to furnish the companions of this commandery,—but the information must go no further,—the occasion which influenced General Bragg to abandon a claimed victory, and withdraw his army from the front of what he officially proclaimed a defeated foe.

It will be remembered that at 3 o'clock on the morning of the first day of January, the Ninth Michigan Infantry was ordered to open the road to Nashville, and to place headquarters train in a secure position, which was successfully accomplished.

In the evening of the second day of January, the writer being at Nashville, received an order from General Thomas to return to the front, with the Ninth Michigan and the headquarters and an ammunition train.

As early as 4 o'clock on the morning of the 3rd the Ninth Michigan moved out of Nashville for Murfreesboro in charge of the trains, also having under its command as many of the routed troops of McCook's corps who had reached Nashville as could be collected.

On reaching Lavergne, we found Colonel Innis' command in line of battle, awaiting a threatened attack from Wheeler's cavalry, which attack was abandoned by Wheeler on the appearance—apparently in support of Innis—of the Ninth Michigan with McCook's stragglers and its train of ammunition.

Wheeler not only abandoned his attack upon Innis, but hastened a report to Bragg that large reinforcements were being sent to Rosecrans from Nashville. No other troops

came to Rosecrans from Nashville on the 3d, and the inference is at least a fair one, that he referred to the Ninth Michigan.

General Bragg, in his official report says: "Reports from Brigadier-General Wheeler satisfied me that the enemy, instead of retiring, was receiving reinforcements. Common prudence and the safety of my army, upon which even the safety of our cause depended, left no doubt in my mind as to the necessity of my withdrawal from so unequal a contest."

Thus, you see, that not only was Innis saved by the opportune arrival of the Ninth Michigan at Lavergne, but Wheeler was so impressed with its extended columns as to induce him to hasten a report to Bragg of its march to reinforce Rosecrans.

History has recorded the result of the battle; and whenever you refer to the published histories of the battle of Stone's River, and read the message of the General-in-Chief to the brave commander of the Army of the Cumberland, expressive of the results of the battle, saying, "the victory was well earned and one of the most brilliant of the war; you and your brave army have won the gratitude of your country and the admiration of the world,"—and read the congratulatory message of the great Lincoln to the gallant Rosecrans, in which he says: "Your despatch, announcing the retreat of enemy, has just reached here. God bless you, and all with you. Please tender to all, and accept for yourself, the Nation's gratitude for your and their skill, endurance and dauntless courage,"—don't forget the Ninth Michigan Infantry's return to the front.





A JULY MORNING  
WITH THE REBEL RAM  
"ARKANSAS"

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A PAPER  
PREPARED AND READ BEFORE THE  
MICHIGAN COMMANDERY  
OF THE  
MILITARY ORDER OF THE LOYAL LEGION OF THE U. S.

BY  
S. B. COLEMAN,  
ACTING MASTER U. S. NAVY.  
MARCH 6TH, 1889.

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## A July Morning with the Rebel Ram "Arkansas."

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In the summer of 1862 a formidable fleet of war vessels lay at anchor in the Mississippi river just above the city of Vicksburg.

Farragut, flying his broad pennant from the "Hartford" was there with a number of his crack vessels, and Davis with his Mississippi squadron of iron clads and rams.

Naval operations were at a lull just at this time in the West, for the confederate navy below New Orleans had been destroyed by Farragut, and that below Memphis had been knocked out in one round by the Mississippi squadron, aided by the rams improvised on the spur of the moment by Col. Ellet.

Taking advantage of the security offered by this condition of affairs, as well as on account of the fierce July heat, fires had been drawn throughout the fleet and the cleaning of boilers was in progress, as well as the various little repairs that engineers are always wanting to make after a season of arduous service.

Information had reached us that somewhere up the Yazoo river, which empties into the Mississippi about seven miles above the anchorage, there was, in hiding, an iron-clad confederate ram known as the "Arkansas," one of the vessels

which had escaped destruction at Memphis by having previously been sent for completion up the Yazoo.

To ascertain something definite of her whereabouts the gunboat "Tyler," under Lieut. Commander Wm. Gwin, was directed to make a reconnoissance up the Yazoo accompanied by the iron-clad "Carondelet," and one of Ellet's rams, the "Queen of the West," the two latter to aid in destroying the ram, should the "Tyler" find her and bring her into action. The plan agreed upon was for the iron-clad to take station up the Yazoo, about seven miles from the Mississippi, while the "Tyler" and Ram proceeded on up. The departure of the expedition from the fleet was timed so that it entered the Yazoo at daylight on the morning of July 15th, the "Tyler" in the lead.

About seven o'clock, while the crew were breakfasting, the officer of the deck reported the smoke of a steamer in the distance coming down the river. Capt. Gwin came on deck and as soon as the vessel came in sight around a bend ordered a shot from a light howitzer fired across her bows as a hint to come to a halt and await his approach, but the stranger paid no attention to this, and the morning haze lifting just then discovered the vessel which was first supposed to be a river steamboat coming down to give herself up, to be an iron-clad running out guns, and presently the smoke from her bow, the roar of her guns and the noise of shells passing over the "Tyler," notified us that we need go no further on our search.

The men sprang to the guns without waiting for the boatswain's whistle; the breakfast things were hastily brushed aside; and in a few minutes the "Tyler" was cleared for action and responding to the challenge with her heavy battery of sixty-four pounders, and the fight was soon fairly under way.

The "Tyler" had slowed down her engines when the engagement began, and the current was taking her toward the

“Carondelet” and the “Queen of the West,” then some distance behind.

After considerable firing, the “Carondelet” forged by, both vessels using their guns as rapidly as possible.

The “Arkansas” had kept slowly on all this time, her progress arrested only by the concussion of her guns and by swinging from side to side to use her broadside battery, just as the “Tyler” was doing, while the guns in her bow were served as rapidly as possible, directed at the “Carondelet” or “Tyler” as each offered the best results.

The “Carondelet” had not made much progress ahead of us when, to our surprise and consternation, she suddenly ran into the bank.

The “Arkansas” moved over towards her, and when almost abreast, let go all the guns she could bring to bear.

Our last view of the “Carondelet” was through a cloud of enveloping smoke with steam escaping from her ports, and of her men jumping overboard.

Until it was evident that the ram was intent upon continuing her journey down the river, we considered the capture of the “Carondelet” as certain.

She, however, turned her attention exclusively to the “Tyler” from this on, and moved over to strike us.

The “Tyler” was a wooden vessel, originally a river steamboat, cut down and altered to suit her new character, and carried a broadside of six eight-inch sixty-four pounders and a thirty-two pounder Dahlgren in the stern, but her guns and machinery and boilers were unprotected against anything more formidable than musketry.

Her opportune presence at Shiloh was, it will be remembered, of great service during that battle, when the Confederate advance on the left was checked by the fire of her guns and that of her consort, the “Lexington.”

She had covered the landing of Grant’s troops and his

retreat from Belmont, where he made his first fight ; and did her share of the work at Ft. Henry and Ft. Donelson.

A few weeks before the "Mound City," an armored vessel, had her steam-chest perforated while engaged with a battery up the White River, and of her crew of one hundred and seventy-five men, one hundred and thirty were dead and twenty-five badly injured, within a few minutes after she was struck.

There was nothing reassuring in the present situation, for we were even more vulnerable than the "Mound City," and it was evident that the "Tyler" was no match for an armored vessel such as was her antagonist.

Her main reliance, the "Carondelet," was already disabled and evidence was accumulating on the "Tyler" that the "Arkansas'" guns were heavy and well served.

The "Arkansas" was protected by an armor of railroad iron well greased down, set at an angle and backed by several feet of heavy timbers, and the openings for her guns and smoke-stack were the only vulnerable points about her that our guns could search out.

The "Queen of the West," in the meanwhile, was a few hundred yards astern of the "Tyler," having kept about that distance since the engagement began, apparently waiting for orders.

Capt. Gwin now called out to her commander, to move up and ram the "Arkansas." His only response to this was, to commence backing vigorously out of range, while Gwin was expressing his opinion of him through the trumpet in that vigorous English a commander in battle sometimes uses, when things do not go altogether right.

The ram commander was badly scared and demoralized by the loss of the "Carondelet," and he let slip a golden opportunity, for he could have struck and sunk the enemy, had not his valor given way at the critical moment. He

pointed his vessel for the fleet and the last we saw of him he was making off at the top of his speed, followed until he was entirely out of hearing by a storm of what the darkey called the "wustest kind of language" from Gwin, who was boiling over with rage and mortification at the turn affairs had taken and the imminent danger he was in of losing his vessel. By the time the "Tyler" got headed down stream and her engines moving, the "Arkansas" was close up and throwing grape, while the "Tyler" as she swung around, replied with each gun as it could be brought to bear, and with musketry from a detachment of sharpshooters we had taken on board the night before.

Things looked squally. Blood was flowing freely on board, and the crash of timbers from time to time as the "Arkansas" riddled us seemed to indicate that some vital part would be soon struck. In fact our steering apparatus was shot away, and we handled the vessel for some time solely with the engine until repairs could be made.

Here is where Gwin showed his high qualities as a commander. He was ablaze with the spirit of battle. All knew that the vessel might go down and all of us be killed, but there would be no surrender. In fact he made that reassuring remark to the first lieutenant in my presence, when that officer suggested such a possibility. We were fighting for existence and we all knew it.

The "Tyler" had been pounding the "Arkansas" all this while, but with little apparent effect; but her smoke-stack, close to the armor, had been shot through and through, and the smoke pouring out had lessened the draft from her fires and slackened her speed and we began to gain a little on her.

There are few circumstances more trying than to be exposed to a heavy fire and not be able to hit back.

The unpleasant features of battle are not so apparent while



the fight is on; then, one is busy, his pride is aroused, and the strain upon his nerve enables him to look upon death and bloodshed with some little indifference; but exposed to danger, seeing your comrades shot down and idle meanwhile, is trying in the extreme. There is but one thing to do under such circumstances and that is to stand up manfully and take what comes. On board a man-of-war there is no other course. This trying ordeal we went through for the next hour, most of us with practically nothing to do but watch the gunners of the "Arkansas" as they handled their battery, render such assistance as was practicable to the wounded encumbering our decks, occasionally sounding the pumps to see if we had been struck below the belt, and the crew of our one stern gun working it for all it was worth.

The "Tyler" at last turned out into the Mississippi with the ram close at her heels, and soon the smokestack and masts of the fleet appeared in sight. The code signals were run up in warning of the character of the company we were keeping, though the firing constantly approaching nearer, had been so continuous that it was supposed they would be in readiness to give her a warm reception. This was not the case. In fact one of the naval officers, ashore at the time, remarked, when we first came in sight: "There comes the 'Tyler' with a prize."

The heavy firing had been heard of course, but it was supposed that the expedition was on its return and shelling the woods, and no preparations were made to meet the emergency.

In the early days of the war we used to let off our surplus loyalty by shelling the woods, where we thought the enemy might be, when there was no enemy actually in sight to practice on.

In fact there was hardly time to have gotten up steam, and the combined fleets were entirely taken by surprise. The

first intimation of the situation came when the "Tyler" and "Arkansas" appeared in sight, exchanging fire and signals flying.

As the "Tyler" steamed along the line, the crews of the different men-of-war were crowding on deck in hurried efforts to cast loose their guns.

The "Tyler" passed under the stern of the "Hartford" receiving a parting shot from the "Arkansas," freighted with death for one unfortunate who had rested his head against the bulwark, only to have it taken off, while she kept on down the entire line within pistol shot, receiving the broadsides of such of the men-of-war as were ready, as she came within range and blazing herself with fire and smoke with her return compliments, and soon was safely under the guns of Vicksburg.

The "Tyler" in the meantime had come to anchor, and boats began pulling over with surgeons offering assistance, and officers, out of curiosity, to note the results of the encounter.

The "Tyler's" decks presented a shocking spectacle. During the fight she had been hulled eleven times, besides being cut up by grape, thrown at very close range, and by exploding shells. Her decks were literally running with blood, and the killed and wounded lay around in every direction.

At the very commencement of the fight in the Yazoo, the "Arkansas" had exploded a shell from one of her forward guns directly on our crowded deck. It had horribly mutilated and instantly killed a commissioned officer and five men, piling them up in one sickening heap. Four of them were headless, and for many feet on both sides of the deck, the wood-work was spattered with blood and shreds of flesh and hair, while few of us escaped without bloody evidences on

our clothing and in our faces of the destruction of our comrades.

The "Tyler" had lost in the engagement four officers and twenty-one men, killed and wounded, while the injuries to the vessel were of such a character as to require extensive repairs before she was again able to enter into active service.

The "Carondelet," which had been left disabled in the Yazoo, repaired damages and reached the fleet later in the day. She, too, had a large casualty list. The mortification of the two admirals was excessive, but both owned up manfully that they had been caught napping.

I have read several reports of this fight and it is unnecessary to say that none of them agree! From the "Carondelet" point of view that vessel did all the fighting. The "Tyler" is mentioned incidentally, I think, as having some trifling connection with the affair.

The report of Brown, the commander of the "Arkansas," would lead one to suppose that he did most of the fighting, while from this sketch of mine it may seem as though the "Tyler" was not entirely a looker on.

The commander of the "Queen of the West" has not yet shown up in war literature with his claim for the laurels. Perhaps he is still running.

There was no pluckier exploit in the war than this of the "Arkansas," in running the gauntlet of these two formidable fleets. Fortune favored the brave in this instance, in her finding them unprepared to receive her, and her audacity and pluck did the rest. She had, on her way down, disabled an iron-clad of her own size, which she could have compelled to strike her flag, had she the time to wait. She had badly injured and all but sunk the "Tyler," and as she was passing through the fleet had blown up another ram, which,

having steam up, had gotten under way to strike her and had herself escaped without material injury.

In her encounter with us, however, and in passing the fleet, she had lost in all, killed and wounded, a large number of her crew, amongst the latter her gallant commander, Isaac N. Brown of the old navy, who was barked by one of our sharpshooters in the Yazoo while standing on deck by the pilot house directing the movements of his vessel, and for some little while was insensible.

Capt. Gwin received many congratulations on the gallant manner in which he had stuck by the "Carondelet" and fought his vessel, while those who were fortunate enough to escape alive received substantial recognition in promotion.

Not long after this we lost Gwin, then in command of the "Benton," while fighting a battery in the Yazoo, not far from the place where we encountered the "Arkansas," struck by a shell just as the rebel guns were silenced.

Gwin was a man of fine personal appearance, of elegant and winning manners, and courageous to the last degree. He was one of that class of officers who loved a fight, and never, knowingly, lost an opportunity to engage his vessel.

During the operations up the Tennessee river, previous to the movement of Grant's army to Pittsburg Landing, he found congenial occupation in keeping the confederates from making a lodgement on the river with their batteries.

At Pittsburg Landing, he fought a six-gun battery with the "Tyler" and "Lexington" and silenced it, though not without a loss, for which he feared a reprimand on the score of rashness.

He had the old-fashioned idea, that the place for the commander of an iron-clad in action, was outside the armor, and was killed while carrying it out. It is hard to estimate the value of an utterly fearless officer in action, in holding subordinates up to their work.

No one ever thought of anything but strict devotion to duty when under fire with him. None of us dared to duck our heads, no matter how close and fast the balls came, or act otherwise than as though we thoroughly enjoyed it.

Perhaps a word in this connection would not be out of place, as regards the service of which he was such a fine representative. From the commencement of active operations at Belmont the Mississippi squadron never failed in a loyal support of the army, clearing the way for its operations, conveying its troops and supporting it under fire, and its fights were frequently bloody ones.

It was one of the sights, after a prolonged engagement, like that at Donelson, Grand Gulf or Vicksburg, to go on board any of our fleet, but more particularly the flag ship. The sanguinary character of the service, evidenced by broken and blood-stained wood work and dead and mutilated men, was generally more apparent there, for carrying the admiral's flag she was always a more or less conspicuous mark for the confederate gunners. From the character of the service there could necessarily be no flinching, every man had to stand to his gun, no matter how ghastly the sights presented by his mutilated comrades.

There never was a more determined or pluckier fight than the fleet made at Grand Gulf, where for five and one-half hours it was under the fire of confederate guns, nor at Vicksburg, when supporting Grant's assault, by engaging the water batteries of that place at close range.

It operated in a climate where a formidable sick list had always to be contended with and where men were constantly breaking down from exposure, and where, too, quinine and whisky were indispensable parts of our rations; but, in spite of fever-racked bodies and weakened gun crews, the squadron always came up smiling to a fight, and history now associates its name with our successes at Belmont, Ft. Henry and Don-

elson,\* Island number 10, Vicksburg and the numerous encounters that eventuated in the opening of the Mississippi.

The action of the play was always rapid, and when the curtain was finally rung down we were all ready and willing to bid a final adieu to the swamps and bayous, where for four years we had been slowly getting poisoned.

It was pleasant to take up again the duties of civil life in a climate where quinine was known only as a drug — not as an article of diet; where people drank whisky because they liked it, and not to sustain life; and where one could take his “constitutional” without the crack of a sharpshooter rifle to shake up his nerves and impress upon him the uncertainty of life.



THE  
BATTLE OF KERNSTOWN,

March 23, 1862.

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A PAPER  
PREPARED AND READ BEFORE THE  
MICHIGAN COMMANDERY  
OF THE  
MILITARY ORDER OF THE LOYAL LEGION OF THE U. S.

BY

BVT.-COL. GEO. K. JOHNSON,  
*Late Medical Inspector, U. S. Army,*  
AT GRAND RAPIDS, DECEMBER 4, 1890.

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## The Battle of Kernstown.

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MARCH 23, 1862.

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The story of the campaign of Gen. Banks in the valley of the Shenandoah in '62 has never been circumstantially told. That campaign was without any very decisive military results; it was distinguished by no great feats of arms nor by striking exploit; and it was followed by three years of stupendous strategy and gigantic struggle. For these reasons its events have been in a great measure cast into dim perspective, and have fallen out of public thought.

Nevertheless, it is in some respects a noteworthy chapter in the lengthened chronicles of the war. It was characterized by great activity and crowded with incidents, many of which were stirring and some of which were of no little importance.

That campaign opened when, on the 24th of February, '62, Gen. Banks, with 25,000 men of all arms, crossed the Potomac at Harper's Ferry. It ended when, about the 1st of July following, that general, with about 15,000 men, traversed the gaps and valleys of the Blue Ridge to unite his arms with those of Gen. Pope, who was then organizing his army of Virginia and boasting of the great things he was about to do.

During all this time the 1st Michigan Cavalry, of which the writer was surgeon, was on service with Gen. Banks. From the moment it touched the soil of Virginia it was incessantly occupied; sometimes in scouting and on picket; sometimes on perilous reconnoissance, and always in the van.

But it is not the present design to review the Banks campaign, nor to follow the footsteps of the 1st Cavalry through it. It is rather my purpose to call up a single episode of that campaign, namely, the battle of Kernstown, fought on the 23d of March, 1862.

What I have to say is largely reminiscent,—a jotting down of some personal recollections and impressions. As that was the first considerable engagement I witnessed, and as some of the circumstances were exceptional and peculiar, it made an impression on me which has remained fresh and vivid through the lapse of twenty-eight years.

The Union force consisted of the division of Gen. James Shields and the 1st Michigan Cavalry. Shields had thirteen regiments of infantry, organized into three brigades, and commanded by Col. Nathan Kimball, Col. Tyler and Col. Sullivan, respectively. He had twenty-four guns organized into five batteries, and all under Capt. Daum. His total force, about which there has been some discrepancy of statements, was not far from 6,500 men.

The enemy had, under Stonewall Jackson, one division of infantry consisting of eleven regiments, organized into three brigades, commanded by Generals Garnett, Burks and Fulkenson, respectively. He had also Col. Ashby's regiment of Cavalry, twenty-seven guns and some fragments of troops, making a total of not less than 5,500 men.

A few days before the affair now considered, Gen. Banks had been directed by Gen. McClellan to send the most of his force to Manassas to co-operate with McDowell. All had gone except the division of Shields and the 1st Cavalry. Only two days before the battle Gen. Alpheus S. Williams, of Michigan, that superb soldier, had left us with his fine division. Gen. Banks himself, wholly unaware of the approach of Jackson, left us the very morning of the day of battle.

On the 22d of March Shields lay encamped with his main force three miles north, or on the Potomac side, of Winchester. The town was held by a small force, as guard to the immense stores gathered there. The 1st Cavalry was on the south, or up-valley, side of the town. Its hospital was a Dunkard church in the south edge of the town, and its headquarters near by. It had pickets on all the roads running out from that side of the town. During the forenoon Ashby's cavalry began to annoy our pickets, and, as the day wore on, became more and more demonstrative. By 2 or 3 P. M. Col. Brodhead of the 1st Cavalry became convinced that the enemy was in force not far away and that his designs were aggressive. He so advised Gen. Shields, but the general discredited and scouted that view. But a little later the cavalry officers on picket, cool, steady, intelligent men, became certain of the imminence of the situation. Again a message of advice and warning was sent to Shields, three miles the other side of the town. Then, with a part of his staff, he came galloping up to the cavalry headquarters, and, still with an air of incredulity, demanded to know where the enemy was who had so disturbed the cavalry. The Colonel, a little nettled at the manner of the general, pointed to a range of hills three-fourths of a mile away, and running directly across the valley pike. The general, still doubting, rode on at full pace toward the hills, accompanied by his staff, Col. Brodhead and myself. When within a short distance of the hill he halted and placed his field-glass to his eyes. He had scarcely done so when a shell from the ridge exploded within a few feet of our group. Gen. Shields fell from his saddle and struck the earth several feet away. In a moment I was at his side and found him limp, blanched, senseless. A fragment of shell had struck his chest and made sad work with his left shoulder. In a few moments he began to revive, and as quickly as possible was removed to

Winchester, where for several days he suffered greatly. As he was the only general officer in the vicinity the command devolved on Col. Nathan Kimball, of the 14th Indiana.

Troops were rapidly brought from the north to the south side of the town, and were during the night advanced so as to press the enemy's pickets and cavalry back two miles or more. It was now known that the force in immediate contact with us was Ashby with three or four guns, and that Jackson, whom Shields thought to be many miles away and headed from us, was in fact in the immediate vicinity and heading rapidly towards us. Col. Kimball, after some maneuvering, established his lines close up to the little hamlet of Kernstown, three miles from Winchester. There, on the morning of the 23d of March, he waited for the enemy to disclose his strength and purposes.

The position taken by Kimball was a very good one. The line crossed the valley turnpike at nearly a right angle, and extended a considerable distance on either side of it. On our left and in front of our left the country was level and cultivated, with patches of wood-land. Our right rested in the woods. In our center and just to the right of the turnpike was a high, conical elevation, called Pritchard's Hill. This hill was under cultivation. From its slopes and summit there was a fine view of the entire field. It furnished good positions for some of our batteries and an admirable screen for troops and maneuvers. Col. Kimball took his personal position on this hill and kept it all day, though often the target for Confederate guns.

In front of our right, about one-half mile distant, was a ridge of considerable height, which ran nearly parallel with our lines. Along the crest of this ridge was a heavy stone wall. Extending back from it was a wooded and rocky plateau. In front of it was a cultivated field which sloped down to the woods in which our right lay.

During the forenoon Ashby, with his guns and dismounted troopers, struck our lines at various points, in his sharp and waspish way ; but all these were beaten off with spirit and resolution. So the hours passed with alternate lull and stir.

About 1 P. M. Jackson himself came upon the field, with his full command ; and soon movements of greater force and with more definite plan began. The first of these was directed against our left. Here the enemy put forth a strenuous effort, apparently with a view to crush that wing and to flank our main position. But after a sharp encounter he was thrown back. Our Col. Sullivan, commanding a brigade, did excellent work here. So far the enemy had gained nothing. We had repelled every assault and fully maintained our lines, but we had remained on the defensive.

The final struggle was yet and soon to come. It has been already said that in front of our right, and distant one-half mile, was a ridge running nearly parallel with our line, and crowned by a strong stone wall. Back of the stone wall was rough, wooded ground. In front of it, and separating it from our right, was a cultivated field. One with a military eye, or with military experience, will at once forecast that that position played an important role in the drama of the day. And so it did. On this plateau and behind this wall Jackson had massed his muskets and planted his batteries. Whether he intended here to stand on the defensive, or to make this the point from which to assail and crush or turn our right, must be left to conjecture. But the option did not remain long open to him. The events of the day had emboldened Kimball. His self-confidence had been strengthened, and the spirit and conduct of officers and men had inspired him with full confidence in them. He therefore resolved to force this stronghold of the enemy, and thus bring the day to final decision. So about five o'clock he ordered the assault. The brigades of Colonels Sullivan and

Tyler formed partly under screen of the conical hill already described, and partly in the woods on our right. Sullivan was on the right, and on his extreme right were five companies of the 1st Cavalry. Thus formed they advanced to the edge of the wood, and then steadily, but with quickened step, through and up the open field to the stone wall. All this time, after leaving the woods, they were under a furious fire of cannon and musketry. At moments our lines bent and swayed under the blast, but on they went. At one instant Sullivan's line seemed badly shaken and about to break, but, under the stimulus of good command, it stiffened and went on.

The stone wall was reached and scaled, and then came a brief struggle at close quarters. At the same moment the cavalry on our right came sweeping in on the enemy's flank, and his discomfiture was complete. Broken and in panic he fled in disorder. Then, above all the uproar, rang out the shouts of the victors. Men like those whom I address, who have seen war and felt its inspirations, need not be told of the irrepressible elation of such a moment.

If, soldiers, the shadows could be left out of the picture; if the dead, and the dying, and the mangled were not there, then victory, then martial triumph, won by brave arms, uplifted for a cause and for country, would, indeed, be glorious.

Our loss in killed and wounded was about 590.

The enemy's loss in killed, wounded and missing, was about 718. Of these 250 were prisoners in our hands.

Here, admonished that this is put down as a short paper, I stop my narrative, in order to refer for a moment to some circumstances which, it seems to me, deserve to be noted.

This was the only occasion during the war in which Stonewall Jackson met decisive defeat; the only occasion on

which he and his command were swept in disorder from the field.

It is also, so far as I know, the only occasion on which a colonel had the independent command of so large a force in battle.

The conduct of Col. Kimball was admirable. He had not been trained to arms, and he had but little experience. He had seen some service in West Virginia under the long-lamented Gen. Lander. That was his only preparation for the work now in hand. This responsible command devolved upon him suddenly, at a most critical moment, on the eve of battle. He found himself pitted all at once against a general already rated as the most vigorous and successful fighter in the rebellion; one, indeed, whose renown as a field commander was soon to make the circuit of the globe.

During all that long day of anxiety and tension Kimball did not weaken, nor falter, nor blunder. During all those hours, cool, clear-headed, resolute and circumspect, he played the game of war, and at last, as the sun declined, by a bold feat of arms he wrung favor from fortune.

But Col. Kimball was magnanimous as well as brave. He so phrased his report as to allow most of the credit to pass to Gen. Shields, who lay wounded and suffering some miles away; and Shields accepted the laurel. Most of the accounts of this affair which I have seen, speak of it as Shields' victory; and so history has, in this, as in many other instances, misdirected her credits.

Shields was, of course, in nominal command; but he did not, as I believe, exercise any actual command in this action. He was three miles away, in bed, suffering greatly and incapacitated. The actual command, the responsibility and the credit were Kimball's.

Jackson charged his defeat to the weakness of Gen. Garnett, whose brigade felt the brunt of our attack and



yielded to it. Garnett was relieved of command and his conduct subjected to inquisition. For months he was under a cloud, but finally was reinstated, and at last, at Gettysburg, while leading a brigade in Pickett's historic charge, met his doom.

THE  
BATTLE OF ALLATOONA.

OCTOBER 5<sup>TH</sup>, 1864.

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A PAPER  
READ BEFORE THE  
MICHIGAN COMMANDERY  
OF THE  
MILITARY ORDER OF THE LOYAL LEGION OF THE U. S.

— BY —

WILLIAM LUDLOW,

*Major Corps of Engineers; Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel U. S. A.*

AT

DETROIT, APRIL 2<sup>D</sup>, 1891.

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## ALLATOONA.

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### *Companions and Gentlemen :*

It appears strange to me that an action which all who mention it—and they are many—agree in characterizing as one of the most brilliant exploits of a war as thickset with deeds of gallantry as a rose bush with its blossoms, should not long since have had its adequate historian and monographer.

The contest was so famous, the issue so glorious, the recollection of the day still must be so vivid in the minds of the survivors, that I could not anticipate any lack of material wherefrom to procure data to formulate a reasonably satisfactory narrative of such a gallant feat of arms, and in such detail as to give it life and color. But of all the war papers that have been written on affairs great and small, none that I know has had Allatoona for its special subject, and from the sources of information at my command, I have found it quite impracticable to construct an account that is not in some respect at variance with others made by authority. The official reports, while giving the general features, of necessity exclude most of the minor but equally interesting details, and the omissions, inaccuracies and discrepancies, not important in some particulars and material in others, for the purposes, at least, of a fully detailed and authenticated nar-

rative, cannot at this time be corrected. And even the numbers engaged on each side, and of those who fell as victims, are not known with certainty.

This paper, therefore, can pretend to be no more than an outline sketch, which an abler hand must put itself to filling out and completing. When the war records shall have been made fully public, as they will be presently, and at least all the official material be available, the historian of Allatoona, by extended research and correspondence with survivors, should address himself to the task of preparing an authoritative narration in order to preserve to posterity the record of a memorable and typically American event.

For an event it was ; a vital one, as it would appear, to the full success of Sherman's campaign, and with the "March to the Sea" hung in the balance and awaiting the issue.

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The importance of a given moment in the world's history is not of necessity to be estimated by the numbers occupying the stage at the time, nor even with the degree of activity or turmoil with which their parts are playing.

Much labor is wasted in the lives of men, and mountains of effort result often in mere noise or discomfiture, making no real history. The center of gravity of two worlds may be an immaterial point, and the earth itself revolves upon a slender axis. So a turning point of history may be concentrated upon a comparatively narrow field, while the reverberation of its potency shall resound forever, as the silent nod of Jove lets loose the thunders of Olympus to shake the earth and change the fate of nations.

Some preliminary remarks are in order, explanatory of the general situation and its relation to the Battle of Allatoona.

## THE GENERAL SITUATION.

It was the fall of '64. The fiery comet of secession that, blazing out in '61, for three long years had scorched the firmament, spreading death and pestilence over all the land, was waning in its course; doomed presently to disappear forever in Chaos, but emitting malignant emanations to its latest spark. The structure of the Confederate Government, practically a military despotism, founded on the enforced servitude and sale of human beings, reared and upheld by the lives, the fortunes, and the constrained or misguided energies of a deluded and chivalrous people, to feed the vain ambition of an oligarchy, was toppling to the ruin that six months later overwhelmed it. Great was to be the fall thereof, and not even to-day is the atmosphere fully cleared of the dust of its destruction.

Two famous, and as the outcome proved, morally conclusive campaigns had been fought and closed.

In the East, Grant, moving against Richmond through the wilderness and swamps of Virginia, all the long summer had been dealing trip-hammer blows, as deadly and sickening to his foe as the stroke of the axe in the shambles, and at length resting from the slaughter, lay before Petersburg and astride the James; feeling out with his left to cut Lee's lines of communication to the South and West, and pressing him close that he should not detach any of his force to act against Sherman.

In the West, Sherman, starting from Chattanooga, with an antagonist the wariest, wisest and most skillful captain of the rebel host to oppose him, had overreached his foe at every point, and stretching out his sinewy arm, had seized in a relentless grasp the "Gate City" of the South; and elec-

trified the country with the exultant shout, "Atlanta is ours and fairly won;" opening wide the door into the hollow trunk of the Confederacy and exposing its emptiness.

Of this campaign Halleck wrote: "I do not hesitate to say that it has been the most brilliant of the war," and Grant himself, with that mutual magnanimity that characterized the two great friends and competitors for fame, declared to Sherman, "You have accomplished the most gigantic undertaking given to any general in this war, and with a skill and ability that will be acknowledged in history as unsurpassed, if not unequalled."

But much remained.

The dragon of rebellion, though sorely smitten, still lay writhing and would not die until his time was fully come.

Lee, sullen and desperate, lay within the still invincible intrenchments of Richmond, nursing his wounds, but with power able yet to strike a heavy blow, and gathering his remaining strength for the final effort.

Sherman's antagonists, though demoralized and bewildered, were still unconquered; and forced out from Atlanta, filled the open country with an angry buzzing, as of an overturned hive. To add to their discomfiture, the astute Johnston, the most intellectual soldier of the Confederacy, whose stubborn dispute of every inch of territory, perfect skill in defending his successive positions, and marvelous success in withdrawing without loss at the latest moment, displayed a capacity second only to that of his opponent, and whose patient policy of drawing Sherman after him, to a constantly increasing distance from his base, without himself risking the disaster of a defeat, was, as history has proved, the last crutch of the Rebellion,—had been plucked from his command by the narrow-minded Confederate President and replaced by Hood, whose fighting qualities had been proved

on many a field of battle, but who otherwise lacked every requisite for leadership in such a contest.

But a thousand long miles still separated Atlanta from Richmond; and these must be traversed before that proximate conjunction of forces could take place that was needed to give rebellion its *coup de grace*, and to tear forever from the free sky of America the fluttering and ragged emblem of a maleficent and arrogant domination.

Sherman, in Atlanta, was resting, granting well-earned furloughs to his veterans, recruiting his ranks, guarding from the cavalry, who swarmed in his rear and sought to break it, the extended line—over 250 miles—of railroad from Nashville to Chattanooga, and thence to Atlanta, upon which he depended for his supplies, and incessantly planning his next move, which he had already determined would be to the Sea, with Savannah as an intermediate base for the farther march to the rear of Lee's Army, and a conjunction with Grant;—upon whom, in his correspondence, he repeatedly urged assent to his proposal, and suggested the capture of Savannah by the Eastern forces in advance of his own arrival there.

The Washington authorities, always timorous and vacillating, were not yet brought to assent to this superb strategic project, based upon the military theorem, "An Army operating offensively must maintain the offensive," and constructed with Sherman's solid judgment that he must go onward, since to withdraw would be to lose all the *morale* of his success up to that point.

Even Grant, with all his confidence in and reliance upon Sherman, expressed unwillingness that he should embark upon it while Hood's Army was still undestroyed.

Meanwhile, Sherman, in full conviction that the necessity would presently be demonstrated, was watching Hood, who



lay some thirty miles to the Southeast of Atlanta, and whose intentions he could not even guess at,—and with tremendous energy was endeavoring to accumulate supplies in excess of daily needs, in order that when the time was ripe he should be ready to start.

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GRAND TACTICS.

On his zigzag way South, early in June, with Atlanta as his then objective point, Sherman, with that wonderful mental vision of the whole horizon that characterized him, seeking for a depot where supplies could safely be accumulated, near enough at hand to be of ready access, but sufficiently removed from the scene of actual conflict to be secure from casual attack, had selected the famous Allatoona Pass, and directed that it be “prepared for defense as a secondary base.”

The place was well chosen.

The diminishing extension of the Great Smoky Mountains stretches across the Northern end of Georgia, from Northeast to Southwest.

The Range is traversed at Allatoona Pass by the Etowah River, flowing West and North to unite at Rome, thirty miles distant, with the Oostenaula and form the Coosa. The railway, coming down from Kingston,—whence a branch ran Westward to Rome,—and crossing the Etowah, winds Southeasterly among the hills, and at Allatoona station, about four miles from the river, penetrates a minor ridge and emerges from a cut some sixty-five feet in depth. It was at this point—referred to by Sherman as a “Natural Fortress”—that the “secondary base” was established, and the surplus supplies were accumulated.

The advantages for defence were admirable. The entire region is hilly and heavily timbered, rolling off to the South-

ward to a less rugged country, and from the Heights of Allatoona looking Southeasterly, down the line of railway towards Atlanta, are visible ten to fifteen miles away, the noble, isolated masses of Kenesaw, Lost Mountain and Pine Mountain, which, raising their wooded crests high above the neighboring forest, command a wide prospect towards every quarter. The narrow ridge cut by the railway is abruptly terminated to the Northeast by the valley of Allatoona Creek, crooking among the hills to join the Etowah, and its slopes facing Northwest and Southeast are steep and difficult. Towards the West and Southwest the descent is more gradual, and a country road follows the rolling crest of the ridge along which from the Westward the main attack was ultimately to be made.

The storehouses for the supplies stood near the railway station and were fully commanded from the dominant elevations rising immediately behind them. Upon these elevations the defensive works were located by Colonel Poe, the Chief Engineer of Sherman's army. Their plan was in conformity with the requirements of the ground and of the service to be expected of them, and while the actual construction by the troops left somewhat to be desired, and could have been bettered had Poe been able to supervise the completion of his work, when it came to the test, well did they serve their purpose. The main features were two Redoubts, about 1000 feet apart at easy supporting distance, one on each side of the railway cut, with ditches and outlying intrenchments near at hand covering the approaches, and overlooking the storehouses for the defence of which they were built.

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Near the close of September, Sherman, in Atlanta, was roused by indications of activity on the part of Hood, who

had sent his cavalry North across the Chatahooche and into Tennessee, and had moved his infantry to a more Westerly camp ; thus leaving the Savannah road open to Sherman, had he seen fit to take it.

Habitually sensitive as to his railway base, Sherman surmised that Hood's intention was to move round him to threaten his rear. September 24th he telegraphed Howard, "I have no doubt Hood has resolved to throw himself on our flanks to prevent our accumulating stores, etc.," and September 25th to Halleck, "Hood seems to be moving as it were to the Alabama line, leaving open to me the road to Macon as also to Augusta, but his cavalry is busy on our roads."

He therefore reinforced the detachments guarding the numerous railway stations and bridges, sent a division of the 4th corps and one of the 14th Northward to strengthen Chattanooga, and put Thomas in command there, and thence back to Nashville to guard against Forrest, the noted rebel cavalry leader, who was ravaging Tennessee and capturing gunboats with horsemen.

Corse's division of the 15th corps was sent to occupy Rome on the extreme Western flank, with instructions to complete the defensive works and hold it against all comers ; meanwhile observing closely any movement of the enemy in his vicinity.

A glance at the map is desirable for the better understanding of the immediately ensuing events.

From Atlanta to Allatoona, near the railway crossing of the Etowah, is, as the crow flies, 32 miles Northwest by West. From Allatoona to Rome is 30 miles W. N. W. Thirteen miles from Allatoona towards Atlanta is Kenesaw, the railway sweeping round its North and East flanks. Fifteen miles West by South from Kenesaw, and the same

distance Southwest from Allatoona, is Dallas, in the vicinity of New Hope Church, where had been three days of heavy fighting late in May. Rome again is equi-distant from Dallas and from Allatoona 30 miles. The central position of Allatoona is evident; and it will also be seen that a force at Dallas occupied, in a sense, a strategic point, whence a rapid movement could be made either upon Allatoona or Rome, with the West and Southwest to fall back upon in case of need.

By October 1st, the ambiguity as to Hood's plans was in part relieved. It was at least certain that he had crossed from the South to the North bank of the Chattahooche, although it was impossible to surmise whether he intended to make a direct attack on the railroad or to undertake an invasion of Tennessee from the Westward. In any case it behooved Sherman to bestir himself, and promptly, too. It was absolutely necessary to keep Hood's army off the railroad, so long as the question of cutting loose for Savannah remained undecided, and at Allatoona was stored an accumulation of nearly three millions of rations of bread, the loss of which, with the railway endangered, would be a serious blow, and one possibly fatal to Sherman's cherished project. Leaving, therefore, the 20th corps in Atlanta, to hold it and to guard the bridges across the Chattahooche above and below the railway bridge, Sherman put the rest of his forces in rapid motion Northward towards Kenesaw, 20 miles distant, and October 1st telegraphed Corse at Rome that Hood was across the river and might attack the road at Allatoona or near Cassville, on the North side of the Etowah, about midway between Rome and Allatoona. If Hood went to Cassville, Corse was to remain at Rome and hold it fast; if to Allatoona, Corse was to move down at once and occupy Allatoona, joining forces with troops in the vicinity for its

defence, while Sherman co-operated from the South. Repeated dispatches were sent to Allatoona, directing the commanding officer, Lieutenant-Colonel Tourtellotte, to hold the place at all hazards, and that relief would be speedy. These have been paraphrased into "Hold the Fort, for I am coming," which, set to an inspiring air, caught the ear of the country, and is still in active service.

Sherman crossed the Chattahoochee October 3rd and 4th, and finding his wires cut North of Marietta, signaled to the station on Kenesaw and thence to Allatoona, over the heads of the enemy, a dispatch to be telegraphed to Corse at Rome to move at once with all speed and with his entire command to the relief of Allatoona. Sherman himself reached Kenesaw early on the morning of the 5th, and from the summit, to use his own language, "had a superb view of the vast "panorama to the North and West. To the Southwest, "about Dallas and Lost Mountain, could be seen the smoke "of camp fires indicating the presence of a large force of the "enemy, and the whole line of railroad from Big Shanty up "to Allatoona (full fifteen miles), was plainly marked by the "fires of the burning railroad. We could plainly see the "smoke of battle about Allatoona and hear the faint rever- "beration of the cannon."

The fact was disclosed that Hood lay in force near Dallas, 15 miles to the West and South of Kenesaw, and had detached a heavy column Eastward to destroy the railroad and capture the scattered garrisons including the all-important post of Allatoona.

About 8:30 a. m. Allatoona signalled Kenesaw, "Corse is here with one brigade; where is Sherman?" As received at Kenesaw this message read, "Corse is here with ——." My recollection is that while the signal officer was working his flag it was cut from his hands by a fragment of shell, inter-

rupting the message, the latter part of which was not received, or at least not recognized. I find, however, no official confirmation of this. The mutilated report gave Sherman immense relief, but left him to suppose that Corse had arrived with his entire division. Had he known that the reinforcement was only a portion of one brigade, his satisfaction would have been less. As he says himself, "I watched with painful suspense the indications of the battle raging there, \* \* \* but about 2 p. m. I noticed with satisfaction that the smoke of battle about Allatoona grew less and less, and ceased altogether about 4 p. m. \* \* \* Later in the afternoon the signal flag announced the welcome tidings that the attack had been fairly repulsed."

The signal officer at Kenesaw reports that Sherman at the time, pronounced these signal messages "Worth a million dollars."

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CORSE.

Leaving now this bird's eye view of what was happening, let us go back a little and follow Corse's movements. He had arrived at Rome from Atlanta September 27th, with two of his brigades, the third being already there,—and thereafter had been busy, in accordance with his general instructions and frequent communications from Sherman, in organizing and equipping his command for the special work entrusted to him, which was in effect to reconstruct and perfect the earthworks and defences, so as to make Rome impregnable to assault, and at the same time to act as a corps of observation, constantly feeling out for and spying after the enemy, and ready, should occasion offer, to strike a heavy blow in any direction where he should be discovered.

It was isolated, difficult and responsible service, and a dangerous one, since the first contact might be with Hood's

whole strength, but of the very first importance to Sherman, whose ignorance of Hood's schemes and inability to anticipate his movements, perplexed and harassed him, and upon Corse he mainly relied to discover, by any or all means, the movements and presence of the enemy.

Corse was well equipped for such service. He had acted as inspector on Sherman's staff, and stood high with his chief, both in personal regard and professional estimation. Of medium height, erect, active and alert, ambitious, combative, decided, of sound judgment and indomitable courage, the task of holding Allatoona could have fallen into no better hands. As Grant, giving over a page of his memoirs to mention of the battle, says of him, "Corse was a man who would never surrender."

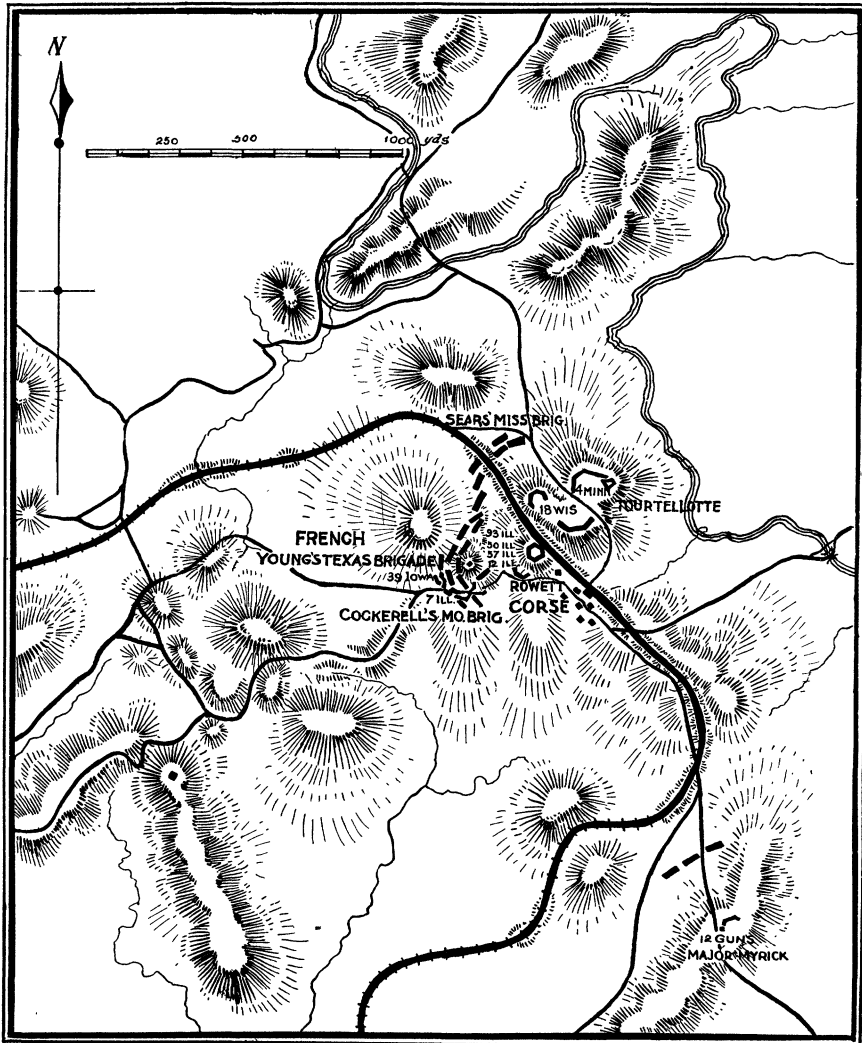
On the third of October Sherman sent him a warning to be wary, that Hood was meditating some plan on a large scale, and at noon of the 4th Corse received the message already mentioned, by signal from Vining's to Kenesaw, thence to Allatoona, and thence by wire to Rome, summoning him instantly to the rescue of the threatened garrison. Corse had fortunately already telegraphed to Kingston that cars be sent him. The train in moving to Rome was partly derailed, but the single engine and about twenty cars were ready by dark.

On these was loaded a portion of one of his brigades under command of Colonel Rowett, viz; Eight companies, 39th Iowa, 280 men, Lieut.-Colonel Redfield, commanding 9 companies, 7th Illinois, 291 men, Lieut.-Colonel Perrin, commanding; 8 companies, 50th Illinois, 267 men, Lieut.-Colonel Hanna commanding; 2 companies, 57th Illinois, 61 men, Captain Van Stienberg, commanding; detachment of the 12th Illinois, 155 men, Captain Koehler, commanding, making a total of 1,054 men, which, with the ammunition for the





SKETCH OF THE BATTLEFIELD.



division, was all that the available transportation could accommodate. The train left Rome at 8:30 p. m., and reached Allatoona a little after midnight. The troops were debarked, the ammunition unloaded with all speed, and the train immediately started back to Rome for another cargo of troops. As it happened, in returning, possibly with undue haste, considering the rough and insecure condition of the track and roadbed, the train was again derailed, and in consequence no further reinforcements reached Allatoona until about 8 p. m. of the 5th,—four hours after the battle was over.

Corse immediately took command, and after a rapid survey of the field with Tourtellotte, in the quiet of the starlit night, proceeded to make his dispositions for defence.

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#### THE DEFENCES OF ALLATOONA.

Allatoona was garrisoned as follows: Ten companies, 4th Minnesota, 450 men (of whom 185 were recent recruits), Major Edson, commanding; 10 companies, 93rd Illinois, 290 men, Major Fisher, commanding; 7 companies, 18th Wisconsin, 150 men, Lieut.-Colonel Jackson, commanding, a total of 890 men, organized as a brigade, with six guns of the 12th Wisconsin Battery, under Lieutenant Amsden (number of men not given), and all under the command of Lieut.-Colonel Tourtellotte of the 4th Minnesota, as earnest, brave and steadfast a man in the discharge of duty as ever drew a sword.

Prior to Corse's arrival, the little garrison, with a full consciousness of its responsibility for the defence of the Post and of the safety of the huge accumulation of rations stored in the neighboring warehouses, warned of danger, and later stimulated to the utmost endeavor by messages from Sher-

man, and inspired by the calm and fearless determination of its commander, had been busily preparing for the attack.

The two small redoubts, one on each side of the railway cut, have been mentioned. The Eastern one, perhaps 75 feet in diameter, stood at the extreme Eastern end of the ridge, looking into the valley of Allatoona Creek, and distant about 280 yards from the railroad and 340 yards from the Western redoubt, towards which it had an open view. Guarding the crooked crest between the railroad and redoubt were three detached lines of entrenchments, one looking Southward towards the storehouse 200 yards distant, and two guarding the Northern aspect, with flanks refused on each side of a ravine that lay between them and down which went a road to the Northward.

On the West side of the railway cut, and almost on its verge, stood the other redoubt, about 90 feet in diameter, occupying an elevation from which the ground fell in all directions. Westwardly, after a moderate dip, the ground rose again to a second elevation or spur, on which stood a house, distant from the redoubt about 170 yards. Beyond this the ground again fell, and the road ran West and Southwest, undulating with the roll of the ground. The exterior defences of the West side, in addition to the ditches surrounding the redoubt, were a short line of entrenchments near the crest Southwest of the redoubt, and a longer line of rifle-pits lying completely across the ridge, beyond the house and about 260 yards distant from the redoubt. These rifle-pits, held by the 39th Iowa and the 7th Illinois, were later the scene of one of the most savage encounters in the history of war.

About three-quarters of a mile out on the road, occupying an open elevation, were still other small works and rifle-pits, not, however, any portion of the regular defences. They had

low parapets and were supposed to have been constructed by Johnston's army when it occupied the locality in June previous. It was from these outer works, which there was, of course, no serious attempt to hold, that our outposts were driven in by the arrival of French's troops on the morning of the 5th.

Tourtellotte was made aware on the 3rd that the enemy was operating on the railroad South of him, and on the 4th was signalled by Sherman through Kenesaw that the enemy was moving upon him, and that he must hold out, but not till the evening of the 4th was any direct demonstration made on Allatoona.

Feeling the paucity of his isolated force, he had worked night and day to construct and strengthen his defences and mature his plans.

The two redoubts were well located for mutual support, each being able to take in flank an enemy assaulting the other from the North or South. The relative disadvantage of the West redoubt, irrespective of its exposure to the probable brunt of an attack, was the fact that higher elevations to the West and Southwest partly commanded it. Tourtellotte therefore built the rifle-pits across the crest of the ridge to the Westward with the object of holding off the enemy as long as possible, and if the crest were taken, of retiring to the redoubt, to reach which the enemy must cover a distance of some 220 yards without shelter. In addition, he partly enclosed the West redoubt with a stockade, at the junction of the outer slope and the surrounding ditch, to prevent escalade if the enemy should reach it, slashed such timber as remained for abattis, and collected some cotton bales with which to close the entrance.

His gunners in the East redoubt, and the infantry as well on the East side of the cut, were charged to watch the flanks

of the West redoubt, and direct their fire so as to cover the slopes to the North and South of it.

His garrison was depleted by his orders to maintain a force to guard the block house at the bridge across Allatoona Creek, about two miles South of the post, where three companies of the 18th Wisconsin were stationed.

They were summoned by French on his way to Allatoona to surrender, but refused, and held the block house, but as French was sullenly withdrawing after the battle, the post was heavily shelled and set on fire, and when the roof was blazing and the men suffocating with the heat and smoke, they surrendered; 4 officers and 80 men being taken prisoners. These men, though included in the return of casualties of the 18th Wisconsin, were not concerned in the Battle of Allatoona.

Tourtellotte, on the evening of the 4th, apprehending a night attack, which would impair the advantages of his position, strengthened his grand guard, barricaded as well as he might the roads to the South and West, and made arrangements to fire a house or two so as to illuminate the site of the little village and the storehouses; but about midnight was immensely relieved by the arrival of Corse, which more than doubled the strength of the garrison and made it possible to man the defences with some measure of effectiveness.

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#### THE MORNING OF THE BATTLE.

There was but little delay in getting down to work. By 2 in the morning a rapid fire was opened on the skirmish lines South of the post, as though the enemy were pushing up the railroad straight at the stores. Tourtellotte immediately dispatched the 18th Wisconsin to reinforce the outposts in that direction, and an hour later Corse threw out a battalion of the 7th Illinois in further support. Five com-

panies of the 93rd Illinois were also sent out to the Westward near the outlying works already referred to.

At daybreak, under cover of a strong skirmish line, Corse withdrew the troops from the open ground in the vicinity of the village to the summit of the ridge, placing the 4th Minnesota and the 12th and 50th Illinois in the redoubt, and intrenchments on the East side of the railway cut, under the immediate command of Tourtellotte, and himself occupying with the rest of his force, under the immediate command of Rowett, the Western side, upon which it was evident the weight of the attack must fall. The 7th Illinois and the 39th Iowa, on the left and right respectively, facing West, were ordered to occupy the line of rifle-pits crossing the ridge about 250 yards in advance of the redoubt. As no defences intervened between this line and the ditch encompassing the redoubt itself, it was of vital importance to hold it and keep the enemy in check to the last moment, and the two regiments were instructed to maintain their position at all hazards. The event proved with what fidelity and devotion the trust was discharged.

Three companies of the 93rd Illinois were stationed in the rifle-pits adjacent to the West redoubt, and the remainder of the troops were distributed forward on skirmish and outpost duty. The six guns of the battery were equally divided, two being stationed in each redoubt, with the third outside behind a low parapet.

The day broke calm and clear, with the crisp air and bright warm sun of that superb mountain region. Sherman, on Kenesaw, takes occasion to record it as a "beautiful day" with some vague consciousness in his mind, perhaps, of the contrast between the shining peace that reigned above and the devil's work that in smoke and fury waged below. At half-past six a rebel battery of 12 pieces opened from an eleva-

tion three-quarters of a mile South and East of Allatoona, and for two hours maintained a furious cannonade, that, concentrated upon the two redoubts, filled the air with smoke and fragments of shell, and deafened the ear with almost incessant detonations. Meanwhile French's skirmish lines were vigorously pushed round to the West and North until, with the exception of the steep and timbered valley of Allatoona Creek on the extreme East, the garrison was completely invested.

At 8:30, amid a temporary lull of the uproar that had prevailed, a flag of truce was sent in bearing the following message: It was dated

Around Allatoona, Oct. 5, 1864, 7 A. M.

Commanding Officer, U. S. Forces, Allatoona.

Sir:

I have placed the forces under my command in such position that you are surrounded, and to avoid a needless effusion of blood, I call on you to surrender your forces at once and unconditionally. Five minutes will be allowed you to decide. Should you accede to this, you will be treated in the most honorable manner as prisoners of war. I have the honor to be

Very respectfully yours,

S. G. FRENCH, Maj.-Gen'l C. S. A.

In making his report subsequently, French endorses on a copy of this summons, the following:

Maj. Sanders, the bearer of this communication, was attacked while bearing the flag of truce. He delivered the communication to an officer and told him he would wait outside the works fifteen minutes for an answer. None came; none was sent, and so the attack was made.

S. G. F., Maj.-Gen'l, Commanding.

Whatever may have been the external conditions that led to this view of the matter on the part of General French, there is no question that Corse did reply, and promptly and to the point. He wrote his answer on the top of a neighboring stump, and a splinter or two may have gotten in it:

Maj.-General French, C. S. A., etc. :

Your communication demanding surrender of my command, I acknowledge receipt of, and respectfully reply that we are prepared for the 'needless effusion of blood' whenever it is agreeable to you.

I am very respectfully your obedient servant,

JOHN M. CORSE,

Brigadier-General, Commanding U. S. Forces.

When this reply had been dispatched, Corse remarked, "They will now be upon us," and nothing remained but to notify the several commands of the purport of the correspondence, and to prepare for the bloody work that lay before them.

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French commanded a division in the corps of Lieutenant-General Stewart, which had been dispatched by Hood Eastward from Dallas to destroy the railroad, as witnessed by Sherman from the summit of Kenesaw, and his report, dated Nov. 5, from which the following particulars of his movements are derived, is of great interest.

Stewart had struck the railroad at Big Shanty, four miles North of Kenesaw on the evening of October 3rd, and his three divisions labored all night at their task, completing it as far as Acworth. This work accomplished, French's division was sent Northward under direct orders from Hood, which are given in French's report, and have some peculiar features. Both orders are dated October 4th, and were handed to French at Big Shanty by Stewart at noon. The earlier one said that French "Shall move up the railroad and fill up the deep cut at Allatoona with logs, brush, dirt etc." Also that when at Allatoona, French was, if possible, to move to the Etowah Bridge, the destruction of which would "be of great advantage to the army and the country." The second order again urged the importance of destroying the Etowah Bridge, if such were possible, and that as the



enemy (Sherman), could not disturb him before the next day, he was to "get his artillery in position and then call for volunteers with 'lightwood' to go to the bridge and burn it."

The curious points about these instructions are, in the first place, the absurdity of a wearied body of troops undertaking such a task as that of filling up a railway cut 65 feet deep and some 300 or 400 yards long, in the way described, with "logs and dirt" and the futility of doing it, if it were possible. It would have taken French several days to fill up that cut, even assuming him to be uninterfered with, and one day's labor would open it again.

The second point is the absence of any reference to a garrison at Allatoona, or to the accumulation of stores there. French was a good soldier, and after stating in his report that as both he and Stewart knew the facts in the case and were aware of the large amount of stores, they considered it important that the place be captured, contents himself with saying, dryly, "It would appear, however, from these orders, that the General-in-Chief was not aware that the Pass I was sent to have filled up was fortified and garrisoned." The fact is that it requires something more than mere courage to command an army, and it seems likely that a few such specimens of leadership cost Hood the confidence of his subordinates, and thoroughly justified Sherman in a disparaging remark he made respecting him a day or two later.

Stewart gave French 12 pieces of artillery under Major Myrick and at 3:30 P. M. of the 4th he marched away to Acworth, but was detained there until 11 at night by lack of rations. The night was dark, the roads bad, and he didn't know the country. From Acworth he reports seeing night signalling between Kenesaw and Allatoona, and fearing that reinforcements might be sent from the Northward, he dispatched a small cavalry force to reach the railroad as close

to the Etowah as possible and take up the rails. It was a wise precaution, but undertaken too late, as Corse was at Allatoona by midnight. French arrived there about 3 in the morning, and, as he writes, "Nothing could be seen but one or two twinkling lights on the opposite heights and nothing was heard except the occasional interchange of shots between our advance guards and the pickets of the garrison in the valley below." He placed his artillery in position at Moore's, 1300 yards south and east of the Post, an admirable location for the purpose intended, having an open view of the defences across the intervening hollow, left with it the 39th North Carolina and the 32nd Texas, of Young's brigade, as supports, and sought to gain the ridge west of the fortifications, intending to attack at daybreak, but after floundering in the Egyptian darkness of the forest, with no roads and over a rugged country, and unavailingly seeking, notwithstanding the aid of a guide, to get upon the ridge westward of the works, was compelled to wait for daylight. Finally at 7:30 the head of the column arrived about 600 yards distant from the West Redoubt, and here French got his first view of the works, which impressed him at once as much more formidable than he had anticipated. Instead of one small redoubt on each side of the railroad cut, as he had been led to believe, he declares he saw no less than three on the west side and a "Star Fort" on the east, with outworks and approaches, defended to a great distance by abattis, and nearer the forts by stockades and other obstructions. It may have been the weariness of a long night march, or perhaps the too early morning air, that conjured these formidable defences to French's eyes, or possibly, it is the exterior aspect of these works that to a covetous and hostile apprehension enlarges their numbers and proportions.

It must be admitted that from the interior standpoint

they shrunk mightily from French's description, and the defenders at least would have been hugely gratified could they have had the privilege of occupying what French thought he saw.

He rapidly made his dispositions for assault, sending Sear's Mississippi Brigade round by the left to gain the north flank of the works, while Cockerell's Missouri Brigade formed line across the ridge, with Young's Texas Brigade behind it to support and follow up the attack. Myrick had been ordered to open up with his guns and continue his fire until the attacking troops were so close up to the works as to prevent it. Sears, having the longer distance to traverse, was to begin the assault when Cockerell would immediately move forward. Sears was delayed by the ruggedness of his route to the north side of the works, and in fact for a time lost his bearings among the wooded hills, and was not in position until 9 a. m. by French's time. French says that when he sent his summons to surrender, the Federal officer entrusted with the missive was allowed 17 minutes within which to bring the answer, and this time expiring, Maj. Sanders returned without any. Nothing is said in the report as to the firing upon him, noted in the endorsement on the copy of the summons already mentioned.

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#### THE ASSAULT.

Cockerell was at length ordered forward and the attack began. According to French's account, everything went as successfully as possible. He represents the triple lines of intrenchments and Redoubts on the west side as being captured one after another, his troops resting but briefly at each to gather strength and survey the work before them, and again rushing forward in murderous hand-to-hand conflict

that left the ditches filled with dead, until they were masters of the "Second Redoubt," and the "Third or Main Redoubt" was filled with those driven from the captured works and further crowded by the refugees from the eastern fort and its defences, who had been driven out by the attack of Sears. He represents the Federal forces, their fire almost silenced, as being herded into the one Redoubt on the west, of which French's troops occupied the ditch and were preparing for the final attack.

At this critical moment, with the garrison and the precious stores, as it were, in the hollow of his hand, French received word that General Sherman, who had been "repeatedly signalled during the battle," was close behind him with his whole army, and within two miles of the road he would have to take to rejoin his corps.

On this point of Sherman's proximity to French as his reason for leaving, we have not only full knowledge of the exact position and movement of our troops to show that such was really not the case, but a brief piece of testimony from the other side in the shape of a dispatch from Major Mason, Hood's adjutant-general, from which it is evident that French, becoming hopeless of success, had sought in advance to justify at headquarters the failure of his enterprise. The date and hour of this dispatch, which reads as follows, are of interest:

"CARLEY'S HOUSE, Oct. 5, 1864. 8:15 p. m.

*Lt. Gen'l Stewart,*  
*Com'd'y Corps.*

General French's dispatch, forwarded by yourself, is just received. Gen. Hood directs me to say that he does not know where a division could march at this time to give any assistance to Gen. French, but that you will endeavor to send some scouts to him, and direct him to leave the railroad and march to the West, to New Hope Church.

Gen. Hood does not understand how Gen. French could be *cut off* at the point he designates in his dispatch, as he should have moved directly away from the railroad to the West, if he deemed his position precarious. A. P. M."

It is of course obvious from the map that if French found Sherman approaching from the South, he had only to follow westward the road up which he had been charging at Allatoona all day and free himself from danger in an hour. It would be of interest to see this dispatch of French's and observe the hour when sent, but it is not forthcoming. The hour of the reply is significant. It need not have taken a mounted man three hours to get word to Stewart, then near a junction with Hood and to Hood himself, less than 15 miles away. The reply, made at once, is written at 8:15 p. m., and French's message must certainly have been sent later than 4 p. m. French had probably been gone from Allatoona an hour or more when he bethought him to send the request for a division to extricate him.

The facts are, that it was not until the night of Oct. 5th that the nearest troops of Sherman's went into camp at Brushy Mountain, 11 miles distant in an air line, and none reached Allatoona until the 7th.

But to return to French. It was really an immense pity that he should feel obliged to leave just when he had but to put forth his hand to snatch the prize; but then it would not do to have his division cut off from the army, and on the whole it might be well to start, and if so, why not at once?

So about 1:30 he says an order was sent to Sears and Cockerell to withdraw. The ground was too rough to carry badly wounded men over it, so that those who could not get away on their own feet had to be left.

The artillery, unable to operate effectively with the assaulting column close up on the works, had already been in part ordered to take the road, and after the assaulting troops had left, French went to the two regiments who had supported it, and sent a battery to the block house at the railway crossing of Allatoona Creek, fired fifty shots at it, knocked it about

the ears of the garrison, and setting fire to it, smoked them out and marched them off as prisoners.

French's report of this affair, written a month later, from which the above is condensed, is very interesting and dramatic, and regarded as a literary composition, of no mean merit. He has certainly made the best of a bad business, and if his facts do not quite tally with those of his opponents, at least the discrepancies were not officially noticed at headquarters, nor probably would a gloomier account of the affair have been considered more inspiring. Those rations would have been extremely convenient, could they, or even a part of them, have been hauled away for distribution among the hungry Confederates, and if that were impracticable, it would have been at least a noble stroke to have destroyed them. On this head French's report is silent; nor does he endeavor to explain how it happened that so vital a part of his own program was omitted. In effect, the play had been badly broken up by the attentions of the gallery, and Hamlet had slipped out of it.

French is without excuse for his fear of Sherman's approach, baseless as we know it to have been. Armstrong is responsible for despatches to him suggesting it. All the same, the evidence is conclusive that French was beaten, that he knew it, and that he had to withdraw quite independently of Sherman's movements.

A Confederate historian, R. S. Bevier, writes as follows on this point: "The men of French's Division had now become so much scattered that it was impossible to gather a sufficient number to give any hope of successful assault on the Fort."

What can wholly be pardoned to French is the unstinted commendation he bestows on the gallantry of his men.

These poor fellows, ragged and hungry, with but a handful or two of parched corn in their haversacks, had marched

all day on the 3rd; had worked all that night destroying the railroad; had worked and marched all day on the 4th; had marched to Allatoona during that night, and had fought nearly all day on the 5th. Nor is it forbidden to those who felt the vigor of their dashing onset and the undaunted determination with which they rallied again and again to the assault of the intrenchments, or who witnessed the hand-to-hand encounters with sword and bayonet, with butts of guns, and even with loose pieces of rock, to appreciate the intrepidity and resolution with which they hung to their bloody and fruitless task.

Brave men may honor bravery the world over. We can in all sympathy and common brotherhood say: "They were of our blood and race. Peace to their ashes. Give us the like to stand side by side with us, and we could fear no quarrel, were it with the whole round world."

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#### THE DEFENCE.

Having glanced at the situation from French's standpoint, let us step over to the other side, as we may safely do at this lapse of time, and see how it actually fared with the beleaguered garrison which we left in momentary expectation of attack; and since General French has been heard, it is no more than fair to quote from the graphic reports of the federal commander.

After narrating his preliminary movements, and the stations of the troops, he proceeds:

"I directed Col. Rowett to hold the spur on which the 39th Iowa and 7th Illinois were formed, \* \* \* and taking two companies of the 93rd Illinois down a spur parallel with the railroad and along the bank of the cut, so disposed them as to hold the north side as long as possible. Three companies of the 93rd, which had been driven from the west end of the ridge, were distributed in the ditch South of the Redoubt, with instructions to keep the town well covered by

their fire, and to watch the depot where the rations were stored. The remaining battalion of the 93rd, under Major Fisher, lay between the Redoubt and Rowett's line, ready to reinforce wherever most needed.

"I had barely issued the orders when the storm broke in all its fury on the 39th Iowa and 7th Illinois. Young's Brigade of Texans had gained the west end of the ridge and moved with great impetuosity along its crest till they struck Rowett's command, when they received a severe check, but undaunted came again and again. Rowett, reinforced by the gallant Redfield, encouraged me to hope we were safe here, when I observed General Sears' brigade moving from the North, its left extending across the railroad (opposite Tourtellotte). I rushed to the two companies of the 93rd Illinois, which were on the brink of the cut running north from the Redoubt, they having been reinforced by the retreating pickets, and urged them to hold on to the spur; but it was of no avail; the enemy's line of battle swept us back like so much chaff, and struck the 39th Iowa in flank, threatening to engulf our little band without further ado. Fortunately for us, Col. Tourtellotte's fire caught Sears in flank, and broke him so badly as to enable me to get a staff officer over the cut with orders to bring the 50th Illinois over to reinforce Rowett, who had lost very heavily. However, before the regiment sent for could arrive, Sears and Young both rallied, and made their assaults in front and on the flank with so much vigor and in such force as to break Rowett's line, and had not the 39th Iowa fought with the desperation it did, I never would have been able to get a man back inside the Redoubt; as it was, their hand-to-hand conflict and stubborn stand broke the enemy to that extent that he must stop and reform before undertaking the assault on the fort. Under cover of the blows they gave the enemy, the 7th and 93rd Illinois, and what remained of the 39th Iowa, fell back into the fort.

"The fighting up to this time—about 11 a. m.—was of the most extraordinary character. Attacked from the north, from the west and from the south, these three regiments—39th Iowa and 7th and 93rd Illinois—held Young's and a portion of Sears' and Cockerell's brigades at bay for nearly two hours and a half. The gallant Col. Redfield, of the 39th Iowa, fell, shot in four places, and the extraordinary valor of the men and officers of this regiment, and of the 7th Illinois, saved to us Allatoona.

"So completely disorganized were the enemy, that no regular assault could be made on the fort till I had the trenches all filled and the parapets lined with men. The 12th and 50th Illinois arriving from the east hill, enabled us to occupy every foot of trench, and keep up a line of fire that, as long as our ammunition lasted, would render our little fort impregnable. The broken pieces of the enemy enabled them to fill every hollow and take every advantage of the rough ground surrounding the fort, filling every hole and trench, seeking shelter behind every



stump and log that lay within musket range of the fort. We received their fire from the north, south and west of the Redoubt, completely enflading our ditches, and rendering it almost impracticable for a man to expose his person above the parapet. An effort was made to carry our works by assault, but the battery (12th Wisconsin) was so ably manned and so gallantly fought as to render it impossible for a column to live within one hundred yards of the work. Officers labored constantly to stimulate the men to exertions, and almost all that were killed or wounded in the fort met their fate while trying to get the men to expose themselves above the parapet and nobly setting them the example.

“The enemy kept up a constant and intense fire, gradually closing around us and rapidly filling our little fort with the dead or dying. About 1 p. m. I was wounded by a rifle ball that rendered me insensible for some thirty or forty minutes, but managed to rally on hearing some persons cry, ‘Cease firing,’ which conveyed to me the impression that they were trying to surrender the fort.

“Again I urged my staff, the few officers left unhurt, and the men around me, to renewed exertions, assuring them that Sherman would soon be there with reinforcements. The gallant fellows struggled to keep their heads above the ditch and parapet in face of the murderous fire of the enemy, now concentrated upon us. The artillery was silent, and a brave fellow, whose name I regret having forgotten, volunteered to cross the railway cut which was under fire of the enemy and go to the fort on the east hill to procure ammunition. Having executed his mission successfully, he returned in a short time with an arm load of canister and case shot. About 2:30 p. m. the enemy were observed massing a force behind a small house and the ridge on which the house was located distant northwest from the fort about 150 yards. The dead and wounded were moved aside so as to enable us to move a piece of artillery to an embrasure commanding the house and ridge. A few shots from the gun threw the enemy’s column into great confusion, which being observed by our men, caused them to rush to the parapet and open such a heavy and continuous musketry fire that it was impossible for the enemy to rally. From this time until near 4 p. m. we had the advantage of the enemy, and maintained it with such success that they were driven from every position and finally fled in confusion, leaving their dead and wounded, and our little garrison in possession of the field.

“The hill east of the cut was gallantly and successfully defended by Col. Tourtellotte, with the 4th Minnesota and a portion of the 18th Wisconsin (which was drawn from outpost duty towards the south about 10:30). \* \* \* Col. Tourtellotte, though wounded in the early part of the action, remained with his men until the close, and rendered valuable aid in protecting my north front from the repeated attacks by Sears’ brigade.”

A notable struggle truly and stirringly told, even though the limitations of an official report forbid that amplification of incident that would make as thrilling a tale as tongue could utter. From start to finish, seven solid hours of as desperate fighting as ever was done under the sky of heaven, and with multiplied acts of individual heroism that would tax the pen of Homer to narrate.

With the exception of about 250 rounds, the supply of ammunition brought from Rome for the entire Division, had been expended by a portion of a single brigade.

Every one of the subordinate commanders' reports on both sides bears testimony to the unparalleled fierceness and concentration of the struggle, and the closeness and duration of the action, and the terrific slaughter; and these reports, it may be noted, are made by the ruggedest of Sherman's and French's veterans—men inured to war in every aspect, and as familiar with bloody battle-fields as we of to-day with the street we daily tread. In reading these scant records, one scarce knows whether to admire the more the daring vigor and persistence of the attack, or the spirit, valor and heroic determination of the defence. With both it was "To do or die," and each can feel that none, save his rival, can challenge supremacy in war-like exploit.

Corse's signal dispatch to Sherman after the fight can therefore well be excused, "I am short a cheek-bone and an ear, but able to whip all h—l yet."

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#### INCIDENTS OF THE BATTLE.

It is a thousand pities that the many notable incidents of this fight are not on record; but, so far as I am aware, no one has sought to gather them in any complete and authentic form.

Corse caught his wound about 1 o'clock while scanning the movements and position of the enemy from the Redoubt. It was a close call for his life, the ball ploughing his cheek and splitting his ear, and, as might be imagined, dazing him. A surgeon took him in charge and ministered as well as the circumstances permitted. At intervals Corse was unconscious, but rallied from time to time, as though the spirit within him crowded itself up through the physical deadening of his senses. At one of these occasions he caught the words "Cease firing," and as mentioned in his report, feared some attempt to surrender. On this point, in a private letter, he speaks as follows: "Do you remember our losing a large number of Springfield rifled muskets that exploded near the muzzle after becoming foul from over-shooting? I saw some that had exploded, say about the shank of the bayonet. It was so phenomenal as to make a decided impression on my mind at the time. I think a large number of these must have been lost, and when the order was given to cease firing, it was under the impression that if the men were not given a chance to clean their guns, we would lose them all and be overwhelmed. My impression, you remember, at the time was that the order to cease firing meant surrender, but Rowett removed that impression in subsequent interviews, during and after the war."

Rowett's order to "Cease firing" had, of course, nothing to do with the cry of "Surrender." It is true that there were men in that Redoubt ready to surrender or to do anything else in order to get out of it alive. Happily these were few, and most of them lay prone, close under the parapet, "playing dead," with the combatants and wounded standing and sitting upon them. If I mistake not, Corse himself, at least for a time, was holding down of these "living corpses" who preferred to endure all the pain and discomfort of his

position rather than get up and face the deadly music that filled the air with leaden notes. It came about this way: The Redoubt was crowded, and as bloody as a slaughter pen. In its actual construction the parapet encircled a higher elevation in the center, which had not been sufficiently excavated, so that a man standing, or in fact, lying, in the middle of the work was exposed to bullets coming in close over the parapet. It was absolutely necessary to keep room for the fighting force along the parapet, so the wounded were drawn back, and in some cases were shot over and over again. The dead were disposed of in the same way, except that as the ground became covered with them they were let lie as they fell, and were stood or sat upon by the fighters. Several of the "skulkers" lay among these, but a few were in the ranks. The slaughter had been frightful. One of our guns was disabled from the jamming of a shot, and we were out of ammunition for the other two, thereby losing both the deterrent effect upon the enemy, and the moral encouragement that the friendly roar of cannon always gives to infantry in action. I recall distinctly the fact that a regimental flagstaff on the parapet, which had been several times shot away, fell again at a critical moment towards the end of the action. There was a mad yell from our friends outside and a few cries of "Surrender" among our own people, but a brave fellow leaped to the summit of the parapet, where it did not seem possible to live for a single second, grasped the flagstaff, waved it, drove the stump into the parapet, and dropped back again unhurt. Of course nobody knows the name of that man, but his action restored confidence, and a great Yankee cheer drowned the tumult, and no cry of "Surrender" was afterwards heard.

What saved us that day—among forty other things—was the fact that we had a number of Henry rifles (16-shooters),

since improved and known as "Winchesters." These were new guns in those days, and Rowett, as I remember, had held in reserve a company of an Illinois Regiment that was armed with them until a final assault should be made. When the artillery reopened, after the incident related by Corse of the man crossing the cut and coming back with an armful of case shot, this company of 16-shooters sprang to the parapet and poured out such a multiplied, rapid, and deadly fire that no men could stay in front of it, and no serious effort was thereafter made to take the fort by assault.

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It is not possible, within any reasonable limits, for a paper already too long for your patience, to undertake the recital of the numerous thrilling incidents. One may be mentioned:

An artillery sergeant, whose gun was at first stationed outside the fort behind an exterior parapet, was driven in by the rush of the enemy, and his men being all killed, he had to abandon it. Wounded himself in several places, he came into the Redoubt, frothing with rage at the loss of his piece, and demanded a crew of volunteers to go out with him and get it. Notwithstanding the deadly fire, he got them, and in three minutes was back with his recovered prize with more wounds to his account. A bloodier man was never seen, but he kept at his work, loading and firing, until a musket ball passed through his neck, and he dropped dead. The same ball traversed the body of an Iowa officer, with whom I was standing further back, and then struck me with force enough to take my breath. That ball had killed two men, and I preserved it with the name and date of the battle scratched on its but slightly distorted surface.

On Tourtellotte's side a grim war comedy was enacted. The remains of two Mississippi Regiments—the 35th and 39th of Sears' brigade, that had charged with desperation,

found themselves as the surge of battle that broke upon the hill went back, lodged in a sheltered depression of the north front, whence they could move neither up nor down without concentrating upon themselves the fire of Tourtellotte's whole front. Unable to determine what course to take, they remained where they were to think it over, and Tourtellotte, observing their embarrassment, thoughtfully sent a portion of the 4th Minnesota to their rescue and invited them to come in. One field and several line officers and 80 men with the colors of the two regiments were the reward of the Yankee courtesy.

After the fight was over we thankfully emerged from the shambles and went out to survey the field. The dead, the dying and the wounded lay everywhere. The ditches immediately outside the Redoubt were crammed with corpses. There were dead rebels within 100 feet of the work, and they were piled in stacks near the house where they had massed for the final assault which was never made, against the reopened artillery, and the rattle of the Henry rifles. But the appalling center of the tragedy was the pit in which lay the heroes of the 39th Iowa and the 7th Illinois. Such a sight probably was never before presented to the eye of heaven. There is no language to describe it. With all the glad reaction of feeling after the prolonged strain of that mortal day, and the exultant surge of victory that swelled our hearts, it was difficult to stand on the verge of that open grave without a rush of tears to the eye and a spasm of pity clutching at the throat. The trench was crowded with the dead, blue and homespun, Yank and Johnny, inextricably mingled in their last ditch. Our heroes, ordered to hold the place to the last, with supreme fidelity, had died at their posts. As the rebel line run over them, they struck up with their bayonets as the foe struck down, and rolling together in the

embrace of death, we found them in some cases mutually transfixed. The theme cannot be dwelt upon.

For relief, take another one, so unique in the circumstances that I doubt at times my own recollection of it. It was in the morning when French first gained the west end of the ridge. The 93rd Illinois was in the vicinity of the outworks, a quarter of a mile or so from the Redoubt. I had been reconnoitering the ground, and the rebel column charged us sharply and without warning. We ran, of course, but in passing through or rather over an old work of low relief, one of our men stooped, grabbed a brick and turned. Curiosity overcame discretion, and I had to look. He threw the brick straight as a bullet at a rebel running toward us, and if I may be believed, the brick caught the man full in the face, and he went down like a log.

One more incident, and I am done. After the battle the wounded of both sides were collected, housed and cared for. One of the surgeons invited me to come to the hospital with him, and on the way said he had a wounded woman there. I expressed surprise, and he said: "See if you can pick her out." We went through the hospital, and I saw no woman, but passing through again on the way back, the doctor stopped at a bed where a tanned and freckled young rebel, hands and face grimy with dirt and powder, lay resting on an elbow, smoking a corn-cob pipe. The doctor inquired, "How do you feel?" and the answer was, "Pretty well, but my leg hurts like the devil." As we turned, the doctor said, "That is the woman," and told me that she belonged to the Missouri Brigade, had had a husband and one or two brothers in one of the regiments, and followed them to the war. When they were all killed, having no home but the regiment, she took a musket and served in the ranks. Like an actor of the old Greek dramas, war has its two masks of tragedy

and comedy, although it is difficult at times to determine to which the antiphonal scene belongs—so of this case. It is perhaps not proper in such a paper as this to expose or call attention to the shifts to which the Confederates were forced to fill their ranks, but the incident may be told nevertheless.

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THE STORES SAVED.

The stores which had cost such heroic endeavor and expenditure of life, were saved; the stores, which, as Corse says in a private letter, “would have been such a prize as Hood in all his long and bloody career as a soldier had never secured.” This fact is due, independently of the main action, largely to the coolness and vigilance of Tourtellotte, who in addition to fighting Sears on his north front and flanking the attacks on the west Redoubt, kept his mind charged with the protection of the warehouses, even while his wound forced him to physical inaction. As has been stated, he pushed out the 18th Wisconsin to the southward to hold back the two regiments which were in front of the rebel batteries, and only withdrew them at 10:30 when the assaulting column had reached a point in front of the west Redoubt, whence it had a fire upon the rear of the outlying command. Thereafter Tourtellotte kept a wary eye out towards the stores, with men in his southern rifle pit and its vicinity constantly on guard, and cautioned to unceasing vigilance, and although several attempts were made by individuals and small parties to reach the warehouses and fire them, they died on the way and none of them ever attained their destination. We found several bodies scattered about in the vicinity, and one of them within 20 feet of the buildings, with the implements in his hand for firing them.

As to the amount of these stores, General Sherman, in his Memoirs, says there were “over a million rations of



bread," probably with Corse's report at hand, in which the number is incorrectly stated at that amount. Cox, in his "Atlanta," gives it more accurately at "nearly three millions." The actual figures (2,700,000) are given in a letter from Sherman to Corse in acknowledging, on October 7th, Corse's preliminary report of the same day.

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THE LOSSES.

Corse's losses in this battle, from the full official records, were 142 killed, 352 wounded, and omitting those captured at the block house two miles away, 128 prisoners; a total loss of 622—nearly one-third his entire command.

French in his report estimates that he had killed and wounded 750, and captured 205—which, with the block house prisoners, would make a total loss inflicted on Corse of over 1000, which is over 50 per cent. too much.

French's losses are not known. With his report he gives a tabulated list of casualties by brigades, which shows footings of 122 killed, 443 wounded and 243 missing—a total of 799. Sears, however, whose report of casualties is the only one accessible to me, reports in his brigade alone a total loss of 425—as against 351 attributed to him in French's schedule, which is an increase of 21 per cent. Young and Cokerell must have lost at least as heavily as Sears, and having charged our line repeatedly and had several encounters at close quarters, probably more so. Allowing for these facts, it is perhaps nearer correct to increase French's statement of loss by 25 per cent., which would make it almost exactly 1000 men. As Corse actually buried 231 rebel dead, captured 411 prisoners, well and wounded, and picked up 800 stand of arms, and as French left behind him, according to his own account, only those of his wounded who needed litters to

move them, we must add to the 644 rebels accounted for by Corse at least 400 or 500 wounded who got away when French left, or previously. French's total loss could not have been much less than 1100 or 1200.

The number of troops with him cannot be determined. He gives it as "but little over 2000 men," in which case he lost more than half his entire number, but he omits three regiments as forming no part of the assaulting column. He refers to those supporting the artillery, but these men were in the engagement, kept the 18th Wisconsin in their front, and French thanks their leader, Col. Andrews, "who commanded on the south side," and Major Myrick, who commanded the artillery. French's field report for Sept. 24th showed "Present for Duty" 331 officers and 2945 men; an "Effective Present" of 3626, and an "Aggregate Present" of 4347. He probably had not less than 3000 with him at Allatoona engaged in action, in which case his total loss was proportionally the same as ours, viz., about one-third.

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#### REPORTING TO SHERMAN.

On the morning of the 7th Corse sent me down to Kennesaw to take his report to Sherman, and supplement the gaps in the information which his wound forbade elaborating. As I reached the summit of the mountain, conscious of bearing welcome and important tidings of great joy, and considering what special form Sherman's delight might take, I found him surrounded by a group of generals and staff scanning with binoculars the long clouds of dust that, rising above the forest to the westward, betokened a great movement of troops. It was Hood en route northward. As Sherman turned and saw me, his greeting was, "Hello! How's Corse?" I answered that he was doing very well, and Sherman glanced

over the report which I handed him, and inquired, "Pretty hot, wasn't it?" and without waiting for an answer, said, "I knew it was all right when Corse got there; I'll write him presently." As I stood, anxiously waiting an invitation to unbosom myself of the accumulated information that it wearied me to carry, he turned back to take another look at Hood, and some one asked, "General, what do you think Hood is going to do?" Sherman replied, with an outburst of irritation, "How the devil can I tell? If it were Joe Johnston now—Johnston was a sensible man and did sensible things. Hood is a d—d fool and is liable to do anything." This view of his antagonist is, it will be observed, paraphrased in his letter to Corse, written immediately after, into "Hood is eccentric," but his off-hand response was substantially as I have given it.

My interview was over. Nor since that time, until this evening, have I had a chance to "unload."

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#### CONCLUSION.

This practically closes the sketch of Allatoona. I can only hope that it will avail to furnish some material for a proper history of that memorable affair.

Sherman published his congratulatory Special Field Orders, No. 86, dated Oct. 7th, proclaiming the vital military principle that fortified points must always be defended to the last, regardless of numbers, declaring the "effusion of blood" at Allatoona not "useless," as the position "was and is very important to present and future operations," and thanking Corse and Tourtellotte and their men for their determined and gallant defence.

Just how important to his future operations was the suc-

cessful defence of Allatoona may be judged from what followed.

October 9th Sherman telegraphed to Grant with renewed urgency that the march to Savannah must be made, and stated, to show his preparation, "We have on hand over 8000 head of cattle and three million rations of bread."

In other words, the Allatoona stores, 2,700,000 rations, were practically all he had.

Sherman impatiently chased Hood northward, seeking to corner and devour him. But Hood, living off the country and traveling light, could go two miles to Sherman's one, and there was no catching him. Weary of the harassing and fruitless hunt, Sherman insisted that his March to Savannah be not delayed, and on Oct. 19th to be in readiness for it, telegraphed his chief commissary at Atlanta, "Have on hand 30 days' food." Say, 1,800,000 rations, two-thirds of the Allatoona stores, which were supplies for 60,000 men for 45 days.

November 2nd Grant for the first time authorized the March.

Sherman abandoned Hood to his own devices, and the unhappy rebel leader, pressing northward, was heavily thrown in his encounter with Schofield at Franklin, and finally dashed himself to pieces against the "Rock of Chickamauga," the noble George H. Thomas, lying vigilant within the defences of Nashville, and like an old lion, silently licking his chops as he watched his prey draw nigh.

November 12th Sherman, having stripped his railroad, cut the telegraph wires that no message of delay might reach him, loaded his teams, marched his 60,000 men for Savannah, and, although he "lived off the country," got there with empty wagons.

With Hood and Forrest in his rear and on his railroad, how was he to accumulate a fresh store of provision, and what would have become of the "March to the Sea" if Allatoona had been lost?

WILLIAM LUDLOW.

PERSONAL EXPERIENCES  
OF THE  
EARLY DAYS OF 1861.

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A PAPER  
READ BEFORE THE  
MICHIGAN COMMANDERY  
OF THE  
MILITARY ORDER OF THE LOYAL LEGION OF THE U. S.

BY  
COMPANION JAMES T. STERLING,

BVT. COLONEL U. S. V.

AT  
DETROIT, MARCH 30, 1892.

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DETROIT, MICH.:  
WINN & HAMMOND, PRINTERS AND BINDERS,  
1892.



## Personal Experiences of the Early Days of 1861.

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### *Commander and Companions :*

In an unguarded moment, fascinated by the eloquent appeal of our commander, I consented to prepare and read a paper of some kind to you at this meeting. A thousand times since would I have given anything to have been relieved from that promise, not but that I was perfectly willing to spend the time necessary in preparing something for your edification ; not that I did not fully appreciate the duty we owe one to the other, but the feeling of my inability to make it a palatable dose. Therefore, "don't view me with a critic's eye." In looking backward to the days I started out for a soldier, if I succeed while relating any of my experiences in recalling to your minds any pleasant recollections of those days, or if this act of mine will lead any of you to tell your reminiscences, I shall be fully paid for the time spent.

It has been said, and never disputed, that the Union Army could furnish men equal to any undertaking, mechanical or engineering, and carry it to a successful issue. As soldiers in '61, how ignorant? My soldier life began at Camp Taylor, Cleveland, Ohio, in April, '61, where every morning could be seen the portly form of Gen. Fitch, with his staff resplendent in blue and gold, *on foot*, leading the band as it beat off at guard mounting! What an enthusiastic welcome we gave



Jim Steadman when he entered our camp at the head of what appeared to be a mob, which after became one of the most gallant regiments from Ohio, their leader's only badge of office being a huge club. Again I seem to hear the very pleasant voice of the captain of Company C, saying, "Gentlemen, please to shoulder arms," and yet these men of ignorance afterward distinguished themselves as soldiers. I doubt if there is a man before me who could not give some example of a personal nature (regulars excepted) that would equal for ignorance anything I may be able to tell. At the same time I am aware I am relating my experience, not yours, that I am the victim, not you.

Early in May I left Cleveland with the 7th regiment O. V. I. as 1st Lieutenant, Company B. The following day we reached Camp Dennison. Up to this time we had been furnished cooked rations and a table to eat from. Here we found everything different. It was simply a question to cook our rations, eat them raw or go without. The captain ordered me to detail some men and draw rations for the company. I found the commissary located in a barn not far from our camp. Boldly, with no thought of refusal, I presented myself before him and demanded rations for one hundred men of Company B, 7th O. V. I. "Where is your requisition?" What's that? I never heard of it before. I want rations for a company of hungry men. "Well you can't have them until you furnish a proper requisition." And how am I to get one? "Out of the book." As if there wasn't but one book in the world. I know of several, I said. Never saw a requisition in any of them. "The Blue Book, didn't you ever hear of that?" and *such* a look of pity as he gave me for my ignorance. Under his direction I found the precious volume of the indigo hue, and he was kind enough to point out the proper form, but as it turned out not quite

as particular as he should have been, he objected to my tearing out the leaf, said I must copy it ; I borrowed a sheet of paper and using a barrel head for a table, succeeded after much labor in transferring the form upon paper and having filled it out with what I wanted in the way of eatables, as I had been instructed, I again entered the presence of my friend the commissary, confident that I would get my provisions now. He looked at the result of my labors and said, "It must be approved." I'll do that, I calmly said. "No, that won't do. The commandant of the camp must approve all requisitions." His headquarters were a mile away, through the worst kind of mud. It had to be done. I waded up there and back, got my requisition approved, and once again was in the presence of the presiding genius of the ration department, certain in my own mind that I was to get what I had labored so diligently for. I said, please hurry up, the boys are getting very hungry. I never shall forget the look he gave me, and how my heart went right down into my boots when he said, "I can't give you anything on that. You have made a requisition for commissary supplies on a quartermaster's blank for stores." I *never* forgot that lesson. It was some time before Company B forgot it, or I heard the last of it.

It is not my intention to weary you by a detailed history of the movements of the 7th, only to relate the account of one march of Companies H and B. Our regiment left Camp Dennison the afternoon of June 26th, 1861, the following day crossed the Ohio river at a little town called Benwood, a few miles below Wheeling. Then we felt that we were in the enemy's country. We continued our ride until the following day, when we went into camp near the small village of Clarksburg, and it was many months before we again saw a railroad. Here we remained several days, then made a

forced march of thirty miles to Weston, where we captured thirty thousand dollars of rebel gold. At least that was what we went for, and what we were told we accomplished, although none of us saw any of it, I mean the rank and file. We had just begun to enjoy ourselves in camp when Companies H and B were ordered to proceed to Glenville and relieve Colonel Pond who was in command at that point with a part of the 17th Ohio Infantry, three months' men, whose time was about to expire. Glenville was the county seat of Gilmer County, and had been a red hot rebel town when Col. Pond occupied it. Bright and early Sunday morning, July 5th, Companies H and B moved out of camp and took up the line of march for Glenville, expecting only a monotonous tramp of twenty-seven miles, not anticipating anything in the way of excitement, or that would impress it upon our memories for long years after, and in '64 or '65 it would have been of no account, but I am trying to recall events of '61 as they seemed to us then. Capt. Asper, of Company H, ranked the Captain of Company B, (I forgot to state that I had been promoted to captain before leaving Camp Dennison) and was in command of the expedition.

Marching in our very best style, for the people were all out to see us, we soon left the town of Weston behind, and with route step and frequent halts, we plodded along till about eleven, when, after being halted and guns stacked, we were informed that owing to the oppressive heat we were to remain there until 4 p. m. With the usual shout ranks were broken and the boys scattered through the grove where we had halted, seeking all the comfort the situation offered. Hardly had we settled down for our rest when the rapid approach of horses' feet was heard, and suddenly round the bend came a solitary horseman at the top of his speed. Seeing the troops he drew rein, and asked for the commanding officer.

Capt. Asper was called, when the stranger stated that Col. Pond had been surrounded at Glenville by Gen. Floyd with fifteen hundred to two thousand men, that they had been fighting since daylight and wanted help. "Fall in" was sounded and in a few minutes we were again on the road. Heat and fatigue were forgotten; the one thought was, our comrades are in danger, have asked for help, and go we must. The news was at once sent back to Col. Tyler, commanding at Weston, with the information that we would push on as far as possible and endeavor to communicate with Col. Pond and let him know that reinforcements were on the way. With occasional short halts, we continued our march until dark, when it was deemed prudent to go into camp until something definite could be heard from Pond. All the afternoon we had been entertained by the most heartrending accounts of the slaughter going on at Glenville. As we could hear no firing, and having reached a point where it had been heard, so the natives told us, the problem left for us to solve was, had darkness caused the cessation of hostilities, or had Pond surrendered? The writer had been taken suddenly ill and had to find a bed. Capt. Asper with a few men went out seeking some definite information, and returned in about one hour, knowing but little more than when they started. They had, however, secured the services of about fifty men who claimed to be loyal. These had been stationed at a point on the road to Glenville about one mile from camp as a guard, and they had promised to remain until relieved, so we felt secure from that quarter. As Capt. Asper was unwilling to assume the responsibility of his position and act accordingly, it was decided to hold a council of war and the officers of both companies were invited to be present, and for my convenience they were asked to meet in my room. All the officers came, and after a full discussion we were united upon

one plan, and that was that communication with Col. Pond must be opened. The question then was who would go? Your humble servant was chosen, and the events I am about to describe I will vouch for as a sure cure for bilious colic. Capt. H. had secured a guide who said he was a Union man and a horse for me to ride. We started, as far as I was concerned; determined to reach Glenville or die in the attempt. Charge that to youthful enthusiasm. Riding quietly along, suddenly we were greeted with the summons of "who goes there." Reply went back, "friends." Then came the question, "friends of who?" There was the sticker! Were they Rebels, were they Union? Remember, this was the first time I had had the pleasure (?) of looking at a loaded musket pointed at me by a being that might glory in the thought that he had killed a Yankee. You that have been there know how fast one's thoughts travel under such surroundings. Among other things I remembered that my good mother had told me always to tell the truth. Then I wondered what she would do under the same circumstances. Then came the thought, how glorious to die for having spoken the truth. I could have a little hatchet engraved on my tombstone. At any rate, feeling that my mother would be responsible for the result, I sung out "friend of the Union." Then came the welcome reply, "advance, friends!" It seemed I had struck the countersign, Union, and these were the home guard stationed by Capt. Asper. In my hurry of leaving I had neglected to give the countersign, indeed had forgotten all about the men, or I should not have been so scared when we met. They treated us to a hearty reception, but when told what we proposed to do, said it was impossible, we would be captured, if not killed, that there was in that county a company of rebel home guards, that they were in the habit of meeting in a house at the foot of the

hill which we would be compelled to pass. One of the party was quite sure he had seen a number of men going in that direction that very afternoon. Undoubtedly they were to have a meeting that night. Had I consulted my own inclination I should have turned back then and there. Finding that my guide was willing to go on I concluded to take the chances. Should have felt better had I been sure whether my guide was rebel or Union, but I was in for it. Silently we picked our way down the hill until the outline of the house above referred to could be seen. Suddenly the guide stopped, saying, "Did you see that?" What? I replied. "The lights in the house." Sure enough, I saw what appeared to be several lights moving from room to room. Again came the temptation to turn back. If they are there they undoubtedly have a guard in the road, possibly in the fields, I thought. I prefer to take my chances in the road. Turning to my companion I said, You are a stranger to me. I know not whether you are what you claim to be or not. I propose to run the guard that undoubtedly is in front or near that house. You will lead. If you attempt to stop I will try the effect of my pistol on you. I gave the word, and with the help of our spurs we succeeded in getting up "right smart" speed. Reaching the front of the house I called a halt and burst out laughing. The lights that had scared us so were fire-flies. Nothing farther of interest occurred for some time, when turning a sharp corner we with one breath called out "halt, surrender," which command was obeyed at once and we discovered that we each had a prisoner, good loyal men as they claimed and afterward proved to be, and it was well for us that they were, for we, anxious to get information, dismounted and accompanied our captives to the house of one of them. They practically substantiated the rumors we had heard during the day, but were unable to say how the fight

had terminated, but were of the opinion that Pond still held the town, although his usual picket was not to be found at the point previously occupied by them. They had been down to see. That Floyd's forces surrounded the place they had no doubt, and no offer I could make would induce either of them to guide me through the woods to Pond's camp. According to their statement the road was impracticable. My guide knew of no other route, and neither of these men would go with me, I concluded, in view of the situation, and the approach of daylight, it was better to bring up our men than to take any chances of being captured, which would not help either Pond, or Asper. Very reluctantly we mounted and turned our faces toward camp, our friends, however, promising to communicate with Pond if possible before we returned. Just at sunrise we reached camp, hurried through our coffee and hard-tack, and at the head of the company I was once more a foot soldier. By rapid marching we soon reached the point where I had turned back, and there were my two friends. They reported that they were satisfied that Floyd was in possession of the town. Asper wanted to wait for reinforcements. In the meantime we were in elegant position to be surrounded. We must either go ahead or return. While discussing this question one of the boys reported a fine defensive position. It was a projecting rock directly over the road and commanded it perfectly. To this place the two companies hurried, having first detailed twenty men from each who were to push forward towards town as skirmishers, under my command. We were in a valley with almost impassible ridges on each side. I deployed my men on either side of the road covering the ground between the ridges. We had not proceeded far when we discovered what seemed a large rock directly in our front, and nearing it found that the road led by a circuitous route up the sides of

this rock. Not until we had reached its base did we see a living being except our own party, when lo! we discovered men with guns in their hands trying to cross the road at the top without being seen. I immediately called in my force, and waiting their assembling, watched the rocks above us, the result being that I was sure that the men we saw were our friends. Convinced of this I stepped out into the road and awaited the result. In less time than it takes to write it, the whole party at the top of the hill came out into the road, and beckoned me to advance. In a few moments we were shaking hands and I was conducted to Col. Pond. He was in entire ignorance of any attack, wondering at our delay. The day before there had been the usual amount of picket firing, nothing more. Possibly Floyd had shown up more of a force than usual and Pond had withdrawn his picket, knowing we were coming on that road and were covering it. Word was sent back to Capt. Asper, who soon marched into town, and went into camp. The balance of the regiment arrived at various times during the day, as one company after the other had been started to our relief as the news of the magnitude of the conflict reached Col. Tyler. They were much relieved to find us safe and sound, for reports had reached them of desperate fighting, in which we had been terribly worsted. Thus ended the relief of Col. Pond and his three months men, who shortly returned home. While we accomplished our purpose without firing a gun, to our verdant minds we had realized in a measure what it meant to be soldiers and had been thoroughly scared. As it turned out we had not seen the last of Gen. Floyd, for in August following he caught us napping, surrounded us with over three thousand men and early in the morning disturbed our slumbers by firing on us from every direction. Then we learned what fighting was under the



most unfavorable circumstances, and how small our Glenville affair appeared. How we ever got out of that hole was and ever has been a mystery. Five of the eight hundred escaped; the balance were killed, or went to Richmond. Charging through one point in the enemy's line, we captured a rebel flag, and in our hurry brought its bearer along. I never shall forget how proud we were of that rag, or rather of having captured it. No amount of money would have purchased it, and next to our own flag how we would have fought to retain it; and yet we who are assembled here to-night have lived to see the time when a request to return these emblems of a lost cause has been made in all earnestness. At the time this matter was being agitated through the country I came across the following verses, which answer the question to my satisfaction at least :

When they send us the tears of the widowed  
 And the anguish of those that have bled,  
 When they wake from their low mossy pillows  
 The host of our warriors dead,  
 When they fill up the war washed faces,  
 And gather, all covered with scars,  
 The limbs that were lost in the conflict,  
 Then we'll send back the stars and the bars.

When we send back the gyves and the fetters,  
 The lash, and the block, and the yoke,  
 When we give up the pen of the hero  
 That made men of brutes with a stroke.  
 When we gather from hillside and valley  
 The dark skinned, both mother and son,  
 And give back the slave to his master,  
 Then we'll give up the colors we won.

When we tear down the homes we have builded  
    To shelter the feeble and maimed,  
When our love for our country grows feeble  
    And the sons of their sires are ashamed,  
When we unlearn the lesson of duty,  
    By patriot forefathers taught  
Then we'll send back the dust-covered banners  
    That our blood and our treasures have bought.

We'll not give up the flags that were flaunted  
    When treason's war raised its loud din,  
We have love for penitent sinners,  
    But we have nothing but hate for the sin.  
Put them back till the dust as it gathers  
    Renders misty the blue and the gray,  
Put them back till the worm and the canker  
    Have eaten their blood stains away.

By the mem'ries of Monmouth and Yorktown  
    By the bones of our loved Washington,  
We have but one flag and one country,  
    And our motto is "many in one."  
Then send to our brethren, once foemen,  
    For their feasts of Minerva or Mars  
If they need them, send banners unstinted,  
    But send them the Stripes and the Stars.



A SKETCH OF THE ORIGIN  
OF THE  
SOCIETY OF THE CINCINNATI.

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A PAPER READ BEFORE THE  
**COMMANDERY OF THE STATE OF MICHIGAN**

MILITARY ORDER  
OF THE  
LOYAL LEGION OF THE U. S.

BY  
COMPANION FRED. T. SIBLEY,  
First-Class Member by Inheritance.

*At Detroit, April 7, 1892.*

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DETROIT, MICH.:  
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## A Sketch of the Origin of the Society of the Cincinnati.

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ON the Feast of St. John the Evangelist, December 28, 1778, the celebrated Dr. William Smith, at a service held in old Christ Church, Philadelphia, at which the commander-in-chief of the armies of Continental Congress was present, referred to him in his discourse as the "Cincinnatus of America," voicing then and there for the first time in public, it is believed, the idea that nearly five years later took shape in the organization of the "Society of the Cincinnati."

On the 6th of October, 1781, General Lincoln had the honor of opening the first parallel before Yorktown. On the 19th of the same month at 2 P. M. the British forces led by General O'Hara (Lord Cornwallis being confined to his quarters through indisposition) marched out from their entrenchments and laid down their arms, the War of the Revolution was virtually ended, and the United States of America was "*fait accompli*."

The allied army was then gradually transferred to cantonments at Newburgh on the Hudson; preparatory to its final dissolution; and awaiting this event the officers of the patriot army viewed with sorrow the parting of the ties that eight years of service, shared in common and nobly sustained, had welded their hearts so closely together and made it hard to rend themselves asunder.

General Henry Knox, who, from a position as clerk in a Boston book shop, had, by bravery and faithfulness, risen to the position of a Major-General, prompted by feelings of generous impulse,

conceived the idea of keeping alive the brotherhood of the camp through the formation of a society composed of the officers of the army. The first suggestion of such an organization appears in a paper in his handwriting, entitled "Rough draft of a Society to be formed by the American officers, and to be called the Cincinnati," dated "West Point, April 15th, 1783," the eighth anniversary of that month when at Lexington and Concord "the embattled farmers stood and fired the shot heard round the world."

Meetings were held at which the Baron Steuben as senior officer presided, a plan was drafted by a committee composed of Generals Knox, Hand and Huntington, and Captain Shaw, and the Society was organized at a meeting held on the 13th of May, 1783, at Baron Steuben's headquarters at the old Verplanck House near Fishkill.

General Knox's paper, circulated at the time among the officers of the army, is understood to be referred to in the preamble to the institution of the Society as the "proposals" which had been communicated to the several regiments of the respective lines. What is now known as the "Institution" was evolved from it.

The original paper of General Knox and the "Institution," as adopted, both aimed at the same bond which would still unite those who, for long years, had shared the hardships of the camp and the dangers of many a battlefield, now about to separate, many of them penniless, to find homes ruined, and families dispersed or dead; they sought some tie that should bring them together at intervals in social reunions—above all they sought the means of providing for the necessities of the more unfortunate of their number, and for the support of the indigent widows and children of deceased associates. They wished that their children should inherit and maintain the friendship which *bound them* together. And conscious of their disinterestedness and proud of their claim to public gratitude and consideration, they followed in the line of that desire for recognition which is the life of the soldier's ambition, and adopted a "badge" or "order" to be worn by the members, and which, in but too many

instances, was all they might transmit as a visible, actual inheritance to their children.

This badge was designed by Major Pierre Charles L'Enfant, a French Engineer officer, afterwards assigned to the duty of laying out the Federal city of Washington. The writer submits herewith extracts from a translation of Major L'Enfant's letter to Baron Steuben, as set forth in the records of the New York Society, giving his reasons for the insignia adopted by the society, which may prove of interest :

“PHILADELPHIA, 10th June, 1783.

. MY GENERAL,—Immediately on receiving your letter of the 20th May, which I met by accident at the postoffice, on the 7th inst., I set myself about the plan of the medal. I send you both faces of the design, which I have made large, so that you may better judge of them. In the execution they can be reduced to a convenient size, which, on account of the precision required in the design, ought not to be less than a dollar, the subject being too complex to admit of its being properly detailed on a smaller compass.

I have not made it oval, agreeably to your desire, as such form is not proper for a medal ; besides it can be done in the execution, if the idea should be persisted in of having the order in that form, to which, however, I think any other preferable. I also believe and hope that you will be persuaded of this, and endeavor to convince the gentlemen of it who compose the committee for forming the Institution, and to whom I beg you to communicate the following observations :

A medal, whether round or oval, is considered, in the different states of Europe, only as a reward of the laborer and the artist, or as a sign of a manufacturing community, or religious society ; besides, the abusive custom prevailing particularly in Germany and Italy, of sending to France mountebanks, dancers and musicians, ornamented in this manner, renders it necessary to distinguish this order by a form which will be peculiar to itself, and which will



answer the two-fold purpose of honoring those invested with it, and making it self-respected for its simplicity, by such as may be in a situation minutely to examine its different parts.

Not that I suppose one form or another will change the opinion of a republican people, accustomed to think; I only say, that in an institution of this sort, the main design should be to render it respectable to everybody, and that it is only in appealing to the senses that you can engage the attention of the common people, who have certain habitual prejudices which cannot be destroyed. A gentleman already invested with any European order would be unwilling to carry a medal, but if, flattered by receiving a mark of distinction from a respectable society, he should do it, the manner of it would by no means decrease the value of the order. On the contrary, giving it a new, a particular form, will be adding a recommendation to its real value, and engage those invested with it to wear it in the same manner as their other military orders, which is the surest means of putting it at once upon a footing with them.

The bald eagle, which is peculiar to this continent, and is distinguished from those of other climates by its white head and tail, appears to me to deserve attention.

I send you two essays which I have made, and desire one of them may be adopted instead of the medal. In one I make the eagle supporting a star with thirteen points, in the center of which is the figure of the medal, with its inscriptions, as well in front as on the reverse. A legend might be added in the claws and go round the neck of the eagle, with a particular inscription, or the contour of the medal transferred there. In the other I have made simply the eagle, supporting on its breast the figure of the medal, with a legend in its claws and about the neck, which passes behind and sustains the reverse. I would prefer the latter, as it does not resemble any other order, and bears a distinct character; nor will it be expensive in its execution. The first device, although more complex, would not be so dear as people might imagine, especially if the execution of it should be committed to skillful persons by sending it to Europe, where it would not take up a great deal of time, nor be so expensive as to trust the execution of it here to workmen not well acquainted with the business.

So far from proposing to change the oval medal into an eagle, on which should be impressed the medal, I do not pretend to say medals cannot be made. On the contrary, my idea of the subject is that silver medals should be struck, at the common expense of the Society, and distributed, one to each member, as an appendage to a diploma of parchment, whereon it would be proper to stamp the figure of the medal, the eagle, or the star, in its full dimensions, and properly colored, enjoining on the members to conform to it, though leaving them the liberty, provided it be at their own expense, of having it made of such metal and as small as they please, without altering any of the emblems. It seems to me by no means proper that the honorary members should wear the order in the same manner as the original members, it would be necessary that they should wear the medal, the star, or the eagle, round their necks, and the original members at their third button-hole.

These remarks, I beg you, my General, to have translated and submitted to the gentlemen concerned. I shall be obliged to you to let me know the issue of this letter, and their decision upon it.

I have, etc., etc.,

L'ENFANT.

N. B.—The head and tail of the eagle should be silver, or enamelled in white, the body and wings gold, the medal on its breast and back enamelled in the same color as the legend; springs of laurel and oak might be added in the wings enamelled in green; the star should be pointed in gold, or enamelled in blue and white; those who should be at the expense might, instead of white, have diamonds. The riband, as is customary in all orders, should be watered."

The "Institution" prescribes the insignia and accompanying ribbon to be worn by the companions of the Order in the following terms:

"The Society shall have an Order, by which its members shall be known and distinguished, which shall be a medal of gold, of a

proper size to receive the emblems, and suspended by a deep blue ribbon, two inches wide, edged with white, descriptive of the union of America and France, viz.:

The principal figure of Cincinnatus.

Three Senators presenting him with a sword and other military ensigns; on a field in the background his wife standing at the door of their cottage; near it a plough and implements of husbandry.

Round the whole:—*Omnia Reliquit Servare Rempublicam.*

On the reverse:—Sun rising; a city with open gates and vessels entering the port. Fame crowning Cincinnatus with a wreath, inscribed *Virtutis Præmium.*

Below:—Hands joined, supporting a heart, with the motto, *Esto Perpetua.*

Round the whole:—*Societas Cincinnatorum Instituta, A. D. 1783.*”

The proposed medal appears on the original diplomas, one of which I have brought for inspection.

As to membership the Institute proceeds:

“It having pleased the Supreme Governor of the Universe, in the disposition of human affairs, to cause the separation of the colonies of North America from the domination of Great Britain, and after bloody conflict of eight years, to establish them free, independent, and sovereign states, connected, by alliances founded on reciprocal advantages, with some of the greatest princes and powers of the earth.

“To perpetuate, therefore, as well the remembrance of this vast event, as the mutual friendships which have been formed under the pressure of common danger, and in many instances cemented by the blood of the parties, the officers of the American Army do hereby, in the most solemn manner, associate, constitute, and combine themselves into one SOCIETY OF FRIENDS, to endure as long as they shall endure, or any of their eldest male posterity, and in

failure thereof, the collateral branches, who may be judged worthy of becoming its supporters and members.

“All the officers of the American Army, as well as those who have resigned with honor, after three years’ service in the capacity of officers, or who have been deranged by resolutions of Congress upon the several reforms of the army, as those who shall have continued to the end of the war, have the right to become parties to this Institution; provided that they subscribe one month’s pay, and sign their names to the general rules, in their respective State Societies—those who are present with the army, immediately, and others within six months after the army shall be disbanded, extraordinary cases excepted. The rank, time of service, resolutions of Congress by which they have been deranged, and place of residence, must be added to each name; and as a testimony of affection to the memory and the offspring of such officers as have died in the service, their eldest male branches shall have the same right of becoming members as the children of the actual members of the Society.”

As will be seen by the foregoing extracts, under the Institution, the officers of the American Army, in the most solemn manner combined themselves into one society of friends, to endure as long as they should endure, or any of their eldest male posterity, and in failure thereof, then their collateral branches who might be judged worthy of being its supporters and members. This latter clause, “collateral branches,” has caused considerable confusion, but it was finally decided that its whole tenor is to confine the succession to the descendants of original members.

The Society had also another aim, viz: to particularly extend the most substantial acts of beneficence according to the ability of the Society towards those officers and their families who should unfortunately be under the necessity of receiving it.

In order to obtain funds for these purposes, each officer contributed one month's pay, the interest thereon only to be appropriated to the use of the unfortunate.

The right of membership was also under the Institution tendered to certain French officers under the following terms :

“The Society, deeply impressed with a sense of the generous assistance this country has received from France, and desirous of perpetuating the friendships which have been formed, and so happily subsisted, between the officers of the allied forces, in the prosecution of the war, direct that the President-General transmit, as soon as may be, to each of the characters hereafter named, a medal containing the Order of the Society, and acquaint them that the Society do themselves the honor to consider them as members: His Excellency the Chevalier De La Luzerne, Minister Plenipotentiary; His Excellency the Sieur Gerard, late Minister Plenipotentiary; their Excellencies the Count D'Estaing, Count De Grasse, Count De Barras, Chevalier De Touches, Count De Rochambeau, Admirals and Commanders in the Navy, and Generals and Colonels in the Army.” The organization in France was swept out of existence in the troublous times of the Revolution; it has, however, of recent years been revived by the descendants of the original members, and was received again into full communion at the meeting of the General Society held at Newport, Rhode Island, in July, 1887, the Marquis de Rochambeau being the President of the Society.

Honorary membership in the society was permitted to individuals of the respective states distinguished for patriotism and talents; this, however, was for life only, and their numbers were never to exceed a ratio of one to four of the hereditary membership.

The original institution which was written on parchment and is now in the possession of the General Society, bears the signatures of ninety-seven officers, seventy-two of whom are American and twenty-five in the French service. Gen. Washington's signature

heads the list, and among other historical names, appear those of Generals William Heath, Benj. Lincoln, Nathaniel Greene, Steuben Alexander McDougall, Henry Knox and Kosciuszko. Of the officers above named Gen. Heath was the only one of the original signers who renounced the Institution and gave up his eagle, through the political influences brought to bear against the Society, to which I shall hereafter allude.

At the general meeting of 1784 an amendment to the Institution was offered abolishing the hereditary succession, and placing the several state funds raised for charitable purposes under the cognizance of the Legislatures of such states. These amendments were never affirmed, and consequently the Institution remains as originally adopted. The first general officers of the Society were George Washington, President-General; Horatio Gates, Vice-President-General; Henry Knox; Secretary-General; Alexander McDougall, Treasurer-General.

The general Society was divided into thirteen branches representing each of the Revolutionary States, but it is a singular fact, attested by Mr. John Schuyler of the New York Society and present Treasurer-General, the compiler of the work known as the "Institution of the Society of the Cincinnati," from which the writer gratefully acknowledges to have drawn largely for this paper, that only once did representatives from all of the State Societies convene at their triennial conclave, viz: in May, 1784, at Philadelphia; the next largest gathering was in 1787 in the same city, when delegates from ten of the states were present; the minimum was reached in 1835 and 1838, when the Pennsylvania Society was the only one responding to the roll of the states.

The question will at once arise, what was the cause of this apparent disaffection?

The answer given by Mr. Schuyler is as follows:

"But this (the formation of the Society) was too much for the civilian politicians, who had secured a country and a field for

political ambition without any of the dangers or privations of the camp.

“For eight years the army had stood between them and the enemy. The enemy gone—what need of the army? It may become dangerous; it is poor; the soldiers may become the objects of popular favor—and then came the outcry against the innocent purpose of the poor, unpaid, homeless and penniless soldiers of an occasional reunion and of the opportunity of contributing to each other’s wants and necessities.”

Mr. McMaster, in his “History of the People of the United States,” states that the people of 1788 were timorous lest the Order of the Cincinnati should be a cause of danger to the rights of man, and established to make a complete personal distinction between the military dignitaries and the people, who would henceforth be dubbed plebeians; that it tended to the rapid introduction of nobility into America, and that kind of nobility which for centuries plagued and domineered over Europe. Among the foremost opponents of the Society were Benjamin Franklin, who, however, so far recovered from his patriotic fears as later on to accept an honorary membership therein; John Jay, afterwards Chief Justice of the Supreme Court; Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, who considered it “the deepest piece of cunning yet attempted”; “it is,” he said, “sowing the seeds of all that European courts wish to grow up among us, viz., of vanity, ambition, corruption, discord and sedition.” And yet even he, at a later period of his life, in response to a complimentary address from the Society of South Carolina, spoke of them as enjoying “the sweetest of rewards in the grateful affections of their fellow citizens,” and, forgetful of the Pandora’s box which he thought the Society would inevitably prove, closed by saying, “When the Cincinnati of South Carolina pledge their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honors, I believe that no man will doubt their integrity.”

But the most vehement opponent of the Society was Ædanus Burke, Justice of the Supreme Court of South Carolina, an Irishman by birth, who had been educated at St. Omer for a priest. As an Irishman, he felt an intense hatred of aristocratic pretensions in general; as a staunch Whig, he felt a peculiar hatred of aristocratic pretensions in America in particular. In October, 1783, he issued a pamphlet under the signature of Cassius, in which he proved to his own satisfaction, at least, that the "Institution" created an "Hereditary Peerage," that the Cincinnati would soon have and hold an exclusive right to office, honors and authority, civil and military. "The number of Peers," said he, "is not far short of ten thousand, and every generation will be adding to their numbers."

As a matter of fact, the original membership was less than one-fourth of the number given by the imaginative jurist, and at present the Society does not exceed four hundred. Perhaps upon this latter fact Ward McAllister may have based the mystic number of his exclusive Gotham aristocracy.

I think that after having listened to the reading of the extracts from the "Institution," the Companions of the Loyal Legion will at this age be able to judge more fairly than our venerable political forefathers as to the scope and tenor of the purposes of the Society.

As hereinbefore stated, the animus towards the Society was largely due to political causes. In Boston one member of the Order, who was a candidate for senator found his chances of election so much impaired by his blue ribbon that he came down to the polls on the eve of election day and declared his determination to withdraw from the Society. The Legislature of Massachusetts declared the Society to be "dangerous to the peace, liberty and safety of the Union." Rhode Island disenfranchised such of her citizens as were members of the Order, and yet in 1882 the legislature of the same State, by special statute, gave "the Society of the Cincinnati in the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations," in which body the writer has the honor to hold hereditary membership, the prescriptive use of the Senate Chamber in either of the State Houses



in Providence or in Newport, on Independence Day, for the purpose of holding its annual meeting therein, and is I believe the only organization authorized to take from the walls of the first named building the tattered and time-worn banners borne by their forefathers through the battle-fields of the Revolution.

The Presidents-General of the Society during the period of its existence have been: George Washington of Virginia, 1783 to 1799; Alexander Hamilton of New York, 1800 to 1804; Charles Cotesworth Pinckney of South Carolina, 1805 to 1825; Thomas Pinckney of South Carolina, 1825 to 1828; Aaron Ogden of New Jersey, 1829 to 1839; Morgan Lewis of New York, 1839 to 1844; William Popham of New York, 1844 to 1848, who was the last original member to hold the office; Henry Alexander Samuel Dearborn of Massachusetts, 1848 to 1854; Hamilton Fish of New York, who succeeded in 1854, is the present President-General, and eldest son of Nicholas Fish, Major and Brigade Inspector 2d N. Y. Regiment, an original member of the Society.

The President-General wears, as the badge pertaining to the office, an eagle studded with diamonds, which was presented by the naval officers of France who were members of the Society, to General Washington on May 11, 1784. This insignia was sent to General Hamilton by Washington's heirs, and upon Hamilton's death was delivered by Mrs. Hamilton to General Pinckney, his successor in office, and by him presented, in 1811, to the General Society to be thereafter considered as appurtenant to the office of the President-General. Relative to this insignia the unwritten traditions of the Society state that it was originally ordered by Queen Marie Antoinette as a personal gift to General Washington, but through unknown reasons it was deemed politic to have the present emanate from the officers of the French Navy.

Two curious facts in connection with the order present themselves in French history: First, that the "Bald Eagle," as it is known in Europe, was the only foreign order the nobility of France were

permitted to wear at court and in the presence of his most Christian Majesty; and, secondly, that on the 12th of July, 1788, when the French Revolution may be said to have really got under way, Camille Des Moulins rushed from the Café de Foy, climbed upon a table, and proposed the adoption of a cockade. "What shall it be?" he cried. "Shall it be green, the color of hope? or shall it be blue; the color of the Cincinnati?" and the crowd shouted back: "Let it be green, the color of hope!"

The existing state societies are as follows: Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, South Carolina and Rhode Island. All are in a flourishing condition. Steps are being taken to revive the defunct societies of Delaware, Virginia, North Carolina, Georgia, Connecticut and New Hampshire. The annual meetings of the state societies are held on the Fourth of July, at which are elected the officers, consisting of President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer; the General Society convenes every third year, and elects the general officers, viz.: President-General, Vice-President-General, Secretary-General, and Treasurer-General.

In July, 1887, the writer had the privilege of attending the triennial meeting of the general Society held at Newport, Rhode Island. Among the delegates present was General Henry J. Hunt, well known to the companions present as chief of artillery of the Union forces at the battle of Gettysburg. Knowing him to be an old friend of my father's, I introduced myself to him during the lunch tendered the Society at the armory of the Newport Artillery Company. Naturally the conversation drifted to the Cincinnati, its past, present and future. The general, who was an enthusiast on the subject, finally asked me if I realized what hereditary membership in the society meant. I, of course, endeavored, as best I could, to express my appreciation of the honor, when he interrupted me, saying, "I never fully understood it until some years ago when, traveling through Europe, I found myself in Sweden. Having brought letters of introduction to one of the ministers of the court, I received an invitation to dine with him.

While at the table chatting with my host, I noticed among his other decorations the eagle of the Cincinnati. Naturally surprised at seeing it, I alluded to the fact of my own membership in the order and asked how he obtained the insignia. I then learned that he was a descendant of a French officer who had served in the Revolutionary war, and an original member of the Society. But why, asked he, do you not also wear the eagle? I explained that it was not customary for Americans to make display of such insignia. He seemed greatly surprised and somewhat shocked. Do not you Americans who are entitled to hereditary membership in the order of the Bald Eagle appreciate what it means, what honor it confers? he asked. I went on, said the general, in very much the same vein as you did yourself in reply to my query. My friend looked still more amazed. Why, said he, we consider it, next to the leading order of our own country, the most honorable under heaven. Look through history and learn the origin of the so called proudest orders of Europe. The fondest hope of England's nobility is to obtain the Companionship of the Garter, but what gave rise to that order? A facile quip made by a king upon a foolish incident. The Spaniard aspires to the Golden Fleece, an order based upon the successful issue of a mercantile speculation. And so my friend passed rapidly with caustic criticisms upon the inception of the most famous orders of Europe; then pausing a moment said, "But what was the occasion of the foundation of the Cincinnati? It was to commemorate one of the grandest, if not *the* grandest, event in history, the establishment of the United States of America, the greatest nation that God has ever placed upon this world of ours! As set forth in the motto of the Cincinnati, "*Esto Perpetua*," "may it last forever."

PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS  
OF  
FOUR YEARS IN DIXIE.

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A PAPER READ BEFORE THE  
COMMANDERY OF THE STATE OF MICHIGAN  
MILITARY ORDER OF THE LOYAL LEGION  
OF THE UNITED STATES.

BY  
COMPANION J. T. PATTON,  
LATE CAPTAIN CO. A. 93D REGIMENT OHIO VOL. INFANTRY,  
AT DETROIT, MICH., DECEMBER 1, 1892.

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## Personal Recollections of Four Years in Dixie.

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On that April morning when Edmund Ruffin pulled the lanyard which sent the first shot hurtling through the air at the stars and stripes that floated over Sumter, I was a beardless school-boy.

The echo of that shot sent my young blood tingling, and awakened in my soul a desire to do my feeble part in maintaining the perpetuity of the Government and the enforcement of its laws. I walked into a recruiting office to enroll my name as a soldier, but was told that I was too young and too small to meet Uncle Sam's requirements.

Bull Run was fought and lost to the Union cause, and more men were called. Gen. Fremont, who was in command in Missouri at this time, authorized the raising of a regiment of sharpshooters, and as I was quite an expert rifle shot, I enlisted on Aug. 20th, 1861, in a company which was being recruited at Dayton, Ohio, for this regiment.

We encamped a few days at Hamilton, prior to going to St. Louis. I had a limited experience in finding a ripe watermelon by the light of the moon, and the tree which bore the most luscious peaches, while the man of the house was enjoying his first sweet sleep, but I had never learned the art of transferring a rooster from his perch to my haversack without a squawk, until I took a lesson while at Hamilton.

Soon after our arrival at Benton Barracks, St. Louis, Gen. Fremont was relieved of command, and we found ourselves

assigned to the 13th Missouri Infantry. (The designation of this regiment was afterwards changed to the 22d Ohio.) We received orders to draw our guns, which proved to be old Austrian muskets, which were almost as dangerous to the man at the breach as they were to the enemy in his front. Our disappointment was very great, and so demonstrative that it came near sending us to work on the fortifications under guard.

Uncle Sam's tailor had not taken my measure, hence I found some trouble in getting clothes that would stay on me. As a citizen, I was 5 feet 3 inches high and tipped the beam at 110 pounds. Rigged out for our first march, with knapsack loaded to the guards; blanket strapped on top; haversack with three days' cooked rations; canteen full to the nozzle; cartridge box with forty rounds; belts ornamented with brass plates loaded with lead; a huge bayonet dangling to my knee, and my Austrian musket at a shoulder, I was a sight that would have delighted a Falstaff to look upon. We had scarcely started on the march when the big boys began predicting that, "that infant on the left would soon be in a fence corner," but when Company K filed into camp that night, after a march of twenty miles, but six men were on hand to stack arms, and "that infant" was one of the six. I was ordered to report to Lieut. Wherry, 13th U. S. Infantry, mustering and disbursing officer, St. Louis, where I remained until, very unexpectedly to me, I received an appointment from Governor Tod, of Ohio, dated May 29th, 1862, as Second Lieutenant in one of the new regiments then being organized. Lieut Wherry secured an order from Gen. Halleck for my discharge in order to accept promotion, and on the eve of my departure presented me with a sword. I went direct to Columbus, and was again mustered in and placed on recruiting service. Later I was assigned to the 93d Ohio Infantry, Col. Charles Anderson.

The 93d was mustered into the United States service on Aug. 23d, 1862, and the same day started for Lexington, Ky. Kirby Smith had forced his way through Cumberland Gap, and was moving in the direction of Lexington. We were hastened forward toward Richmond and reached the Kentucky river at daylight, after an all night march, when we learned of the defeat of our forces at Richmond, and were faced about on the return march for Lexington. Our stay at Lexington was of short duration, and we started back for Louisville. The march to Louisville was characterized by wanton cruelty to the men, in the failure of the General in command to allow them proper rests and an opportunity to get water. The weather was oppressively hot, the roads dry and dusty, and water very scarce. Thousands of men fell out of ranks in search of water, were captured and paroled, and many of them never returned to the service. I was detailed as A. D. C. to our brigade commander, and escaped the hardships of the march.

On our arrival at Louisville, we began building breast-works, drilling when not digging. Soon after Gen. Buell's army arrived, and preparations were inaugurated for an advance. We were assigned to the Fourth Brigade (later known as the Third), Second Division, McCook's Corps.

On October 1st the army advanced, the Second Division, under Gen. Sill, marched for Frankfort, which point was evacuated on our approach, the rebels burning the bridges, which caused a delay until pontoons could be constructed. We marched for Lawrenceburg, skirmishing with the enemy almost hourly, but finally encamped at Dog Walk, having made a thirty-mile march that day. Kirby Smith made a desperate effort to capture the division, but his advance brigade was repulsed, and we continued our march. He prevented the division from reaching Perryville in time to take part in the battle, but our six thousand men kept



his sixteen thousand from participating in the battle. Perryville was fought on Oct. 8th, and that night Bragg retreated, making good his escape through Cumberland Gap to Middle Tennessee.

Gen. Buell was relieved, and Gen. Rosecrans was appointed to command the Department of the Cumberland. The army moved to Nashville. The railroad had been repaired from Louisville to Mitchellville, from which point to Nashville, forty miles, rations had to be transported in wagons.

The 93d was detailed as guard to a supply train back to Mitchellville. On our return trip, after we had encamped for the night, word was brought to Col. Anderson that a small force of guerrillas were encamped about four miles up the country, off the main road. Volunteers were called to go in search of them, and I was placed in command of some forty men for the service. The night was very dark, and our route was up a small stream with high hills on either side. Our guide was a colored man who lived near, the same who had brought the news to camp. Our march was slow by reason of the darkness and caution necessary to be observed. For two hours we marched in silence, until we came in sight of the camp fires on the hillside. I selected half a dozen men and quietly proceeded to reconnoitre. We found that the enemy had gone an hour before our arrival. A house was near by, and our guide was not sure as to the occupant being a member of the gang. I decided to investigate and if at home, to take him to camp. I knocked at the door and requested that it be opened at once. As I passed in, a little girl raised up in her trundle bed, and said, "Pap, are the yankees here?" "Yes, sis," I replied, "the yankees are here." I ordered the fellow to dress and accompany us to camp, which he did with much reluctance, as he expected to be shot. The Colonel questioned him as to his connection

with the guerillas, but finally ordered me to escort him to the picket line. On being released he was very profuse in his thanks, and said that if I would go home with him he would present me with a nice turkey. It was near Thanksgiving season and I had an appetite for turkey, but I declined his invitation with thanks.

Orders against foraging were very strict at this time, but from certain sights which I saw, and sounds which occasionally reached my ears, I was not sure that our friend would find *all* of his turkeys when he reached home. I noticed that one of the boys had a ponderous bundle on his shoulders as he passed into camp, but I asked no questions. The next morning I had turkey and honey for breakfast. At the meeting of the national encampment of the G. A. R. in August, 1891, I invited the 93d boys who were present to my house one evening. I told the story of this expedition, when one fellow spoke up and said: "Captain, I was the fellow who stole the hive of bees."

On Dec. 6th, the 93d was guard to a forage train, when it was attacked by rebel cavalry. After a spirited engagement, the enemy were handsomely repulsed. The first man of the regiment killed in battle, was killed in this engagement, and was a member of my company.

Gen. Rosecrans made a few changes in brigade and division commanders. The Third brigade, commanded by Col. P. P. Baldwin, was composed of the 1st and 93d Ohio, 5th Kentucky, 6th Indiana and Simonson's Battery. The Second division was commanded by Gen. R. W. Johnson. The other division commanders of McCook's corps were Generals Jeff. C. Davis, and P. H. Sheridan. A general advance took place on Dec. 26th. On the night of the 30th the entire army was concentrated near Stone River, with Bragg's army in our front.

Johnson's division was on the extreme right, with

Willich's brigade on the right of the division. History records the opening of the battle, and how the right wing was overwhelmed and driven back. Baldwin was bivouacked in the rear some distance, as it was late the evening before when his brigade reached the field. He had barely time to form his lines before the enemy in vast numbers appeared in his front, at short range, their left extending far beyond his right. Opening fire with infantry and artillery upon their massed forces, he checked their advance in his front, but their left swung around his right, and pouring an enfilading fire down his line compelled him to retire, barely making his escape, as five minutes more and his entire brigade would have been surrounded and captured.

As we were crossing a cotton field I received a shot which caused me to slacken my pace, and the rebels began calling to me: "Halt! surrender! You d—d Yankee!" Their language was not such as is used in polite society, and I ignored their call. The woods in my front was my objective point and promised shelter, while "Libby's" doors seemed to be swinging open to receive me, but I took my chances and won. On reaching the shelter of the woods, I took a hasty survey to learn the extent of damages; I found a bullet hole through my right thigh, a slight flesh wound in my left thigh, seven bullet holes through my overcoat, but Libby Prison was far to my rear. I was promoted to First Lieutenant in November, and had been detailed to command the color company for this occasion; I attempted to remain with the command, and not until the Colonel had ordered me to the rear three times did I make a move in that direction. As I started to go to the rear our line was again attacked and driven back, and by reason of my lameness I was unable to keep up, and to keep from between fires, drifted to one side. When darkness overtook me I was at a loss to know "where I was at," and decided to hold my position until daylight.

Thirty years have passed, but the recollections of that carnage day, the last of the year 1862, are still fresh in my memory. Twenty thousand men wearing the blue and the gray had fallen, killed or wounded. The light and life of many happy homes in the Northland and in the Southland had gone out, never to be seen again until the final reunion upon the other shore. As I <sup>lay</sup> laid under a small cedar tree on that December night, a small piece of rubber blanket for my bed, a canteen for my pillow, no covering save God's canopy, my constant thought was for a dearly loved brother who had been the companion of my childhood and youth, the champion of all my boyish troubles. He belonged to Davis' division. What his fate had been I did not then know, but upon being taken to field hospital the next day, I learned that he too laid between the lines that night, his face to the sky, but his bright young soul had taken its flight, and he was safe at last.

After a day or two in field hospital, I was bundled into an ambulance and started on an all night ride for Nashville. The road was rough in many places, and I was compelled to sit with my hands locked under my thigh nearly the entire distance. It was just sunrise when we reached Nashville. The next morning I was put on board a boat for Louisville. The Captain of the boat had taken all the mattresses out of the state-rooms and locked them up. I saw two boys of our brigade, whom I knew, lying upon the bare floor of the cabin. One had lost an arm, the other was shot through the breast. I went to the Captain of the boat and asked him for a couple of mattresses for these boys. "No, sir," said he, "I don't intend to have my mattresses spoiled," and walked off. I found two or three boys who could get around without much trouble and marched them down to the fuel room; we found a heavy stick of wood, which we carried to the door of the state-room in which the mattresses were locked. I requested the Captain to unlock the door, telling him that we proposed

to move immediately upon that door with the cordwood. The door was unlocked without further delay, and every badly wounded man got a mattress, until the supply gave out. He took my name and said he would see that I was dismissed the service, but I have not heard from him since.

I found quarters at Officers' hospital at Louisville, and was not long in securing a hospital pass for ten days, got a pair of crutches and called upon the commander of the post, who gave me a pass across the river, and I took the train for home. I replenished my pocket book, got a new uniform which I had previously ordered, and was back at hospital before my ten days had expired. Gen. McCook was at Louisville on his way to the front, and he secured my discharge from hospital that I might accompany his party to Murfreesboro.

Soon after the battle of Stone River, Gen. Rosecrans issued an order establishing a "roll of honor," to be selected from men whose conduct at that battle would entitle them to this distinction. Three privates were selected from each company, three corporals and two sergeants from the regiment, and one officer, elected by the officers of the regiment. I was elected to command the company from the 93d. The several companies from the four regiments of the brigade formed a "light battalion." It was proposed to mount the battalion for special service. We bought Henry rifles and devoted our time to special drill, being relieved from all duty except guard at Corps headquarters. The war department countermanded the order, and we returned to our respective commands. The men of "the light battalion," with their Henry rifles, did valiant service in every battle until the close of the war.

I received an order from Gen. Johnson within a few days, appointing me Ordnance Officer of the Division. This position was very much to my liking, but our Colonel had

recommended me for promotion to Captain of Co. A., and he constantly importuned me to come back to the regiment. I stated the case to Gen. Johnson, who said that I could remain on his staff as a Captain, but finally, at my request, he relieved me. My commission as Captain dated from June 12th, 1863.

The army remained at Murfreesboro until June 23d, when a general advance was ordered. Johnson's division captured Liberty Gap on June 25th. Gen. Rosecrans in his report says: "Gen. McCook's taking of Liberty Gap was very gallant and creditable to the troops of Johnson's division." Tullahoma was evacuated on our approach, and we took possession July 1st.

The Chickamauga campaign opened Aug. 29th by forcing a crossing of the Tennessee River. McCook's corps crossed the mountains to Alpine, Ga., on Sept. 10th. I received a detail to go back to Stevenson, some forty miles, in command of a supply train. The duty was not a desirable one, as the Rebel cavalry were on the alert for just such opportunities to scoop in a few prisoners and a nice line of supplies. It was not my turn for such duty and I made the usual kick, but was told that I had been detailed by name by Gen. Johnson. I reported to the General, who said the duty was one of great importance and attended with considerable hazard; that he had selected me, believing that I could get through, if any one could. I thanked him for the compliment, and being provided with a horse by the Quartermaster, started on our journey. I was allowed to take my own company of about forty-five men, and had forty wagons to look after.

We got back to Stevenson, loaded our wagons, and were nearly half way back on our return trip when we discovered a small force of rebel cavalry. I ordered the advance wagons to park in an open field, sent out a detachment of skirmishers, and hastened forward the balance of the train. One wagon

broke an axle, and I put enough men on it to transfer the load to the other wagons as they passed without halting, and when empty, piled rails under it and set them on fire, burning it. As soon as the wagons were all parked, we advanced on the rebels on the double quick and drove them for some distance. We resumed the march and were not again seriously annoyed. We rejoined the division on the 15th, and were congratulated by Gen. Johnson on our success.

On the evening of Sept. 18th we reached our position on the right of the army in line of battle. The next morning the booming of cannon on our left announced the opening of the battle of Chickamauga. Our division was ordered from the extreme right to the extreme left, to the support of Gen. Thomas, and made a part of the distance on the double quick. The left was being sorely pressed and two companies of the 93d were thrown out as skirmishers. I was in command of Co. A with Co. K on my right. We advanced and drove the enemy over half a mile when we were halted. Soon after I was greatly surprised to see some rebs with guns at a trail, stealing down the dry bed of a ravine in the rear of my right, where I had supposed Co. K to be in position. I at once moved to the left on the double quick, then to the rear until we were clear of the enemy, when we advanced, taking them in front and flank, and sent them back much more rapidly than they had advanced. I found that Co. K had returned to the regiment without my having been notified, and by their withdrawal a gap was left on my right of two or three hundred yards; I moved to the right and re-established the line. The enemy planted two pieces of artillery directly in front of the 93d, which the regiment charged in gallant style, capturing the two guns. In this charge our gallant Colonel, Hiram Strong, was mortally wounded.

During the entire afternoon, whenever there was a cessa-

tion in the firing, we were busy administering to the wants of the wounded, so far as possible. The ground had been fought over three times, and many of the dead and wounded lay as they had fallen. We took the canteens of the dead, when they contained any water, and gave them to the wounded ; Union or Rebel, all fared alike. I remember one poor fellow who belonged to the Louisiana Tigers, who said to me : “Captain, I have an old silver watch and a few dollars in Confederate money, it is not much, but won’t you please take what I have and shoot me dead, as I am shot through the bowels and can live but a short time, and I want you to relieve me of my suffering.” I said to him, “My dear fellow, I will do anything I can to help you, but I could not comply with your request for all the wealth of the South.” This was but one of the many cases of the terrible suffering which I saw that day ; all that we could do was to give them a drink of water and speak a word of sympathy.

The scabbard of my sword was struck by a bullet, and rendered unfit for further use. I saw an officer lying dead with a scabbard by his side, which I took and left mine in its stead.

It was nearly dark when we discovered the enemy massing on our front. I was ordered to hold our position as long as possible, and when compelled to retire, rally upon Simonson’s battery, and stay with it. We had not long to wait before the enemy advanced with irresistible force, driving our thin skirmish line like chaff before the wind. We fell back to the battery, which opened with double shotted charges of grape and canister, plowing great gaps through the enemy’s lines; but on they came regardless of the storm of lead and iron until they were less than a hundred feet from the guns, when Simonson ordered the battery to fall back. One gun ran foul of a small sapling, and when we pulled it back until nearly clear, a shot struck one of the horses which reared and



plunged, forcing the gun forward. This was repeated until the flash from the muskets of the enemy seemed almost in our faces, when Simonson called out, "Let her go to —, boys," and we retired. So near were the enemy that three of my boys were captured, in addition to a number killed and wounded. We fell back some two hundred yards, the enemy fearing to follow in the darkness.

One historian, in describing this attack on our brigade, says: "Probably the conflict that now ensued was one of the most furious of the war. The enemy opened with the heaviest musketry and artillery fire the division had ever encountered. It far surpassed in intensity Shiloh or Stone River. The rebels charged the line of the third brigade like heroes of a hundred battles, and literally plowed the ground with bullets. Shell, grape, and canister swept through the ranks, and the air sang with the shrill dissonance of battle. The men of the third brigade, as veteran as the enemy, boldly stood up to the work, and like an iron wall repulsed each assault. Finally overwhelming pressure on the right forced the 1st Ohio to fall back; but the distance was trifling, and the regiment again opened fire upon the advancing foe. Such a din of sound never was excelled in a contest among the same number of men. Capt. Simonson, too, and his brave boys stood nobly by their pieces and served them with astonishing rapidity. The falling back of the 1st Ohio caused a slight waver in the ranks of the regiments on its right, and Col. Baldwin, commanding the brigade, fearing lest the line might fall back, galloped to the front of the 6th Indiana, his own regiment, and shouted, 'Follow me!' The noble soldiers obeyed; but they had moved scarcely a rod when their right became engaged in a hand-to-hand conflict, in which the bayonet was used with fearful power; here amidst the darkening shades of night, rendered more dark by the sulphureous canopy of smoke, and amidst a frightful storm of

leaden hail, the gallant Baldwin fell, pierced with balls, as noble a soldier as yielded life on the altar of his country." The line now fell back a short distance, when it re-formed, and night closed the scene.

Sunday we were astir before daylight. A new line was established, with the 6th Indiana and 93d Ohio, of the third brigade in front. Every available man went to work gathering material for breastworks. We had but one axe in the regiment, and logs, fence rails, knapsacks, everything that could be found to aid in stopping a bullet was used. At half-past eight the enemy advanced in three lines, but we lay behind our rude works and allowed him to approach within one hundred yards before we delivered our fire. The effect was terrible, nearly annihilating his first line. His second line came up and encountered a similar fate. Then, maddened with the sacrifice he had made, he hurled an increased force against these two regiments, resolved on forcing us back or suffer the bayonet. But our heroic boys were invincible, and we repulsed every attempt to carry our position, inflicting upon him enormous loss. During these series of charges, we fired one hundred rounds of ammunition to the man. Some of the boys of my company had hands that were bleeding from loading their guns, which became so foul that the charge was rammed home with difficulty.

Our loss was small considering the desperation of the fighting, due to the protection afforded by our temporary works. During the day the enemy would occasionally advance in our front, but his efforts were feeble, as compared with his first assault.

A number of rebel officers attempted to get a better view of our position, when they were fired upon by our lookouts, composed of the boys who had formerly been of the "light battalion," armed with Henry rifles, and Col. Richmond, Inspector General of Polk's staff, was killed; his sword, cap,

spurs, and a valuable map of the battle ground, were brought in.

The third brigade held its ground and repulsed every assault, but our brave comrades on other parts of the field had been less fortunate. Late in the afternoon an order was received "to fall back three miles," which was the first positive knowledge we had of disaster. In going back we had to cross an open field under a converging fire from three rebel batteries. A shell exploded directly in front of me, and I fell to the ground. Some of the boys said, "we will carry him back," but I was up and ready to travel before they got to me, as I had received only a slight wound in my leg, made by a small fragment of shell.

We were again posted in line of battle, but the enemy did not attack.

"Do you see the North Star?" was the inquiry which I heard made of our Commander: "March directly toward that star and you will come out at Rossville, about seven miles distant." I never look at the North Star without the recollections of that night coming to my mind.

By midnight we were at Rossville, and the next morning I was again on picket, but the enemy did not appear in force. That night we withdrew to Chattanooga, five miles distant.

On our arrival at Chattanooga we were ordered out for inspection. As I passed down the company line inspecting guns and cartridge boxes, none of the boxes contained more than three or four cartridges, until I came to one fellow who had forty rounds in his box, twenty in his pockets, and one in his gun. "Where did you get all of these cartridges?" I inquired. "You gave them to me just before going into the battle of Chickamauga," he replied. I was at a loss to understand how it was, as I knew that he was with the company through the entire two days' battle. I said, "What

were you doing during the entire battle?" "Captain," said he, "the fact is I was too busy trying to keep from being shot to shoot at any one."

We had been at Chattanooga but a few days when I was on picket, well on the right. Chattanooga creek separated the two picket lines, but a constant fire was kept up by the opposing forces. I was short on smoking tobacco and resolved to get a supply. I formed a truce with the enemy in our front, and bantered him to trade smoking tobacco for coffee. The stream was thirty to forty feet wide where we met, but logs had floated down and lodged on either side, leaving a channel some ten feet wide. I cut a long stick with a fork at the end, in which I tied my hat; I put some coffee in the hat and passed it over to the Johnnie, when he put in the tobacco, and passed it back. The deal having been consummated, each returned to his command, and the truce was at an end.

Important changes in commands and commanders were now made. Gen. Rosecrans was relieved, and Gen. Thomas appointed to the command of the Army of the Cumberland. The 20th and 21st corps were consolidated and called the Fourth. The 93d Ohio became a part of the Second Brigade, Gen. Hazen's; Third Division, Gen. Wood's; Fourth Corps, Gen. Gordon Granger's.

The Army of the Cumberland was on short rations. Starvation in camp seemed a more formidable enemy than Bragg's army on the mountains and hills in our front. Hooker, with re-enforcements from the Army of the Potomac, was at Bridgeport. In order to shorten the line of communications with him, an expedition was fitted out for the capture of Brown's Ferry, on the Tennessee river, a short distance below Lookout Mountain. Sixty pontoon boats were built; each boat was manned by twenty-five men, who floated down the river past Lookout, passing the rebel pickets who lined

the shore, and landed at Brown's Ferry. As we were nearing our destination, a bugle sounded the reveille in the rebel camp in the valley just across the ridge. This must have instilled life into the sentinel on the bank opposite where we were quietly floating along, as he fired a shot at us. We now pulled for the shore with all possible speed. It so happened that my boat touched the shore among the first, and without waiting for orders or for more men to land, we started for the top of the hill ; the hill was so steep that we aided our ascent by catching hold of saplings and drawing ourselves up. We gained the top of the ridge and sent a few shots at the flying pickets, as a reminder that we were there. As fast as the boats were unloaded they were floated down the river to form a bridge, and the troops who had marched down on the opposite shore were soon crossing to our support. I was sent down the hill in command of a skirmish line and captured a crib of ear corn. The boys went for the corn with such vigor that I put a guard over it, until I could make an equitable distribution. They were soon engaged in parching corn for their breakfast and enjoyed it. This movement was one of vast importance, and its successful accomplishment reflected much credit upon those who planned and executed it. Gen. Hooker came down the valley that afternoon and at night his supply train was parked near our picket line. I didn't see any rebels that night, but I did see several boxes of hard tack and several pieces of "sow-belly" safely escorted to our quarters, and I think Hooker's men knew of it at the time.

Sherman had come up and was on the left, Thomas in the centre, Hooker on the right, with General Grant in supreme command.

On Nov. 23d we issued sixty rounds of ammunition to the man, and turned out as if for drill. The rebels from their position in our front, were enabled to watch our every move;

and supposing that we were turning out for a grand review, took no measure to meet the advance, which soon followed. The 93d was a part of the front line, and when the word "forward" was given, advanced in battle line without skirmishers. The rebel pickets fired and fled at our approach. When within charging distance of their line of breastworks, "Fix bayonets! Forward, double quick," were the orders which followed in quick succession. The enemy were now fully alive as to the purpose of our movements, and opened fire from sixty pieces of artillery from Missionary Ridge; the infantry from behind their breastworks also opened a most destructive musketry fire, but the gallant boys pressed forward through this terrible storm of iron and lead which was rained upon them, without a halt or waver.

The rebel works were reached and over them the boys went, capturing many prisoners. Our Lieutenant Colonel, Bowman, was on the right of the regiment; as he passed around the end of the works he encountered a rebel, with his gun aimed at him. With drawn sword the Colonel rushed at the fellow with the exclamation, "d—n you, you shoot me and I'll cut your head off." The force of the Colonel's remark had the desired effect as the reb dropped his gun and surrendered.

"Orchard Knob" and the first line of works were ours, but not without heavy loss, as more than one-third of our regiment were killed or wounded in the charge. Three color-bearers fell, the fourth planting *Old Glory* on the enemy's works.

As we started on the charge, I was turning toward the left of my company when a bullet struck a diary which was in the right breast pocket of my blouse, glanced downward and struck my sword belt-plate, which was bent until it was of no further use. Fortunately for my present usefulness, I had buckled my belt under my blouse before starting, which

saved my life, as the diary stopped the bullet from passing through my right breast, and the belt-plate prevented it passing through my bowels.

The blow sent me to grass and left me insensible. When the stretcher bearers discovered me, they decided that I was dead and that they would first care for the wounded. (My name appeared in the newspapers as among the killed.) How long I remained there I have no means of knowing, but was finally removed to camp where I had comfortable quarters and my colored boy to care for me. The blow had broken my ribs and injured my spine. I thought from the pain which I experienced, that the bullet had passed through my body, and was rather disgusted when an examination revealed the fact that I was knocked out without a scar to show for it.

At Chickamauga one of my boys threw away his gun and cartridge box and never stopped running until he reached Chattanooga. I told him that I would put the price of the gun and accoutrements on the pay-roll against him. Soon after the charge on Missionary Ridge on the 25th I was lying on my bunk with a blanket over my face, when some one called, "Captain;" I looked up, and there stood the fellow who had thrown away his gun at Chickamauga, his right arm shot off at the elbow, and on his left shoulder he carried two guns. "Captain," said he, "I will have to learn to write with my left hand, won't I? I have brought an extra gun to replace the one I threw away at Chickamauga." I told him to throw the guns down and go to the surgeon's tent and get his wound dressed. The gun was never charged to him.

Immediately after the battle of Missionary Ridge the Fourth Corps started for Knoxville for the relief of Burnside. I was on my back and was left behind. On my recovery, December 26th, I started for east Tennessee with other men of the Fourth Corps who had collected at Chattanooga. We

acted as escort to a large supply train. There were about seventy men of the First Ohio of our brigade with us but no officer. Rebel cavalry appeared in our rear and the First Ohio boys were detailed as rear guard. They requested that I be assigned to command them. I protested, but they insisted, and I accepted the command. That night we encamped at Charleston. A small detachment of our cavalry were stationed there guarding a bridge. One of the cavalry boys had taken unto himself a wife the night before, and as the residence of the bride was but a short distance, I suggested to Major Joyce, of the 93d, that it would be the proper thing to go over and kiss the bride, as we could not march until the wagon train was across the river. We had been in the house but a few minutes when I chanced to look out of a window and beheld the rebel cavalry dismounting just back of the house. "Come, Major," was all the explanation I then made, and we ran for our command as fast as our legs would carry us. When near enough to be heard I called to the First Ohio boys, "Fall in." Without waiting for orders, I deployed the men as skirmishers and advanced rapidly, thus securing a good position for our line. We kept up a brisk skirmish fire until the wagons were across the river and the troops all in position. An advance was ordered along the entire line which started the enemy on the run. Having gotten them well started we opened ranks and let the cavalry, with drawn sabres, pass through our line and take up the chase, which they did in fine style. I found when the engagement was over, that in my enthusiasm to see the cavalry charge, I had made a run of two miles, as shown by the mile stones on the railroad, and the time made was *almost* as good as I could have made had the order of the chase been reversed. We captured 132 prisoners, five of them being commissioned officers. They were placed under my charge and I got a few



square meals, which I would not otherwise have had, as the citizens sent in extras for their use.

We arrived at Loudon on Dec. 31st, 1863, and the extreme cold kept us there three or four days. I have known of some pretty rank cases of foraging, but a case which occurred while here takes the cake. I had a man in my company who had an insatiable appetite for *liver*. The dead body of a cow was discovered near camp; as no part of the carcass seemed to have been taken, considerable mystery as to the object any one could have had in killing the animal surrounded the case. A close examination of the carcass revealed the fact that the *liver* was missing. As soon as this fact was reported, the mystery of that cow's death was clear to me; she had not died of the liver complaint, but by a bullet from Billy McKean's rifle, because she had a *liver*. Poor McKean afterward died of wounds received in battle.

We rejoined the corps above Knoxville, and on Jan. 17th I was on the picket line near Danridge, when we were attacked and some sharp fighting ensued. We were getting the worst of it, when the cavalry arrived, dismounted and poured in a few volleys from their Spencer rifles, checking the enemy's advance.

After much hard tramping, we finally went into quarters at Lenoir's Station. I was detailed in command of the foragers for the division, and instructed to give receipts for everything taken. I instructed the parties to whom receipts were given to take my receipt to Knoxville, and upon presentation to the Quartermaster he would give them vouchers. After the capture of Atlanta, I received a formidable document from Washington, stating that I was indebted to the Government over twenty thousand dollars for Quartermaster's stores, and that my pay had been ordered stopped until my account was adjusted. I went to Gen. Wood, commanding

our division, and said to him that I had decided to resign, as I could not afford to work for Uncle Sam the balance of my natural life, if not sooner shot, without money. He laughed at my discomfiture, and at the same time ordered his Quartermaster to give me a receipt covering the amount of my indebtedness. I sent the receipt to Washington, and my pay continued.

On May 5th we started on the Atlanta campaign. The fighting began at Tunnel Hill, was continued at Buzzard's Roost Gap, Adairsville, Calhoun, and Resaca, in all of which we were engaged. On May 27th Wood's division, supported by Johnson's division, was ordered to find the enemy's right, which movement culminated in the battle of Pickett's Mill. I was in command of the skirmishers, and as we were in search of the enemy's left, we made frequent wheels to the right, which was very trying to the duck-legged fellows on the left. My line became disconnected in the centre, and I went to the extreme left to hurry it forward. I found the left further behind than I had supposed, and told the boys to hurry forward, and that I would go back and halt the right until they caught up. I thought to save myself a long tramp by following a cow path up a ravine. I had gone but a short distance when, in making a short turn, I discovered a rebel cavalryman in my path some twenty feet away. He was evidently as much surprised as I was, and possibly as badly frightened. We stood for a moment, each looking the other in the eyes, when I decided that my only salvation from capture was to assume the aggressive, as he had his carbine resting on his thigh, while I had nothing more formidable than my sword. I yelled at him, "shoot that man on a horse," at which he turned, put spurs to his horse, and was off like a flash. I followed, repeating my call, which some of the boys on the right heard, and running for-

ward shot the horse, but the man took to the bush and escaped.

When we had found the end of the rebel line we were directed to halt. I asked permission to cross a field in my front, but the permission was denied, as we were waiting for Johnson's division to come up on our left. We waited an hour for Johnson, during which time the enemy moved a heavy force in our front, and when an advance was ordered, he was ready with a superior force to meet us. My skirmishers advanced to the edge of the field, and the line of battle got no further. As my company was scattered along the entire front, I had nothing to do during the engagement but hug a big tree. After we had gained possession of the battle ground, I counted sixty bullet marks on that tree, the height of a man.

The division was met by a flame of fire from infantry and artillery which lasted about an hour, during which time we lost from the division fifteen hundred killed and wounded.

The flag of the 93d had passed through many battles and only a remnant remained, but it was more precious to us than when it was first intrusted to our keeping. The morning after the battle of the 27th I found that but a single star remained of the flag. That star I appropriated and now have. We continued to follow all that was left of the old staff until a new flag was supplied us.

My attempted defence of Simonson's battery at Chickamauga left me on good terms with Simonson and his Lieutenant, Morrison, and I was a frequent caller at battery headquarters. On June 14th, on one of my visits, Gen. Sherman rode up and said to Morrison: "Lieutenant, do you see that group of horsemen on Pine Knob? Try a shot or two and see if you can scatter them." Morrison sighted the piece, and as the shell exploded, Sherman, who was watching through his field glass, said it was a trifle short. A second

shot was fired and the group scattered. That shot killed Lieutenant-General Polk. The gallant Simonson was killed near the same spot, while on the skirmish line, two days later. On the 17th I was on the skirmish line and advanced over the spot where Polk was killed ; I drove the enemy's skirmishers losing four men of my company, one killed and three wounded. Again on the 23d I was ordered to advance the line on Kenesaw Mountain, and succeeded in driving the enemy into his main line of works. In doing so I lost thirteen of my company, killed and wounded. As I had about thirty-five men engaged, the per cent. of loss was equal to the loss suffered by Lord Cardigan in the world-famed charge of the Light Brigade.

I had a man in my company who picked up every string he could find and put in his pants pocket. When asked what he intended to do with the string, his invariable answer was, "It will come handy some time." Late in the afternoon of the 23d the ammunition of the men got low and I went back a short distance to where we had left our surplus supply. I was piling cartridges on my arm when some one came running back to where I was at his utmost speed and fell flat on his stomach near me. I dropped the cartridges and ran to him ; he was greatly excited and wanted me to cut off his belt and the sleeve of his blouse. I unbuckled his belt and with my penknife ripped the sleeve of his blouse until the wound was uncovered. He had been shot through the fleshy part of his arm above the elbow ; I found the wound bleeding quite freely and said to him, that if I had a piece of cord I could stop the flow of blood. He put his hand in his pants pocket and drew out a bunch of string as large as my two fists, with the remark, "I told you it would come handy some time." For over a year I had heard that same remark, while the fellow kept accumulating string for just such an emergency. I burst out laughing, at which he was quite disgusted at my

apparent lack of sympathy, but I continued to laugh just the same. Ever after, if any of the boys were found with a lot of rubbish they excused themselves with the remark, "It will come handy some time."

On the 27th, I was on the skirmish line to the left of where Gen. Sherman ordered the assault on Kenesaw. I was ordered to advance to a certain position; we made the start but encountered the fire from a solid line of battle from behind breastworks, and we got back to cover as quickly as possible. Soon after an Aide rode up and ordered me to make the move which we had tried to make only a few minutes before. I told him that we had just tried what he then suggested, and that no single line of battle could take the position. He swelled up and said that he would report me to Gen. Hazen unless I made the advance. I got hot and told him that he was a blasted fool, and to tell Gen. Hazen that I said so. He rode off and before any further word was received the charge was made on the right and repulsed with great loss.

Sherman moved to the right, and Johnson again retired. We passed through Marietta, and on July 4th, I was on the skirmish line when we came to a blackberry patch. The berries were ripe and we decided to have a feast. We advanced and drove the enemy some distance beyond the berry patch, when we quietly slipped back and had a feast of berries.

Two days later, as we neared the Chattahoochie river, Gen. Hazen ordered two companies from the 93d thrown forward rapidly to the river, to prevent the enemy from cutting loose their pontoon bridge, on the south side of the river. Co. A was one of the companies detailed, and we passed down a lane and went for the bridge on the run. The rebels opened fire on us from across the river, but we prevented their cutting loose the bridge.

A few days later, I was on picket at this same spot, with instructions that the command would move some distance up the river to effect a crossing. I was to keep up a show of strength until after dark, when I was to quietly withdraw and follow the command.

Picket firing had been so constant at this point, that I decided upon a plan to stop it, so that our withdrawal would not be noticed. I called over to the enemy and told them to stop firing as it was Sunday. A truce was soon arranged, and in a short time at least a hundred rebs were in the river, taking a bath. A number swam over to our side with tobacco, to trade for coffee; one fellow called me aside and asked permission to stay with us. This we could not then allow, but it was agreed that he might come over at a given signal. About dark the signal was given, when over he came. He was in the condition, as to clothing, which we have been taught that our first parents appeared, before donning the fig leaf. I sent a man to camp with him, to look up some cast-off clothing. After dark we withdrew from the line, and about one o'clock in the morning overtook the command. I had scarcely fallen asleep when I was notified that I was wanted at Brigade headquarters. I found our prisoner in charge of the Provost marshal, the worst frightened rebel I ever saw; being dressed in our uniform, he was charged with being a spy, and told that he would be shot at daylight next morning. I explained the circumstances of his being with us, and all was well.

At daylight the next morning a passage across the river was made, and the march down the river took the enemy in flank, and he withdrew toward Atlanta. The battles and skirmishes which occurred from June 28th to Sept. 2d, are matters of history. Then followed the movement to the right, the battles of Jonesboro and Lovejoy Station, the evacuation of Atlanta, in all of which we took our part.

“Atlanta was ours and fairly won,” and we were allowed a rest until about the first of October, when Hood’s movement to the rear again put our corps in motion.

From Chattanooga our division went by rail to Athens, in order to intercept Hood from crossing the river. Our trains went overland. I had for a pack animal a fine, large donkey, which the boys had captured some months before. I had a colored boy who had been with me for several months, and the donkey was his charge. Two Irish boys of the regiment were of the force that marched. When the trains arrived at Athens, Monroe and the donkey were missing. The explanation made by the Irish boys was, that the donkey’s back got sore and they left him in the mountains; that Monroe, fearing that he would have to go back to his old master, decided to remain with a farmer in the mountains. As the train on which we were returning to Dayton, after our muster out, was nearing its destination, these boys came to me and said: “Captain, we want to explain to you the loss of Monroe and the donkey. We sold the donkey to a farmer for ten dollars, and agreed that Monroe should stay with him. We then made up the story and told Monroe that you were all captured, and that he would have to go back to his old master unless he consented to stay with the farmer.” In other words, they had sold both donkey and darkey for ten dollars.

Hood’s movements took us back to Columbia, Spring Hills and Franklin, where the army turned and gave him a stunning blow. The night of the battle of Franklin we withdrew, and the next day I was on picket in front of our position at Nashville, when Hood’s forces came up, but they were satisfied with simply feeling our position.

On Dec. 15th the 93d was deployed and occupied the works covering our brigade front. The balance of the brigade, led by its gallant commander, Col. Post, made a successful charge, capturing Montgomery Hill. The next

day we were in the front line, and at about 3 o'clock in the afternoon made a charge on the fortified works on Overton Hills. Our forces were massed for the charge directly in the enemy's front, and in plain view from his lines. He was forewarned and re-enforced his line in our front.

When the charge was ordered the men moved forward in gallant style, the line steadily advancing under a murderous fire from the enemy's batteries on Overton Hills, and from his line of rifle pits in our front. When within a few feet of the breastworks we encountered a line of abatis of logs in which holes had been bored and long pins driven and sharpened. The logs were lashed together at the ends with grape vine withes, and formed an unbroken barrier to our further advance. Men could not live under such a fire; the line began to waver, then to fall back. At this critical moment Col. Post came riding along the line. When within a few feet of me I saw that his horse was falling and sprang to his side, caught the Colonel under his arms and dragged him from the falling horse. I laid him behind a large tree and sent a man to bring a pair of stretchers. He was badly wounded by a grape shot, and as he looked up into my face said: "Captain, for God's sake don't leave me." "No, Colonel," I replied, "we will not leave you." The man with the stretchers arrived none too soon, as the enemy were getting over their works and coming in our direction. We lifted the Colonel on the stretchers and four of us picked him up and started for the rear on the run. The enemy kept up a scattering fire at us as we ran, but finally we reached the point where our line was reforming and turned him over to the surgeons. Much to my surprise he recovered from his wound, and has for some years been a useful member of Congress from Illinois. No more gallant soldier ever led a command in battle than Philip Sidney Post. The 93d lost in the charge 28 per cent. of its number.



In January, 1869, I visited the battle field at Nashville, accompanied by my new wife. I had told her of this incident and went in search of the tree, which I would be able to identify from a scar on the root of it, made by a grape shot which plowed through it while I was with Post awaiting the return of the man with the stretchers. I saw what I believed to be the tree, and handing the lines to my wife began scraping away the leaves in search of the mark left by the grape shot. I was successful, and as I pointed toward the spot where the Colonel's horse fell, was surprised to see the bones of the faithful old sorrell on the spot where he had fallen four years before.

Gen. Wood, commanding the 4th Corps, was at hand, and seeing the enemy's troops passing from his left to our front, ordered a charge on our right, which was successful, and as the cheers from the right reached us, we were again ordered forward and passed over the enemy's works, capturing their artillery on Overton Hills, with hundreds of prisoners. The cheers from the right were answered by the left, announcing victory all along the line. The battle of Nashville, planned and fought under the leadership of the invincible Thomas, was one of the most complete victories ever won on an open field, where the forces engaged were nearly of equal numbers.

We pursued the retreating enemy until he was across the Cumberland river, when we were halted at Huntsville, for a time. While at Huntsville I was detailed as Judge Advocate of our division, and was kept on this duty until mustered out. Then we went to East Tennessee, and across the mountains to Warm Springs, N. C., in order to get into position to head off Lee, in the event that he should escape Grant. The surrender at Appomattox made it unnecessary that we longer remain in that vicinity, and we returned to Nashville,

where we were mustered out on June 8th, 1865, and returned to Camp Dennison, Ohio, where we were paid off on June 15th.

Before disbanding as a regiment, we returned to Dayton, where, amidst the booming of cannon, ringing of bells, blowing of steam whistles, the glad shouts of the assembled thousands who filled the houses and crowded the streets, we marched to the Court House, only a remnant of the one thousand who had marched forth three years before, but the honored sons of a restored Union.

*J. T. Patters.*



THE BATTLE OF GROVETON;  
OR,  
SECOND BULL RUN.

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A PAPER  
READ BEFORE THE

COMMANDERY OF THE STATE OF MICHIGAN  
MILITARY ORDER OF THE  
LOYAL LEGION OF THE UNITED STATES

BY  
**COMPANION GEO. C. HOPPER,**  
**Late Major 1st Regiment Michigan Volunteer Infantry,**

AT  
DETROIT, MICH., JANUARY 5, 1893.

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## The Battle of Groveton ; or, Second Bull Run.

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### *Commander and Companions:*

I do not expect, in the short paper which I shall present to you to-night, to add anything to your stock of information regarding the general features of the Battle of Groveton, usually known as Second Bull Run or Manassas ; but, as the conduct of brave men in extremity is wont to arouse the sympathy of other brave men who have been in like peril, perhaps some of the incidents which I shall relate will interest you.

In the reports sent from battle fields in the early days of the war a great deal of exaggeration was contained ; and if a regiment suffered greatly, it was usually accounted for by the author of the report beholding (in his imagination at least) a large array of batteries, masked batteries and Black Horse Cavalry. I must confess that some such exaggeration has crept into the history of the 1st Michigan Infantry at Groveton, and I hope to show that a brave regiment may suffer great loss in a twenty minutes' charge, even though it does not have four or five batteries playing upon it all the time.

At sundown, August 28th, 1862, the 1st Michigan Infantry, which then formed part of the 1st Brigade, 1st Division, 5th Corps of the Army of the Potomac, received orders to bivouac for the night at Bristow Station.

Five days previous it had landed at Acquia Creek, and since then had been making short rapid marches, with long halts between; as was supposed, in pursuit of a foe who could not be found. The next morning, August 29th, it took its line of march along the Orange and Alexandria R. R., toward Manassas Junction, where it arrived about ten A. M.; and while halted there, some troops came up who said they belonged to Gen. King's Division; that they were in an engagement the day before, and that, if we were looking for someone to fight, we would probably be accommodated before the day was done. This was the first authentic information we, I mean the line officers, had of the enemy being near us. I suppose the generals were better informed.

Soon resuming our march, we came to a road running at right angles to the railroad, filed to the left, and followed it a mile or more, when we came to a low hill which overlooked the country out towards Thoroughfare Gap. We then filed to the right, moved along the top of the hill until our brigade was all in line, halted, stacked arms, and rested.

The 13th New York was deployed as skirmishers, and soon the rattle of their muskets told us that there was at least a skirmish line of the enemy opposed to them. Whether it had a large support behind it, is a question not yet settled to the satisfaction of all the students of the military history of those times.

Our line of battle was on, what I take to be, the western slope of the hill top, and a nearly unobstructed view was had of the country before us straight out to Thoroughfare Gap.

We had not been in this position long before a large force of the enemy appeared, coming directly towards us, and when they were a mile away they apparently found a road leading to their left, which they took, thus bringing their line of march directly parallel to us.

Three shots were fired from one of our batteries, the shells exploding directly in their midst, and making a great commotion in their ranks. A few moments afterward they returned the fire; one shell dropped in Company I., and severely wounded three men.

The brigade was faced about, and marched about ten rods to the rear, or just over the crown of the hill, halted again, faced to the front, stacked arms, and resumed their old attitude of waiting. This ended the hostilities for the day.

About three o'clock fighting commenced away to our right, which continued until after dark. We could see the charging lines and hear the crash of battle, but could not learn whether we were successful or not.

At nightfall four companies, under Capt. Alcott, were ordered to relieve the 13th New York. My Company, C., and Company F. were put out on the picket posts, and the other two were the reserve. In front of us was a meadow, about two acres in width, and beyond that, a cornfield, in which was the enemy's picket line.

My Orderly Sergeant requested me to let him go out to the fence, and see if he could not find out what had been going on away to our right that afternoon. I sent for Lieut. Hatch, of Company F., had him take charge of both companies, and joined the Sergeant in his scout. They were so busy picking corn that we got very near to the fence without being discovered, and could plainly hear what was said. They did not know the result of the afternoon's battle, but one said to another, "I wonder why they did not come down here and fight us. We were ready for them."

At midnight we were relieved, and at three in the morning were all withdrawn. We found the brigade ready to march, but they permitted us to stop long enough to absorb some coffee and hard tack before joining them.



Our line of march led us back until we found a road that ran parallel to our late line of battle. We turned into it, and at 9 A. M. reached a hill overlooking the Warrenton Turnpike, passing a house which those who had been in the previous year's battle thought to be the Henry House. We descended the hill, crossed the road at a point near where the stream called Young's Branch crosses it; ascended the opposite slope in a direction diagonal to the road, leaving a large house to our left; halted when near to a large wood, and found ourselves upon our new line of battle.

To make the story of our afternoon's operations intelligible, I must first, as well as I can, describe the ground over which we operated. The forest to our right and front was very extensive, but after passing through that part directly in front of our regiment, a quarter of a mile or less, we came to a "U" shaped opening; the open part of the letter being towards our left flank, which permitted the enemy, whose lines were curved, to note every movement after we emerged from the forest into the opening.

About thirty yards from the border of the forest was a dry watercourse, wide and with perpendicular banks, and about one hundred and fifty yards farther on, was a railroad cut, along the border of the other side of the "U" in which was the enemy's line of battle. Following the line of the railroad to the right, just as it was lost to view in the woods, it curved in towards the valley, and then re-curved in the opposite direction, the line here being an embankment instead of a cut, but forming a very good defence to fight behind. The ground from the watercourse to the cut sloped upward without any irregularity, which could be used as a cover, except at one point within fifty yards of the enemy's position.

To return to our line of battle: An hour or more had elapsed, during which time a battery had been placed in

position on our right, a shell or two had come whistling over us from our right front, and a good many men had come back wounded from the skirmish line.

Our brave Colonel was quite a hand at making little speeches to his officers when an important duty was near, and also in explaining what he intended to do; and we therefore were not surprised when each commander of a company received orders to report to him. He said: "Gentlemen, the enemy is in a railroad cut in front of us, in a strong position, and it is not intended to attack him there, but this regiment is intended to relieve the skirmish line now in front (the 16th Michigan Sharpshooters), make a good fight, and we are to be relieved by the 13th New York. When I am relieved I shall file the head of my line to the left, and I want all the companies to follow in the line of the preceding company, and turn at the same point. In case we draw them out and have a fight, I want you to remember what Michigan and our friends at home expect of us." With that he turned and left us.

The experience of the past three months had been sufficient to teach the officers the difference between a skirmish and an approaching battle. They stood silent for a moment; then Capt. Pomeroy looked intently at Lieut. Bloodgood, who was his chum, and remarked, "I say skirmish, Bloody, how are you till after the battle," and reached out his hand; at once the hands of the assembled group began to grasp each other, and "how are you till after the battle," was repeated again and again. They then turned quietly away, and resumed their position in rear of their respective companies.

Before a half hour had passed we were commanded to take arms and advance into the woods. We passed nearly through, when we were halted, and ordered to lie down,

preliminary, as we supposed, to the projected skirmish ; but soon our massed brigade passed over us, halted and deployed into battle line, leaving a space between the 13th New York and the 18th Massachusetts, just large enough for us to fill, which we at once proceeded to do. Gen. Butterfield rode up to the rear of our line, called for our cheers, and gave the command to charge, and we swept out of the forest like an avalanche.

At the dry watercourse we received our first check ; the line tumbled into it, in more or less confusion ; the guns of Longstreet, away on our left, dropped their shells into it with a quickness and precision which gave me a new experience ; and on account of his curved lines the fire from his batteries followed our every movement in this charge, in a way I have never seen equaled before or since.

The bank of the watercourse was so high that the men had to place one hand upon it, in order to lift themselves out ; the line was new formed, and the advance continued ; but hardly had we started when the musketry fire from the railroad cut began to tell upon us. It was so severe that the regiment to our right swerved away to the right, leaving a large gap between us. Our commands to our men were merely, "Steady, men—steady, and touch to the left." The line was doing well, and it seemed as if we would soon be upon the foe, but at fifty yards from the cut it stopped, and here the slaughter commenced.

The enemy in the curved line of the railroad, on our right, was almost on a line with us, and began an oblique fire on our right flank ; the enemy in front and well protected and only fifty yards away and Longstreet's guns were still as active as ever.

Just as we came to a halt Lieut. Hatch, in command of Company F, came to me with a mangled arm and said,

“Captain, will you take care of my company ; I am hit,” and went to the rear. The men were standing up and loading and firing with a coolness not to be excelled, but they were so exposed that I ordered them to lie down. Just then a bullet paid its respects to my right thigh. A moment after Capt. Wendell came to me, and said : “The Colonel is killed, and I am in command. There are troops in the woods in the rear of us, and I think they are going to charge. We must hang on here, keep down the enemy’s fire, and go in with them when they reach us.”

I said; “I am wounded, but will hang on as long as I can;” I looked back at the woods and saw a Zouave regiment in line of battle. In doing so, I took a step or two away from the Captain, a shell burst over our heads, so near that I felt the flash on my face. I turned to him, and saw him holding one broken arm in the other hand and going to the rear. Before he had got two rods away a ball from the enemy in the cut pierced and instantly killed him.

The men were falling so fast that several of the officers picked up the muskets which they had dropped and used them. Among the number was Lieut. Arnold, who in his earnestness got back a little too far from cover, and an oblique shot struck him in the forehead, and he, too, instantly died.

Capt. Whittlesey received his death wound at the same time that Col. Roberts did, when the charge was made; and Lieut. Garrison was killed farther to the left of the line, while fighting by the side of Capt. Spencer.

The numbness from my wounded limb passed away, and the pain that followed admonished me that I had better bandage it. While doing so Capt. Alcott, who was then in command, came to me and said: “Captain, to save our colors, and our men, I must order a retreat; the 13th New York are going back and we are doing no good here.” I said, “All

right, I will be with you soon," and, with head bent down, continued to fix my bandage. All at once I heard the Captain say: "Don't fire; we surrender," and looking up I saw a half score of men in gray uniforms, with muskets cocked and leveled at us, who replied, "If you surrender, give up your arms," and looking on beyond them I saw a hundred men or more of the old regiment massed around the colors, moving swiftly, but in good form, nearly to the woods. The sight was so inspiring that I had to cry, "Bully for the old regiment." I suppose that the same thought had come to Capt. Pomeroy that was in the mind of Capt. Alcott, as to the uselessness of keeping up the contest; and he, therefore, ordered a retreat. If so, it was the last order he ever gave, for a shot from the foe then and there ended his earthly career.

The regiment, under the direction of Captains E. W. Belton and Clinton Spencer, and Lieutenants H. C. Christiancy, O. C. Allen, D. C. Bradish, Wm. Byrnes, and John Griffin,—seven officers out of nineteen, who were not incapacitated by wounds, capture, or death, passed a half mile to the rear, halted, and awaited orders.

They were afterward moved back, near to Bull Run; and that night crossed it, and resumed their position in the brigade; and from this time, till the close of the war, this regiment, which stood in line of battle at Gaines Mills, two months before with seven hundred men, seldom carried into action more than two hundred muskets.

In obedience to our new commanders we gave up our arms, but the Sergeant who commanded the party, and who was very friendly, said his Lieutenant had no sash or sword belt; therefore, to cement the new friendship, I gave him mine. Another one of the party attempted to take my watch, but I grasped the hand that grasped the watch, and

forced him to let go. We then—I with my right hand on Capt. Alcott's shoulder, and the Sergeant holding my left arm, moved toward the railroad cut which we had been trying so hard to capture. When about half way, from some cause unknown to me, we were halted; all at once the Captain's form trembled, he looked at me, tried to speak, and sank lifeless to the ground. He had been shot while a prisoner of war.

I had only time to take one look at my noble comrade, when we moved on, and into the cut; and almost as soon as we reached there the watch-seeking scamp again attempted to extract it from my pocket. I resisted, and called for an officer, and a young lieutenant responded. I asked him if he allowed his prisoners to be robbed. He indignantly said he did not; said they were civilized, and asked me to show him the man. I showed him the rascal, who was making his way to the left as fast as he could go, and I never saw him afterward.

A dozen more prisoners were soon assembled, and two dozen guards started to take them to the rear, my new found friend still holding tightly to my arm, but before we had proceeded far some officers met us, and they, thinking that one armed rebel ought to be equal to an unarmed "Yank," reduced our escort one-half, and returned them to the battle line.

As we proceeded we came to a woods road, down which an officer was riding rapidly toward their left. The escort halted and cheered him, and the Sergeant asked me if I knew him. I said I had not yet made his acquaintance, but hoped I should sometime. He said, "That is Stonewall Jackson. What do you think of him?" To not offend, I said he was having it all his own way that afternoon, which seemed to please the Sergeant.

We soon arrived upon the banks of a stream, which I think was Catharpin Creék, were turned over to the guard there, and my new found friend left me. This spot, in which I was to pass five miserable days, was on a steep hillside, covered with stone, with no shade trees or grass, or any other redeeming feature near, except a nice spring of water. I found about a dozen officers surrounded by a guard, and soon another detachment came in, and among them were Lieut. G. C. Mogk, Lieut. John Stepper and Lieut. Wilkins. Bloodgood, of my regiment. Lieut. Bloodgood was so badly wounded that he died at Washington about twenty days afterward.

We soon pre-empted a spot on which to spread our blankets, and then took a survey of our surroundings. Prisoners were constantly coming in, and soon there were nearly forty officers in our small corral, and at the foot of the hill, in the woods on our right, a thousand or fifteen hundred men. The battle still continued, but the noise seemed to be getting further away, and the continual bringing in of prisoners was sufficient evidence that the victory was not ours. There was a major of a New York regiment in our corral, so badly injured that he died during the night, and many others so badly off that a Surgeon was asked for, the reply being, always, that they could not take care of their own wounded. The next morning Lieutenants Mogk and Stepper started for Libby, and the second morning afterwards Lieut. Bloodgood and I were paroled.

One of the officers who took our parole said: "You belonged to the 5th Corps, did you? Were you having a dress parade on the hill the forenoon of the 29th of August? Why did you not come down and fight us; we were waiting for you?" In these later times, when thinking over these words and the similar talk heard by the Sergeant and

myself at the edge of the cornfield, and also because no large force took up a position in front of us during the day, I am constrained to believe that when Morrell's Division took their position a large portion of Longstreet's force was in front of us, and that in order to get on Jackson's right flank we would have had to first overcome Longstreet. Of course, the position I have taken in this matter does not oblige anyone else to stand beside me unless he wishes to.

How we existed the five days we were waiting at this place, for our Medical Corps to reach and take care of us, I do not now recall, except that we were very hungry, and at night very cold; but on the sixth day we reached our field hospital, were given plenty of good coffee and soft bread, and a piece of loaf sugar to eat with it, in lieu of butter, and the next day were sent to Washington. I once thought the ambulances and stretcher bearers should have reached us sooner, but the seventh day after the battle, forty-five ambulances and carriages, in one train, took their way to Washington—a sufficient proof that there was a great deal for the Medical Corps to take care of.

While in the hands of the enemy, we were several times called upon by their officers, who were eager to discuss the merits of the war; a controversy I thought best to avoid; but the fourth of September a group of them came about us, and one of them said, looking intently at me: "Captain, you are all right;" and, on my asking him what he meant, he replied: "You have a wound there that will show your friends at home that you are of the kind that can give and take blows in battle, and before it is well peace will be declared, and you will never see another battle-field. I did not respond to his remark until he urged me, when I said: "I do not agree with you, and I do not care to get up any feeling between us." He said: "Speak freely, do you



suppose I would take advantage of a wounded prisoner? I want to know just what you think." I then said: "The North did not want war, but, now they are in it, I predict they will never cry quits until you are back in the Union, as you used to be. He replied: "You are crazy; this morning Lee's advance is in Maryland; Washington and Baltimore are at our mercy; one more victory for us, and France and England will intervene; you will have to stop the war, and we will have obtained our separation from you."

I quote this conversation, because it goes to show that their hopes of success were based a great deal on foreign intervention, and a few successful battle-fields; but every battle was not a victory for them, and intervention failed to connect; and if my confident foe lived until Appomattox told the story, he probably concluded that I was the true prophet.

This paper has grown to a greater length than I intended; but I cannot conclude it without saying a few words about the comrades whose deaths were so noble and so untimely.

Col. Roberts, Capt. Wendell, Lieut. Bloodgood, Lieut. Arnold and Lieut. Garrison received their primary teaching in the Art of War in that organization in this city which sent out so many noble men who took their advance degrees in the great seminaries of well fought battle-fields: I mean the Detroit Light Guard. All honor to it, and the other volunteer military organizations that are upheld by the patriotism of the young men of their time, men who believe that behind civil authority and civil laws there must be some power to help enforce them.

Col. Roberts' first service, however, was in the Mexican war, and when President Lincoln called for volunteers he was one of the first to respond. He accepted a commission in the three months' service, and before the regiment was disbanded he had commenced organizing the new regiment.

Capt. Charles E. Wendell, Capt. Edward Pomeroy, Lieut. Irving Garrison, Lieut. Henry C. Arnold and Lieut. Wilkins Bloodgood all carried muskets in the first Bull Run battle.

Capt. R. H. Alcott served in the Mexican war and on the Peninsula, and was a man of great courage and patriotism. Capt. Whittlessey also served on the Peninsula, and was a brave and skillful officer.

The names of the men who died on that ill-fated field I cannot mention ; but the fact that fifty-five officers and men, out of three hundred and twenty, perished in a twenty minutes' contest conclusively proves that they were well disciplined and brave, and the undaunted way in which they rallied around the colors and marched off from the battle line has been a pleasant memory to me for many years.

One year after this battle it was my fortune to again pass over the field, and my heart was saddened at beholding the exposed remains of my poorly buried comrades, lying where they fell.

They had been so slightly interred that the storms of winter had exposed them to view, and we were so situated that we had to pass on and leave them as they were ; but since then they have been gathered up and placed in that grand Mausoleum at Arlington that contains so many of the brave unknown that perished on Virginia battle-fields, and of the thousands that there repose there are none more deserving of a nation's kind remembrance than are these men who fought and fell at Groveton; and while I do not wish to unduly extol the merits of the regiment to which they belonged, I, with its other survivors, do ask that it may be classed as the peer of the other noble war organizations that went out from this State.

This is honor enough for us ; it should be honor enough for anyone.



# “JEB” STUART’S HAT.

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A PAPER  
READ BEFORE THE

COMMANDERY OF THE STATE OF MICHIGAN  
MILITARY ORDER OF THE  
LOYAL LEGION OF THE UNITED STATES

BY

COMPANION FORD H. ROGERS,  
LATE 1ST LIEUT. AND ADJUTANT 1ST REG'T MICH. VOL. CAV.

ALSO,

## “HOW I LOST MY HAT.”

BY

COMPANION GEO. W. CHANDLER,  
BREVET MAJOR U. S. V.

AT

DETROIT, MICH., FEBRUARY 2, 1893.

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DETROIT, MICH. :  
WINN & HAMMOND, PRINTERS AND BINDERS.  
1893.



## "Jeb" Stuart's Bat.

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In the summer of 1862 I was serving as adjutant of the First Battalion First Michigan Cavalry Volunteers, and the incident which I am requested to relate occurred in August of that year. Having preserved no written data of those times, and the lapse of thirty years having somewhat dulled a fairly good memory, I find myself obliged to resort to outside sources for dates and minor details, and in so doing I find some considerable variations in different accounts of the same affair.

At that time our brigade consisted of four regiments of cavalry, viz.: The First Michigan, Fifth New York, First Virginia (*loyal*), and the First Maryland (*loyal*).

Colonel Thornton F. Brodhead commanded the First Michigan and was the senior colonel of the brigade.

"After the battle of Cedar Mountain, on August 9, 1862, our brigade remained in that vicinity doing scouting and picket duty for about a week.

On August ~~17th~~ 17th (~~accounts vary as to date~~), Colonel Brodhead <sup>we</sup> received orders to ~~take his own regiment, the First Michigan and Fifth New York, and make a reconnaissance towards Louisa Court House, and these two regiments constituted the reconnoitering force, notwithstanding the assertion of a writer in the National Tribune that I am mistaken about the presence of the Fifth New York Cavalry. The Fifth was there.~~ <sup>Virginia</sup>

Our march lay through a part of the so-called "Wilderness," and in the evening we came into a good farming

country with extensive corn-fields on either side of the road, between which we marched until about 11 o'clock at night, when we bivouacked in the road along side of a big cornfield. The boys immediately proceeded to tear down the rail fences for camp fires, and went into the corn-field for roasting ears. But our visions of a feast on roasted corn were suddenly and rudely dispelled. Some of our boys who had first entered the corn-field penetrated it to a considerable distance, where they encountered some "rebs" bent on the same errand as themselves. They took them prisoners and brought them out to our fires, and from these men we learned that Jeb Stuart's division of fifteen regiments of rebel cavalry was encamped for the night on the other side of that corn-field.

Mr. Stuart had something of a reputation in those parts, of which we had heard, and we had no desire to encounter him with the odds fifteen to two in his favor.

The fires were quickly extinguished, the mount was accomplished without the aid of a bugle, and a somewhat accelerated movement was begun towards the Rapidian.

On the outward march the First Michigan was in the advance, but our return was a somewhat hasty movement by the left flank, putting the Fifth New York in the lead. We marched in this order very steadily for four or five hours, having an interval of about forty rods between the two regiments.

At about 4 o'clock in the grey of the morning I was riding with Major Gardner of the Fifth New York about midway between his regiment and mine; the Fifth had struck the pike running at right angles with the country road on which we were marching, and was moving on to the right. Just then I looked along the pike to the left and saw two horsemen approaching from that direction. A short observation satisfied us that they were "rebs," and I drew my revolver and started for them. They immediately turned and fled. I put

spurs to my horse and gave chase, firing a couple of ineffectual shots after them.

As they passed a little farm-house at the left of the road, I noticed that they both shouted at the top of their voices to a party on the porch, and there was considerable confusion in the yard, most of the party running to the rear of the house and across the fields.

One large, fine-looking officer, with a hat too large for him, pulled down to his ears, came out into the yard, unhitched a horse, mounted it bareback, leaped two rails of the bars, and was away like the wind.

I called "Halt!" but he seemed to entertain different ideas of the situation and showed no inclination to take orders from me.

Our horses were both on the dead run and doing their best, but mine was already well exhausted by a twenty-four hour's march without feed, while his was fresh after a night's rest and fodder. I saw that I was being distanced, and fired a shot at the fugitive. He fell forward and I supposed he was wounded, but he had simply thrown his head forward along his horse's neck to lessen the chances of being hit. I fired one or two more shots with like effect, and he passed out of sight over the summit of the rising ground up which we had been running.

I rode to the top of the rise and looked down to the fields and woods, beyond which I saw were swarming with grey-coats; so I abandoned the chase and returned to the little house by the wayside.

I threw my-reins over a post and went on the porch, which I found covered with blankets, long shawls, hats, haversacks, revolvers, pipes, tobacco, etc., showing that a party of officers had camped there for the night, but I still had no idea of how distinguished a party it was whose slumbers I had so rudely disturbed.



I immediately began gathering up such articles as struck my fancy. I took a gentleman's long shawl marked "Chiswell Dabney," a pair of revolvers, and a broad-brimmed, light brown, soft hat with a long feather on it, which I immediately donned. Just then Major Gardner of the Fifth New York and a few men from each regiment rode up to the fence. The Major did not dismount, but sang out to me, "Here, Rogers, give me some of that plunder!"

I picked up a patent leather haversack and tossed it to him and it proved to be the prize of the lot. It contained Jeb Stuart's yellow silk sash and a lot of papers of the utmost importance to the Union cause, among them being General Robert E. Lee's orders detailing General J. E. B. Stuart to the command of the cavalry advance guard of the rebel army, then advancing for Pope's overthrow, and hoping to capture Washington.

Our stay at the little farm-house was very brief, as an opinion was rapidly forming in our minds that that climatic belt was a very unhealthful one for Yankees. On our way back to rejoin the column we fell in with Adjutant Wm. M. Heazlett of the First Michigan Cavalry and a few men, who had Major Norman R. Fitz Hugh, Stuart's adjutant-general, as a prisoner. Upon seeing me with the broad-brimmed hat on, Major Fitzhugh blanched and said in a quick, troubled voice, "Where is the man who wore that hat?" Upon being informed that he escaped, he said with an air of great relief, "Thank God for that; that's Jeb Stuart's hat."

This was the first intimation I had as to the importance of the game I had been hunting.

I supposed for years that the man whom I chased and fired at was General J. E. B. Stuart, because he left his hat, and the man I chased wore a hat much too large for him, leaving me to infer that Stuart in his haste had left his own hat and picked up the larger one, being unable just at that time to

give his usual care to details. I have since learned that Stuart ran around the house and across the fields, while the gentleman with whom I had the steeplechase was a Prussian officer named Von Borceke, on a leave of absence from the Prussian army and serving on the staff of General Stuart.

As soon as Colonel Brodhead read the captured papers and realized their importance, he sent them to General Pope by couriers, and before night Pope was burning his wagon trains and hastily falling back for the defense of Washington, which would undoubtedly have been in great danger had General Lee succeeded in concealing his advance for twenty-four or forty-eight hours longer.

The long shawl I now have at my house in this city. The hat I took to California with me, packed in a trunk, and being smashed very flat, I took it to a hat store in San Francisco to be put in order, where I allowed it to remain for a long time, and when I called for it, it could not be found, having been cleared out with a lot of old second-hand hats.

A very correct picture of the hat was published in the Century magazine a few years ago, which led me to suppose that they might have the hat, and I visited their office when last in New York and found that their picture was from a photograph.

It is pleasant for one to feel that he accomplished something of more than ordinary importance in the great struggle for national existence, and I sometimes flatter myself that my little sortie on the left on that August morning was fraught with consequences momentous and far-reaching.

FORD. H. ROGERS.

After the reading of Companion Rogers' paper, Companion Chandler recited the following, to which the Council will affix the title :

### How I Lost My Hat.

---

*Mr. Commander :*

Companion Roger's graphic description of the capture of Gen. J. E. B. Stewart's hat reminds me of a somewhat similar experience I once had with the same gentleman, only that my hat was the one captured.

In the spring of 1863, while in the city of Baltimore, Md., I purchased a fine, light-colored, wool, army-shaped hat, for hot-weather wear. I put the hat, with other articles of my wardrobe, in my army chest, and when I was subsequently transferred from Belle Plain to Edward's Ferry, on the Potomac, of course the chest was taken along.

I was stationed at Edward's Ferry with Captains Winchester, Granger and Meredith of the Commissary Department for the purpose of supplying our army while crossing from Virginia into Maryland, which subsequently resulted in the Gettysburg campaign. Our orders were to return to Washington as soon as the army had crossed and had been supplied. Consequently, about four o'clock in the morning of June 28th, 1863, we left Edward's Ferry in a packet, via the Baltimore & Ohio canal. Having been on duty both day and night for several days, we at once arranged our cots in the hold of the canal boat, instructed our servants to prepare breakfast and call us when same was ready; and, feeling ourselves secure from the enemy, we turned in for a much-needed sleep.

We reached Seneca Locks about 6 A. M., when we were suddenly awakened by Capt. Granger's boy tumbling down stairs, shouting "Captain, we's took. We's took." We naturally sprang to our feet inquiring "By whom?" "By de reb'l cabalry; dey is all 'bout hiar," replied the boy. About the same time the boat had stopped and the deck was swarming with men pointing carbines at us through the hatches shouting "Come up Yanks." We were not long in getting out, nor in ascertaining "where we were at." We found we had been captured by Gen. Stewart's cavalry corps, they having swung around the rear of our army and forded the Potomac at that point. The men proceeded to loot our baggage in short order, after which we were conducted to headquarters and found ourselves in the presence of Generals Stewart, Wade Hampton, Fitzhugh Lee and others comprising the chivalry of the South. After being questioned at some length we were ordered to march with the command, as they could not send us to the rear, and had no horses or wagons with which to transport us. We soon set out on a weary march of fifty miles, after which we were finally paroled.

While stopping at Rockville, Md., I saw a fine-looking young officer approaching with my colored boy, Robert. He at once addressed me by saying, "This boy tells me he is your servant, but as he is one of my father's niggers I shall have to take him from you." I meekly consented to the transfer. He then turned to the boy and said, "Robert, why did you run away?" "'Deed, sir, some ob de oder boys 'ticed me, but I's mighty glad to get back and wont nebbber run 'way no moah," was his reply. Nevertheless, he returned to me at Washington within a week, and remained with me until the draft was ordered among colored men, when he disappeared, probably returning to his old home.

While talking with the officer I recognized the hat he wore as mine, and ventured to remark that, "if I had his nigger, he evidently had my hat." He replied that he had taken it from one of the soldiers who had broken up our baggage. However, he very kindly offered to pay me for it if I would accept confederate money. No, I replied, but if he would deposit some of my personal effects where I could at some future time recover them, I would cheerfully make him a present of the hat. After convincing himself that what I desired to leave was of no value to his cause, he took me to an hotel, put my package in charge of the landlord, and I subsequently recovered it in good order.

This is the manner in which my hat was captured by Gen. Stewart, also the way in which I saved a portion of my personal effects.

# ON TO GETTYSBURG.

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TEN DAYS FROM MY DIARY OF 1863.

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A PAPER

READ BEFORE THE

COMMANDERY OF THE STATE OF  
MICHIGAN,

Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the U. S.

BY

COMPANION ZIBA B. GRAHAM,

Late 1st Lieut. 16th Regt. Mich. Vol. Infantry.

AT

DETROIT, MICH., MARCH 2, 1889.

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DETROIT, MICH.

WINN & HAMMOND, PRINTERS AND BINDERS.

1893.



## Ten Days From My Diary of 1863.

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### *Commander and Companions :*

Gettysburg, although a glorious battle to have been a participant in—largely due to its achievements, and as the turning point of an unbroken line of successes upon the part of General Lee's army of the Virginia, and as the starting point of which Appomattox was the culmination—has been more thoroughly written up than any other battle of the Civil War, and the three days of hard fighting, while at no time a battle of "all along the line," brought out the bravery, skill and valor of the individual regiments, brigades, divisions and corps as no other battle during the four years' struggle.

Buford's Cavalry, the First and Eleventh Corps, on the 1st of July at Oak Hill, Willoughby Run, McPherson's Woods and back to Cemetery and Culp's Hill. The Third and Fifth Corps on the afternoon of July 2d in the Peach Orchard, Emmetsburg Pike in the Wheat Field, around Devil's Den and on Little Round Top. The gallant fight of the Twelfth Corps on the morning of the 3d on Culp's Hill against Johnson. The artillery duel preceding the fight of the afternoon, and the final forlorn charge of General Pickett on our center, with its disastrous result to the rebels—all give scope to as many views as there were survivors of the fight. This, together with the exactness with which the wisdom of the Gettysburg Memorial Association has laid out the grounds and the location of each regiment's position, will always add to the knowledge and interest of each individual soldier who participated in the struggle.



It would be impossible for me to describe with any degree of accuracy the general fighting of those three days, and I purpose in this paper to copy from my diary to show the wearisome marching, and our life, hopes and desires a few days before the battle, to revive in your memories the days before we arrived at Gettysburg, and in part to show what the Sixteenth Michigan did on the afternoon of the 2d of July on Little Round Top.

Quoting from my diary commencing :

*Friday, June 26th, 1863.* Adieu once more to Dixie Land. Again we are on the retrograde movement. Our yearly pilgrimage North has already commenced ; the two great columns of living souls are slowly moving Northward. Ours with escutcheons brightly bearing aloft the principles of right and the maintenance of law and order, whilst the other carries anarchy and confusion. We feel that the column carrying for its motto the love of liberty and union must prevail.

We had a severe march to-day. We passed through Leesburg, the place made notorious by the women demeaning themselves in the first days of the Rebellion by maltreating the prisoners who were captured at the battle of Ball's Bluff, where Colonel Baker, of California, and formerly a United States Senator, fell. There were some very fine forts built in this neighborhood by the rebels during the summer of 1861. Passed by Ball's Bluff and crossed the Potomac at Edwards Ferry into Maryland. Just before sundown bivouacked near Poolesville.

*Saturday, June 27th.* Another hard day's march. We never did such forced marching before. We seemed to verify the old song :

“ By ceaseless action all that is subsists.  
Constant rotation of the unwearied wheels  
That nature rides upon, maintains her  
Health, her beauty, her fertility.  
She dreads an instant's pause,  
And lives but while she moves.”

We had to wade the Monocacy River, which was about two hundred feet wide ; water was about waist deep ; bivouacked for the night near the Monocacy Bridge, but three miles distant from Frederick City.

Just one year ago to-day was an eventful one to us. We were fighting the battle of Gaines' Mill, where we lost in killed and wounded 161.

How quickly has the year rolled around ! It seems but a year since I enlisted. This army life is a strange life to lead—one lives fast, events crowd themselves thickly upon each other, one day a battle, next day a march, again something else—always change and excitement ; 'tis what keeps us up.

*Sunday, June 28.* We remained in camp all day, and for the first time since leaving the Rappahannock received a mail. To-day General Meade, our corps commander, superseded General Hooker in command of the army. He received his appointment about midnight, and was as much surprised as the troops were. He thought when he was awakened to hear it that it was an order for his arrest. So it goes. A general in this army seems ever to be on the anxious seat ; he does not know but the next order cuts off his military head or raises him to supreme command. As a general thing his promotion at this crisis does not seem to give universal satisfaction. Two important changes were made in this army at critical moments, and the result has been written under the head of failures at Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville.

*Monday, June 29th.* On the march again. Wishing to buy some articles, I received permission to go on ahead of the column. I remained three hours in the city before our regiment came up. Frederick is an enterprising city of about 15,000 inhabitants, and located in one of the finest valleys in the world. Her citizens are very patriotic. It does us old soldiers good to march through a country where we can realize that all around us are friends. The people here are

very liberal, and many a poor soldier will carry to his Northern home pleasant memories of his journey through Maryland. It is a long time since many of the old toppers of the army had a chance to step up to a bar, and every one seemed to be possessed to avail himself of the opportunity of filling up himself and his canteen as he passed through Frederick City. We marched twenty miles to-day, and stopped for the night near a little town called Libertyville.

*Tuesday, June 30th.* Up again before daylight. It does seem as though we were being marched to death. We passed through several very pretty villages; at one called Uniontown we stopped for an hour to eat a cold lunch. The surgeon and myself availed ourselves on an invitation to step into the house of the village doctor, and his wife regaled us with music until the bugle called us to line of march. Just before sundown we arrived in the little town of Union Mills. The rebel cavalry under one of the Lees has been here for several days, only leaving about five hours before we entered it. We were met by the inhabitants with loud cheers, and a flag which had been carefully concealed during the rebel stay was proudly waving on the principal house of the town.

The rebels have stolen nearly every horse in the neighborhood, also levying upon the citizens for everything they wanted.

*Wednesday, July 1st.* Another tiresome march. We were up before daylight and kept up our march until long after midnight. To-day we marched from Maryland into Pennsylvania with flags unfurled and the bands playing. It was truly inspiring to us weary soldiers; cheer after cheer was sent up, and many a tired soldier trod with a firmer step and renewed again his determination to fight as he had never fought before. Every man's countenance seemed to bear the look of a victor. Even before we had knowledge of where

we were to meet the enemy, Pennsylvanians were breathing vengeance upon the invaders of the Old Keystone State; many of them who belonged to our corps lived in that part of the country we were passing through.

During the latter part of the forenoon we came to Hanover; they had heard of our coming and every table was spread with just such substantials as we could appreciate. Our cavalry had had an engagement here yesterday, and dead horses were lying thickly strewn in every street. About the time of our arrival in Hanover we could plainly hear the cannonading in the direction of Gettysburg; it proved to be the First Corps under General Reynolds, and this fighting we all judged to be but the beginning of that struggle which was to test the powers of both armies. After resting an hour and a half, and just before sundown we again resumed our march in the direction of Gettysburg, which was about fifteen miles distant. I shall never forget to-night's march. Day after day we had been marching until every soldier seemed exhausted, and now that we felt that the coming day was to be an important one for us we needed rest. Many were the speculations as to the probable result. The animation of our march of the forenoon as we entered the State, with the sun shining, flags flying, music enlivening us, in the darkness of the night seemed to have been lost, in our tired condition. Confidence seemed to be lacking and hope seemed almost to have forsaken us. We were experimenting with a new commander. We were fearful. For miles we marched on with ominous silence; in this way pursued our course until we filed into the little village of McSherrytown, when the troops at the head of the column, which was nearly a mile distant, began cheering. We all seemed to be inflated with the desire to cheer, if we only knew what to cheer for. Soon the news reached us—"McClellan has been reinstated; he leads us into the battle of to-morrow!" The news must

be true, as it comes from the head of the column. Cheer after cheer rent the heavens. Wearied boys, who but a short time before seemed dejected, now were delirious with joy. "Little Mac has come; all will yet be well!" was the universal cry. Old patriots, who had ever been identified with the army, shouted and cheered until tears came to their relief, and, although near midnight, clouds of caps could be seen in the air. Citizens, who lined the roadside, carried away by the cheers, joined in the chorus. Old men, whose sons were now marching to victory, cheered us whilst tears trickled down their wrinkled faces. "God bless you, boys, God bless your leader, Little Mac?" Women lined the roadside, administering to the wants of the hungry and thirsty. Truly, it was a sight never to be forgotten.

N. B.—The soldiers of the Fifth Army Corps entered into the fight of July 2d, believing the midnight news—by whom or how started I do not know. It was stated afterward that all that day Governor Curtin, of Pennsylvania, labored with President Lincoln to that end. At all events it freshened us up and made light the last two hours of an almost continuous march of twenty-two hours. Just before daylight we sank to rest three miles out from Gettysburg.

*July 2nd.* After about three hours' sleep we were routed up and started for Gettysburg. We soon arrived at the outskirts of the place and were then apprised of the fact that our whole army was here. All had been marching on different roads, and when Buford's Cavalry and the First and Eleventh Corps became engaged yesterday it was ascertained the enemy were in force here. The different corps who were marching on parallel pikes and within supporting distances of each other massed in here during last night, with the exception of the Sixth Corps, which came up during the day.

All remained quiet during the forenoon and many of the men lay down to sleep, not having had much of a chance the

past seventy-two hours. I went out to the front to see the line and take a view of the surrounding country. I had not returned to the regiment but a few moments before the Sixth Army Corps came up, and we moved away toward the left of the Third Corps, whilst the Sixth Corps took our place. Whilst moving to our new position the ball opened and the firing became terrific. We double-quickened over the old stony ground in very short order, whilst shell after shell came bursting amongst us. We had been massed between the Emmetsburg Road and the Baltimore Pike; the First Division on the right, the Third Brigade on the right of the division, and our Sixteenth Michigan on the right of the brigade, placing our regiment on the lead of the corps. Going into the fight we had progressed near to the Trastle House (Sickles' headquarters), in our double-quick movement to support General Birney, when General G. K. Warren came dashing up to the head of the column from the direction of Little Round Top, and pointing out Little Round Top, to Colonel Strong Vincent, who had command of our brigade, said, "I take the responsibility of detaching your brigade. Give the command to double-quick and side forward with me to Little Round Top. To lose Round Top would be fatal." The command was given. The regiments of the brigade did double-quick and moved right forward into line, formed on top, the ranks closed up. General Warren, taking position on a large boulder, pointed out to Colonel Vincent and Colonel Welch the movements of Hood's Division of Longstreet's Corps.

Turning to Vincent he gave him imperative orders to hold this point at all hazards, if he sacrificed every man of the Third Brigade, promising to go immediately for reinforcements.

The disposition of the regiments and battery was made as follows: Battery D, Hazlett's Fifth U. S. Artillery, on top

of the mountain and on right of brigade. The Sixteenth Michigan moved forward and down about sixty feet below the summit, its right resting under the left section of battery, whilst Company A and the company of sharpshooters were detached and deployed as skirmishers over and on Big Round Top; Forty-fourth New York, Eighty-third Pennsylvania and Twentieth Maine in somewhat of a semi-circle formation, facing in the woods and low rocky ground between the Round Tops. We remained in this position but a short time when we were attacked by Hood's column. No other troops were there when the Third Brigade made its grand charge up the rocky side of Little Round Top.

No others entitled to first honors. We arrived none too soon. As we got into line, Hood's men could be seen coming up the side of Round Top from the valley of Plum Creek, and an almost hand-to-hand conflict raged for fully half an hour, when the Texans sought shelter behind the big boulders at the base of the mountain. Again they charged, but by this time General Warren had brought up the One Hundred and Fortieth New York, under Colonel O'Rorke of the Third Brigade of the Second Division, Fifth Corps. It was comparatively a new regiment and strong in numbers. They came at an opportune time and hurled themselves against the enemy, losing in killed and wounded over a hundred men the first ten minutes. The Forty-fourth New York also was placed immediately in rear and on top of the Round Top, above and in support of the Sixteenth Michigan. The second attack was again repulsed. About seven o'clock in the early evening a third assault was made, but it proved no more successful than the previous ones, and when darkness covered us we held the same ground we planted ourselves upon; at 4:30 P. M. holding the ground that Warren intrusted us with, and with what a sacrifice! The losses sustained by the brigade in this desperate encounter, as reported July 3d,

were 491 officers and men, or 62 per cent. of those of the command actually engaged; our beloved Brigade Commander Vincent mortally wounded; General Weed killed, falling over the dead body of brave Artillery Hazlett; O'Rorke, the dashing and brave commander of the One Hundred and Fortieth, just fresh from West Point, also lay dead among the rocks. Our own regimental loss was fearful—349 men for duty on June 30th, a twenty-two hours' almost continuous march on July 1st, the natural falling out on such a forced march. Two of our strongest companies on detached duty on Big Round Top left us no more than 150 fighting men. Of that number 60 had fallen, 30 never to rise again. Of my own Company B, of which I had command, just one-half were killed. During the lulls in our own immediate vicinity we could from our vantage ground witness the fierce struggle of the balance of our corps and the Third Corps in the peach orchard and the wheatfield. We could see line after line of Longstreet's men forming and advancing; also the close contact, the repulses, the fierce havoc of artillery, the close range of musketry, the break of the lines, the gallant unbroken second line still pushing forward, the gradual pressure upon Sickles, his stubborn falling back, the hand-to-hand conflict in the wheatfield where the gallant Fourth Michigan fought so stubbornly, and where their brave and noble Colonel Jefferds lost his life by a bayonet thrust, still clinging to the flag. All this and more passed before our eyes. So fierce was our own fight that we could spare no men to take off the field our own wounded. I engaged part of my time in securing from them the ammunition they had not used in loading the guns for those who could fire. Although unable to describe that fight, the memories of what I saw, the bravery, heroism and the fearful grandeur of it all, I never shall forget. The fighting was sharp and did not quiet until after dark. We who had survived the battle thanked



God that we had been spared, whilst so many of our comrades had fallen, and as we groped around in the darkness for our wounded on that rock-bound mountain side, friend grasped the hand of friend and congratulated each other that they had been spared.

When the task of caring for the wounded had been finished it was nearly midnight; we sank down upon that Round Top weary and exhausted, but with the proud feeling that we still held the important position entrusted to us.

*Friday, July 3d.* We remained upon Little Round Top until 10 o'clock of this forenoon, when we were relieved by part of the Second Division of our corps. We took up a new line about half a mile to the right of Little Round Top and in the direction of Cemetery Hill; in half an hour we had built quite a good breastwork, something we had not time to do in our hurried engagement of yesterday.

All being quiet in our front I received permission to go back to the hospital to get an ugly tooth extracted, that had kept me dancing all the night before. Our surgeon, Doctor Everett, who had been hard at work all night at the amputation table, made but short work and little ado about one tooth. He laid me on the ground, straddled me, and with a formidable pair of nippers pulled and yanked me around until either the tooth had to come out, or my head off. I was glad when the head conquered. I then made up my mind never to go to a surgeon for a tooth-pulling matinee the day after a fight. I saw the boys who were wounded from the fight of the day before; poor fellows, without a murmur they were patiently waiting their turn for examination, whilst their precious life's blood was slowly ebbing away. My heart sickened and I turned away. It unmans one for the bloody work before him to witness the sufferings of the field hospital. No soldier but of iron nerves should ever leave the front to see the sufferers.

On my way back to the regiment the fighting commenced upon the right of the line. It was the most terrific artillery firing that was ever heard upon this continent. Our corps was not engaged in this battle, although many of the shells fell in its midst. We were maintaining the line just to the left of where Pickett's charge came in contact with our centre. On my way back to rejoin the regiment I called at a large house for a drink of water; I saw that the well crank had been removed. I turned to a rebel captain who was lying on the grass and asked him if he knew where it had gone to; he said that but a few moments before the owner of the house had taken it off, declaring he was not going to have his well pumped dry by rebel soldiers, and that they wasted the water. This captain begged that I might get it again. There were some fifty rebel wounded in the yard, besides a few of our own men. The surgeons who had been with them, and who had partly gone around in their first examination, had cleared out and left them on the commencement of the firing, and with the fever of their gunshot wounds they were thirsting for water. I went into the house, found this man, a mean Dutchman, buried in the bosom of his family, and his family buried in the bowels of the cellar, they having taken safe refuge from the hail of iron which was bursting in every direction. I ordered him to give up the well crank. He first refused. Just at that time a shell struck his chimney, and the noise and rattle of the falling brick nearly frightened him to death. I threatened to shoot him if he did not give me the crank; this brought it out of its hiding place back of the stairway. I went out, watered the boys, put two of the least wounded in charge of it and then left, receiving the thanks of all.

N. B.—Every visit I have since made to Little Round Top, I have seen "old Wikerts'" son—his father is now dead—telling interested hearers of "the wonderful acts of

heroism his father and he did in taking care of the wounded in their yard that fearful day, and how kind the government was to recognize their services.”

*Saturday, July 4th, 1863.* It rained nearly all day, and the boys pitched their little poncho tents behind their breastworks and remained closely housed until night.

When the rain slacked up a little, in the afternoon, I passed over the battlefield of the day before yesterday. It was a horrible sight to behold. Thousands of men, poor fellows, lay upon the ground, many of them in a condition unrecognizable. In one place near where our regiment was engaged I counted the bodies of one hundred and fifty dead rebels, and in another the bodies of seventy. Whole lines seemed to have been swept away. Truly, a valley of death !

*Sunday, July 5th.* It appearing evident that the rebels were falling back, our brigade was this morning advanced beyond the line nearly a mile. My company and the sharp shooters of our regiment were under my charge as skirmishers ; we encountered nothing but a few of the rebel videttes, but we had a good chance to witness the havoc made by the fire of our artillery during the battle of the 2d. We picked up one hundred good muskets, the rebels having left this line but an hour previous to our advance; and the wrecks of the good things which they had helped themselves to were seen at every step. Fragments of mutton, veal, crocks of butter, lard, preserves, baskets containing delicacies from the cellars of the wealthy farmers in the the vicinity, were thickly strewn around. Dressing apparel which could do them no earthly good, such as old bonnets, fashioned after old patterns, babies' shoes, young misses' gaiters, feather beds, in fact everything stealable could be found here in profusion. We remained out on the front until relieved by the Sixth Corps, they being the only corps who

were not immediately engaged in the series of battles of the past week, only one division of them participating, the rest being all the reserve we had in the army. As the rebels are on the retreat, this corps will follow them closely. After going back and stopping only long enough to cook a little coffee, we started in pursuit. It was dark before we had gotten fairly under way, and the hardest marching—for a short one—I ever made was to-night. It was so dark that it seemed to us that we could almost feel it; and such marching—we were like pigs wallowing in a mire. The boys could only keep together by hearing each other grumble and grunt. I was only too glad when we hauled up for the night, which was long after midnight. Many of the boys did not get out of the woods that night, having lost their way. It was a night long to be remembered.”

So much from my diary.

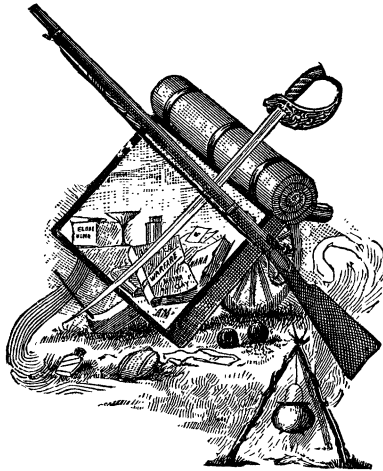
To-day as we look upon Gettysburg and realize that the loss on our side was fully twenty-seven per cent. and more than thirty-six per cent. for the confederates engaged, we can in a slight degree compass the magnitude of this struggle.

Those of us who participated in the late Grand Army Encampment at Washington, when it took nearly eight hours with twenty-four old veterans abreast to pass the grand stand, can scarcely realize that the casualties of Gettysburg exceeded by over five thousand the number then in review. In our own City of Detroit, at the late election, forty-eight thousand voters registered, representing the manhood of a city of a quarter of a million souls. That number but barely laps the loss at Gettysburg.

To-day the line of battle is strewn with hundreds of monuments erected in memory of the fallen. Silent sentinels to watch over the ground of the pivotal point in the great struggle, and as an object lesson to future generations. Ancient

Greece, noted for her arts and the science of war, for centuries after the battle of Thermopylæ Pass taught to her school children the names of every one of the three hundred noble Spartans who fell defending that Pass against the Persian Invaders.

Let us, as soldiers of the Civil War, take pilgrimage as often as we can and, with our children, visit the field of Gettysburg, and, with uncovered head, in sight and along the line of shafts erected there, renew with them the love of our country and our flag.



# FROM THE RAPIDAN

—TO—

## ATLANTA.

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LEAVES FROM THE DIARY OF  
COMPANION E. B. FENTON,  
Late Twentieth Connecticut Volunteer Infantry.

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READ BEFORE THE  
COMMANDERY OF THE STATE OF MICHIGAN  
MILITARY ORDER OF THE LOYAL LEGION OF THE  
UNITED STATES,  
AT  
DETROIT, MICH., APRIL 6TH, 1893.

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DETROIT, MICH.:  
WINN & HAMMOND, PRINTERS.  
1893.



## From the Rapidan to Atlanta.

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The tremendous losses of our army at Chickamauga, in the early fall of 1863, compelled the prompt reinforcement of General Rosecrans in his new positions in and about Chattanooga, where he was closely invested with Confederate troops, about double the number of his own. The Confederates occupied Lookout Mountain, the railroad and the river, thus compelling General Rosecrans to transport his supplies over the mountain for a distance of nearly sixty miles. The utmost effort possible could not supply the army with food, even with half rations. The horses and mules "died by the thousands," and hardly enough serviceable animals could be obtained to haul a respectable sized train. In his stronghold General Rosecrans had the "bull by the horns," but he could neither let go nor hold on with safety.

This was the situation of the Army of the Cumberland, and was the urgent necessity which caused the transfer of two veteran corps of the Army of the Potomac. Within ten days after the movement began the entire Eleventh and Twelfth Corps were transferred by rail from Virginia to lower Tennessee.

September 16th we broke camp at Kelly's Ford, Va., crossed the Rappahannock River, and marched to Stevensburg, a distance of twelve miles.

September 17th we marched to Raccoon Ford, on the Rapidan, distance seven miles, went into camp for the night, in line of battle.

September 18th Company B furnished a detail of two men to the firing party, at the execution of several deserters.



September 20th we advanced about one or two miles, to a point beyond the range of the rebel batteries, on the opposite bank of the Rapidan, remaining there four days.

On the 24th we advanced to Brandy Station, about twelve miles, from there to Bealton Station on the 26th, and at 11 P. M. the same evening took the cars for Washington, arriving early in the morning of the 27th. From Washington we started on our trip West, our objective point being Atlanta, Ga. Well do I remember that beautiful morning, as train after train steamed out of the depot, at our National Capital, amid the cheers of a great crowd of people who had assembled to witness our departure.

The journey was made in ordinary freight cars, into which we were packed, from fifty to seventy in each car, making it impossible for us all either to sit or lie down at the same time. To get any sleep under such circumstances was next to an impossibility. But comfort was the last thing to be considered, especially where haste was so important as in this case. Crossing the Ohio River at Bellaire, where everything was ferried over, we were again packed into freight cars of the Central Ohio Railroad, reaching Louisville, Ky., on the morning of October 1st.

All through Ohio and Indiana we received a perfect ovation given by the people of those loyal states. At every stopping place they turned out by hundreds and thousands, the women honored us with gifts of flowers, and filled our haversacks so full of good things, as to bring the most abundant rations of pork and hardtack for sometime afterwards, into the utmost contempt.

The journey from Louisville to Tullahoma took until Oct. 6th. On arriving at the latter place, it was found that rebel cavalry held the railroad between Tullahoma and Murfresboro, and was given a three days' chase by the 1st Division of the 12th Corps, (of which our regiment formed a part), by

which, further depredations in that direction was prevented; Evidently contemplated by the rebels in hope to cut off our supplies for Chattanooga, to the forwarding of which the two re-inforcing corps were first directed, and so successfully that "hard crackers" which had commanded an exorbitant price, became plenty in camp.

On the 19th of October, General Rosecrans was relieved, and was succeeded by Major General Geo. H. Thomas, in command of the Army of the Cumberland; three days previous to which, the Department of the Ohio, the Cumberland, and the Tennessee, had been constituted the military division of the Mississippi under the command of Major General Grant, who arrived at Chattanooga on the 21st and took charge of the operations about to commence there. Meantime the rebels came down from Lookout Mountain and took position at "Brown's Ferry."

General Grant ordered the Twelfth Corps to co-operate with the Eleventh Corps in cleaning the rebels out of Lookout Valley that were hindering the navigation of the river. This had been successfully accomplished by the 28th.

From Lookout Mountain the rebels saw General Geary's corps encamped in the valley. They stole silently down upon them, under command of General Longstreet, who was, by the assistance of General Hooker, quickly defeated. During the night about two hundred mules belonging to the train broke loose and stampeded, rushing through the rebel ranks with such vigor as to put an entire brigade to flight,—the rebels supposing the mules to have been a company of cavalry. It was said that the "Charge of the Mule Brigade," as it was afterwards called, contributed not a little to the final victorious result, and afforded an immense amount of amusement at the expense of the enemy.

This victory of Generals Hooker and Geary over Longstreet

was characterized by General Thomas as "among the most distinguished feats of the war."

In order to dispossess the rebels of Lookout Mountain and Missionary Ridge, upon which they were strongly entrenched, General Grant ordered General Sherman, in command of the Army of the Tennessee, to join the Army of the Cumberland at Chattanooga, thereby making a force sufficient to take the offensive against General Bragg. General Sherman arrived about the 20th of November with his forces, consisting of the Fifteenth, Sixteenth and Seventeenth Army Corps.

General Bragg, being unaware of this strengthening of our forces, thought his position safe, and dispatched General Longstreet's corps to East Tennessee to operate against Burnside. General Grant immediately took advantage of this movement and prepared for the rebels a grand surprise. In and about Chattanooga he had nearly one hundred thousand men, composed almost entirely of veterans upon whom he could rely, men who were the heroes of Vicksburg, Chicamauga, and Gettysburg.

On the morning of the 24th, as if preparing for a grand review, General Grant paraded the entire Army of the Cumberland in full view of the rebels, who crowded Lookout Mountain and Missionary Ridge, amazed at the magnificent display. While this apparent parade of our troops was going on, a signal gun, fired from one of our forts, announced that everything was ready, when suddenly a division of troops under General Wood, which had been well advanced under cover of the parade, dashed across the field, before the rebels apprehended the design of the movement, an elevation of Missionary Ridge was taken, immediately fortified, and, for a time, was the headquarters of General Grant.

During the night General Sherman crossed the river, and on the morning of the 25th entrenched himself in a position to carry the right of the enemy's line.

In the fog, at early dawn, on the right and left the attack began. General Sherman charged upon the entrenchments on the enemy's right, but was repulsed. Again and again did the heroes of Vicksburg march over their dead to the assault, finally succeeding in occupying the works. At daylight General Hooker advanced against the rebel left, on Lookout Mountain, up the sides of which he had discovered a path. While a portion of his troops were engaged in another direction, he led the second division of the Twelfth Corps and two brigades from the Army of the Tennessee over a very rugged way, landing early in the forenoon on the top of the rock in the rebel rear. Hastily forming, our troops advanced to the attack. It was a complete surprise. The enemy were in strong force, but General Hooker's resistless column carried everything before it. The rebel column broke, confusion took possession of the men, and they scattered in every direction. Hundreds of prisoners and several pieces of artillery were among the fruits of this famous "battle above the clouds." The fog settled about the sides of the rock, hiding from view those below and the strife of their comrades among the ragged and rugged peaks of Lookout Mountain, on whose very crest General Hooker bivouacked for the night. His gleaming camp fires proclaimed to the anxious watchers at Chattanooga how well the battle in that direction had progressed. Morning came, and with it General Sherman renewed the assault upon the rebel right; on the other hand General Hooker pressed forward, driving the enemy through the valley towards Missionary Ridge, and, sweeping 'round, threatened the rebel left. To meet this, General Bragg, with a portion of his troops from the centre, pressed against Hooker with the energy of despair, but the veterans of the Army of the Potomac met them at every point and drove them back. On the rebel right the contest was *still more* severe. General Bragg sent brigade after

brigade to reinforce that portion of his line, until our troops seemed in danger of annihilation. Till three o'clock the battle raged. Stationed on that part of Missionary Ridge captured in the first day's battle stood General Grant, quietly smoking his cigar. He looked on with the utmost coolness, watching the progress of the battle on the flanks, and waited for the time to come to press forward his troops against the centre. To resist this attack on his flanks General Bragg had greatly weakened his centre. The order for the attack was now given, the Army of the Cumberland from its place of concealment, under Generals Granger and Palmar, pushed forward and crossed the valley to Missionary Ridge. Soon the stars and stripes floating over Fort Hindman announced the success of the assault. General Grant now appeared on Missionary Ridge, and was received with cheers of wildest enthusiasm. Inspired by the presence of our great leader, the remaining strongholds, one after another, were easily taken. By night fall, the whole chain of works were in possession of our troops, while the army of Bragg was flying in confusion along the route to Ringold and Dalton. The results, as here stated, were the relief of Chattanooga, the opening of communication by rail to Nashville, the isolation of the rebel force sent against Knoxville, and a loss to the defeated rebel army of some "twelve or fifteen thousand men, with seven thousand stand of arms." Our own loss was about "thirty-two hundred."

The main business of the army was now to guard the line of railroad, from Knoxville to Chattanooga and then back to Nashville and Louisville, so that supplies could be gathered at Chattanooga for the spring campaign. The 12th Corps guarded the Nashville and Chattanooga railroad, and was found to be no easy task. With the most *infernal* malignity the rebels lay in ambush the entire distance, ready to blow up the passing trains with torpedoes, or by tearing up rails

to wreck the trains loaded with soldiers. If one of our boys were caught outside of the lines, he was first robbed and then murdered by hanging or otherwise.

These acts of violence became so unbearable, that General Grant took vigorous measures for holding the people of the whole country 'round about responsible, *unless* they at once gave information of the presence of these guerillas. Contributions were also levied upon the wealthy secessionists, for the support of the non-combatant Union citizens who were sufferers from the raiders. In pursuance of this order, a portion of the 12th Corps was sent out for twenty miles to gather in supplies, by which more than ten thousand people were provided for. While out on this foraging expedition, some of our men were attacked, and, after surrendering, three of them were shot. Ascertaining who the guerillas, committing the deed, were, a levy of thirty thousand dollars was made, by order of General Slocum, upon their property and that of their neighbors. This sum was collected, and distributed equally to the families of each of the murdered soldiers, by the hand of an officer detailed for the duty. After a few weeks of this vigorous treatment, and an occasional retaliative court marshal shooting party, bushwhacking became very unpopular. The Tennessee Union Cavalry were ordered out in pursuit of these raiders, known as "Wheeler's Cavalry." But they only succeeded in capturing a few stragglers whom they "lost" in a very peculiar way to themselves, before getting into camp, so that they could never more be found.

On the 11th of April an order was issued dissolving the Eleventh and Twelfth Corps and forming the same the Twentieth Corps. General A. S. Williams was assigned to the command of the first division, General John W. Geary the second, and General Butterfield to the third. Prior to this, General Grant had been, as Lieutenant-General, assigned

to the command of the Armies of the United States, General Sherman succeeding him in the Military Department of the Mississippi. General Thomas commanded the Army of the Cumberland, General McPherson the Army of the Tennessee, and General Schofield the Army of the Ohio. Everything was now all bustle and preparation for a forward movement. Every train brought in re-enlisted veterans; and from every headquarters newspaper correspondents were informing the public of the grand campaign about to open, and praising the commanders in proportion to the amount of whiskey furnished them. At length everything was in readiness, and they only awaited the order for a forward movement.

Heretofore, when the Army of the Potomac fought, the Army of the Cumberland was lying by for repairs, and vice versa, by reason of which the rebels between could, by short marches, concentrate upon either. General Grant determined to put a stop to all this, and issued his famous order, "That henceforth there should be but one campaign, and that should last through summer and winter to the end of the war." Both of the main armies were to march simultaneously, the one toward Richmond, and the other into the heart of Georgia.

On the 27th of April our regiment, having joined the second brigade, third division, of the Twentieth Corps, advanced on to the Lookout Valley. On the second day of May we moved forward, and, with other divisions, concentrated at Ringold.

The objective point, as hereinbefore stated, for this great army, numbering one hundred thousand men, was Atlanta, Georgia, a place of great importance by reason of the railroads converging there, and being a great place for manufacturing articles of war.

On the 7th of May the army was put in motion; the Army of the Ohio moving down the Cleveland & Dalton Railroad,

and the Army of the Cumberland (with the exception of the Twentieth Corps) moving down the Chattanooga & Dalton Railroad. The Twentieth Corps proceeded through Taylor's Ridge to a fortified hill in front of Buzzard's Roost, which was, after a sharp contest, taken possession of. The railroad from Cleveland passes through a range of hills east of Rocky Face Mountain and enters Dalton from the north. The Army of the Ohio, under command of General Schofield, approached the place from this direction, while the remainder of the army confronted Rocky Face Mountain from the west. On the 9th of May Colonel Coburn of the Thirty-third Indiana arrived, and, as senior officer, assumed command of the second brigade. Our regiment with the Nineteenth Michigan were ordered, under command of Colonel Ross, to proceed to Boyd's Trail, seize and hold it at all hazards. Leaving camp about one o'clock P. M., after a march of seven or eight miles the enemy were overtaken, and driven in perfect pandemonium over the mountain some twenty miles to the right. General McPherson passed to the rear of the enemy at Snake Creek Gap, and was in a position to threaten the rebel line of communication near Resaca.

On the night of the 10th the Twentieth Corps was ordered down to the support of McPherson. At Snake Creek Gap the two regiments just mentioned, under command of Colonel Ross, joined the second brigade, to which they belonged. Here the Fourteenth and Twenty-third Corps were once more dispatched to the assistance of McPherson, against whom the enemy were rapidly concentrating; meanwhile the Twentieth Corps were engaged in making a double track through the Gap to facilitate the passage of our troops and trains.

On the 13th of May General Sherman came from Buzzards Roost, announcing that General Howard, having taken possession of Dalton, was moving down on the east of the



mountain to join his forces below. After several hours of skirmishing, in the afternoon and next morning, the forces of the rebels were discovered to be drawn up behind a deep creek, facing the west and north, covering the railroad and Resaca, with their right resting on Connasauger River. The centre of their position was a high ridge, which had been strongly fortified during the night and morning. General Sherman therefore determined to make an assault upon both flanks of the enemy, at the same time making a strong feint against the centre. At about 2 o'clock P. M. our line moved forward to the attack. Soon the action became general, and continued with varying fortunes until it became so dark that the firing gradually ceased. Our troops bivouacked in the places where darkness overtook them, while only the occasional crack of some picket's rifle, "or the doleful sound of the whip-poor-will disturbed the stillness of the summer night." Though fatigued and sleepy, nothing could steal away our senses so entirely that the wicked "zip" of an occasional bullet passing over, or striking or awaking some poor fellow, could not be heard, still it was rest for the weary body, and occasionally the weary spirit within would busy itself among the peaceful scenes of home, only to be suddenly awakened to the terrible realities of the position, perhaps by the dreaded bugle call at reveille, which, to a soldier, was worse than death to disobey.

The forenoon was comparatively quiet. About noon came the order for General Butterfield to move forward to an assault, for the purpose of recovering ground lost by the Fourth Corps on the preceding day; this, with the other operations of these two great opposing armies, made a busy and bloody afternoon.

The evening of the 15th found as results of the struggle, so far, that the enemy had been driven from its position on the right and left, and was otherwise so badly crippled that

it seemed as if on the morrow it must be defeated or perhaps annihilated.

During the evening our Lieutenant-Colonel was detailed to take command of a detachment of troops, numbering about 250 men, of which my company formed a part, with orders to capture a murderous little battery which was making it lively for us, and situated on a ridge right in front of our division, along the front of which was an embankment, forming a natural redoubt. The gunners had been driven from their guns after a fearful struggle, which covered the ground in front with dead and wounded, but neither side was able to take away the pieces. They remained, as it were, on disputed ground. The detachment moved out about 9 P. M. After groping 'round in the dark we found the position, and formed around the side of the hill below the battery. We proceeded to reconnoiter and examine the location in order to determine upon a course of action, the result of which was that *two* plans were presented for the accomplishment of the object. One was to charge against the main works of the enemy, under cover of which the guns should be run towards the rebel lines, around the end of the bluff on which they were situated, and thus into our lines. The other was to dig them out. After a short council of war the latter course was adopted. Commencing some two or three rods down the hill, a trench was dug towards the muzzle of each gun, wide enough to admit the carriages. About 2 o'clock in the morning the trenches were completed, ropes were attached to the pieces and they were dragged silently through the trenches down the hill, and into our lines. The battery proved to have been composed of four nice, new, brass twelve-pounders, only just out of the Confederate arsenal at Atlanta. They were found loaded with a double charge of grape shot. The mission was accomplished without the loss of a man. The rebels seemed to have been aware that some movement was

on foot for the capture of the guns. Several times during the night they opened a brisk fire in the direction of the works, but it was evidently expected that the attempt would be made to take the guns over on their side of the bluff, thinking it impossible, from the nature of the ground, that it could be done on the front. But the Yankees had dug out too many foxes and woodchucks on old Connecticut Hillside to stick at a little job like that of digging through the top of a mountain, to get whatever they might want on the other side.

Early in the morning it was discovered that there was no enemy in our front. General Johnson, during the night, built bridges and quickly withdrew, crossing the Connasauga River with his whole army, abandoning everything that would impede his march. Even his dead and wounded were left to the care of our army.

“Among the stores abandoned were twenty-three thousand sacks of corn and oats and more than one hundred thousand rounds of ammunition.” At 8 A. M. the whole army again started in pursuit, the route being over the battlefield.

Near where the battery was captured a letter was found, written by its commanding officer to his wife, stating that “some Yankees, who wore stars on their hats (the badge of the Twentieth Corps), had captured his battery; none but Joe Hooker’s men would have done it,” and that “when they charged his battery, they did not mind shot any more than a duck would water.”

The enemy had been forced from its strongest position, and compelled to retreat in the direction of Atlanta. Crossing the river upon the bridges abandoned by the rebels, who were in too much of a hurry to burn them, our troops kept up a hot pursuit, now and then coming up with the enemy’s

rear, when there would ensue a sharp skirmish or a severe battle.

Upon coming up to the village of Cassville it was found to be alive with rebel troops. As it was found necessary to occupy this place, the Nineteenth Michigan and our regiment were detailed to accomplish this task. The Wolverines and Connecticut Yankees went in with fixed bayonets, and Cassville fell into our hands in a very short time.

The villagers had all fled in great alarm, having been told that if the Yankees occupied the place it would be shelled by the forts on the hill and destroyed. One sick man was found deserted by his wife and children. In a cellar three or four old ladies had concluded to "stand the storm." In one house a table was spread for dinner, upon which was a smoking boiled ham, fried chicken, young onions, strawberries and warm biscuit, all of which we partook with great satisfaction after our hard day's work.

During the night the rebels could be heard strengthening their long line of works, and it was expected that here they would make a stand. But the movements of General Sherman were such that Johnson concluded to withdraw, which he did very silently about daylight.

General Schofield, with the Army of the Ohio, now took the advance in pursuit of the retreating enemy, forcing them across the Etawah river in great confusion, capturing many prisoners.

A portion of the Fourteenth Corps moved off to the right, occupied Rome, captured a large amount of stores, destroyed several mills for the manufacture of ordnance and other goods contraband of war. Farther up the river several large cotton mills were seized, which were running under contract for the Southern Confederacy. The mills were burned, and some hundreds of female operatives were sent north within our lines.

The Twentieth Corps, for the next three days, encamped in the edge of the woods near Cassville, fighting woodticks and other beautiful insects so common among soldiers at that time.

At three o'clock on the morning of the 23d of May, the army was again on the move towards the Etawah river. General Johnson expected that General Sherman would attempt to cross at Altoona. To prevent this, if possible, the rebel general made extensive preparations; but General Sherman, proving a little obstinate in the premises, concluded to find his own crossingplaces, which he did during the day and night without any serious trouble at various points between Rome and Altoona.

On the morning of the 24th, without much opposition, the army found itself on the move to the right of Altoona Ridge, and among some of the finest lands in Northern Georgia.

As a sample of the desolation that must have followed in the track of the armies in that famous march through Georgia, the following has been taken from a letter written by one of our officers to his father, which may be of interest to those present who served in that corps :

The people have so long obeyed the behests of Jeff. Davis, that, instead of cotton and tobacco, formerly raised, all the arable land has been planted with corn, or sown with wheat. It is said that the rebel soldiers were detailed in the spring to assist in planting the crops; but in the track of the army not much will be reaped, for, spreading over the country like a swarm of locusts, the troops have eaten up and destroyed everything green.

From the crossing of the Etawah river at Altoona, on the 23d, to the middle of July, when General Sherman was preparing at Marietta to take the last step in the grand campaign that was to place him in possession of Atlanta, it was almost a daily struggle with a deadly foe, who, as he retreated before our victorious forces, seized every opportunity for intrenching himself from time to time in strong positions,

from which he had to be driven at the point of the bayonet, or "wormed out" by superior tactics or sagacity. In connection with this a good story is told :

On one occasion, when Kenesaw Mountain was being held by Johnson's forces, a story had been circulated that General Sherman had been killed. The lines of the two opposing armies were but a few rods apart, so that a man could not raise his head above the works without getting a bullet through it. One morning a rebel cried out: "I say, Yank, who commands your army now?" "Billy Sherman," replied one of the boys. "What makes you ask that question?" "'Cause," said the rebel, "they said he was killed; but I knew he wasn't, for he has corkscrewed us out of some place every day." "He's see-sawed us out of every place we stopped at," said another. "So fur," said another, "ef he gets us out of this, we're going fur Cedar Mountian. If you'ns' follow and worm us out of that, we're going to take a position nine miles t'other side of hell, and see ef you'll follow us through that place." "Who commands your army *now*, Johnny?" says one of our boys. "Oh, General Sherman, of course," was the reply. "Thought Johnson was in command?" said Yank. "Well, he was, at first," said the rebel; "but now we allers move when Sherman gets ready to have us."

Among the incidents of the march was a two hours' battle at Pumpkinvine creek on the 25th of May, in which the Twentieth Corps were exclusively engaged. Some of the regiments were nearly decimated. The first and second divisions of this corps lost over 1,500 men. General A. S. Williams, of Detroit, had a horse shot from under him, afterward gallantly leading his troops on foot in a charge to the very muzzle of a rebel battery.

During this historic pursuit of the enemy, a loss of 500 to 1,000 men each day was counted as but skirmishing. Over

one hundred miles had the retreat and the pursuit been kept up, leaving behind a track of blood, an almost continuous line of graves, and a desolate country, in which innocent women were left to death by slow starvation by the merciless conscription of their fathers, brothers and sons.

On the 17th of June there was a sharp battle at Lost Mountain, resulting, as usual, in our favor.

The enemy retreating to Kenesaw Mountain, was found by General Sherman to be so strongly fortified that, after a good deal of fighting, he abandoned the assault.

The rebels, on the 3d of July, once more retreated to a line of works thrown up in advance by negro pioneers at Chattahoochie, from which they were eventually forced to retire. The time was now at hand when the decisive battle was to be fought which was to determine the fate of Atlanta.

On the 19th of July General Johnson was found with a line of entrenchments environing the city at a distance of about three miles on the north and east, while our line extended from the Chattanooga railroad in the form of a semi-circle round to the Augusta road, fronting to the south and southwest, and about five miles from Atlanta.

While the Union army was thundering at the very gates of the ill-fated city, General Johnson, the man who, by his skill and caution, had so often saved this portion of the rebel army from destruction, was removed, and General Hood placed in command of the rebel forces. Upon assuming command, Hood issued an order to his troops, telling them they had done retreating, that he would show them how to fight, rather than retreat, and would lead them to victory.

On the morning of the 20th of July commenced the bloody battle of Peach Tree Creek. The third division of the Twentieth Corps crossed the creek and filled up the gap between our second division and the Fourth Corps. By noon our whole right was across the creek. The men had stacked

arms and were taking a little rest. Some prisoners, brought in from the skirmish line, gave the information that a strong line of entrenchments was about a mile in advance, behind which the rebels were awaiting an attack. At once the bugle sounded the assembly, the men rushed to their places, seized their arms and deployed into line. About 3 P. M. the rebels advanced to the attack, and our forces were immediately put in motion to meet the assault. Inclining a little to the right, the whole third division advanced in an open field and was soon hotly engaged. For a short time our regiment was in an extremely critical condition, the rebels firing into it from the front, flank and rear. But it maintained its ground with unflinching courage and steadiness. The bugle now sounded the charge, and the whole line pressed forward with loud cheers. Our regiment advanced over an open field under a heavy fire, with an almost perfect line, as if on parade, reserving our fire until within a few rods of the rebel line, when we delivered a volley, driving the rebels out of their position up to a crest of a hill in front, where the whole line of our division was halted. After the battle was over General Newton, commanding a division of the Fourth Corps on our left, sent an officer to know what regiment was on his right, and authorized him to say to its commanding officer "that it was deserving of all praise, that he never saw a regiment advance with such steadiness and precision in the face of such a terrible fire as this one."

Four times during that afternoon the rebels tried to carry our line, but were as often sent reeling back. From 3 o'clock until 8 we stood with no cover, and without assistance or relief, and yet maintained our position and repulsed every assault of the enemy. In front of us were found the dead and wounded of the Thirty-third, Forty-fourth and Fifty-fifth Mississippi regiments, who had been brought against our



regiment, which itself sustained a loss of nearly half its officers and forty-eight men.

This first attempt of General Hood to show the rebel army "how to fight instead of how to retreat" resulted in a loss on his part of more than 6,000 men, as admitted by the rebel newspapers.

Myself having been seriously wounded at the battle of Peach Tree Creek, this narrative is no longer a story of weary marches, sleepless nights, battle, danger and death, but on the contrary a triumphal march to the rear, where the surgeons held court supreme. The roar and crash of battle had ceased; the sulphurous smoke had cleared away, but how strange the scenes about us! The plains and hillsides were strewn with corpses of men where they fell. The dead and dying were lying close together, where a few short hours before all was excitement—the excitement of many a brave comrade's last battle—now an oppressive silence prevails; there is the groaning and the crying of the wounded. In quiet tones we speak to each other. The question passes back and forth—"Where are you wounded?" "Through the body." "And you?" "An arm broken," "My knee smashed with a piece of shell," or "A minnie bullet through the foot," so the low replies pass around. Words of cheer are spoken, while over the faces of some the strange, pale look is coming that betokens the approach of death.

One lies near who has always been jolly and full of fun in the ranks, but now jesting is forgotten. A few feet away lies an officer—lately promoted—the smile still on his face, so suddenly had the bullet cut the thread of life.

The ambulance corps with their stretchers are kept busy. The hospital tent is full of the wounded. The long and weary night draws to a close. In the early dawn, as we begin to distinguish our comrades here and there, we speak to them. Some of them answer with feebler voices than

before, and some are silent forever, having entered their last sleep in the night.

The sun rises, and another day wears on, the living among the dead, wounds are growing sorer and more painful, cries begin to be heard from those whose wounds are in the body and very serious. One poor fellow, an Irishman, lay near to me, so badly wounded that the surgeon exclaimed, shaking his head, "There is no hope whatever of saving this man, he cannot possibly live." An ugly wound in the head and a shattered hand told the sad story. The surgeons passed him by, giving close attention to those whose chances for recovery seemed reasonably sure.

Another long and weary night passes, the morning finds us with fewer alive than the day before. Learning that our Irish friend was still alive, and the surgeon ready to attend to him, his wounds were dressed, and with others of the wounded was sent back to the hospital. His recovery *did* seem impossible, but he ultimately recovered.

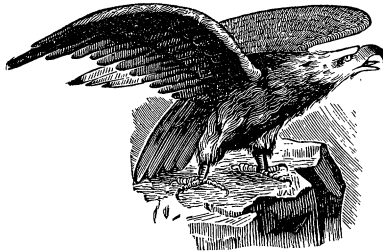
Several years later I chanced to meet him, and his gratitude knew no bounds, with tears in his eyes he related to me how I "had saved his life," and, drawing me aside, said: "Let us take a drop for the sake of auld times."

While on our way to the hospital we learned of the death of General McPherson (which occurred on the 22d), and that General Logan, upon assuming command of the Army of the Tennessee, called upon the men to avenge the death of their late leader.

History will record this march from Chattanooga to Atlanta as one of the most brilliant of modern times. A march in which one of two great conflicting armies gradually crowded the other back, inch by inch, and day by day, through storm and sunshine, over hills, mountains and rivers,

leaving in their footsteps innumerable graves, broken hearts, and a blighted and blasted country.

As we view these terrible battlefields through the distant haze of the years which have passed and gone, we leave the hope of future greatness and glory to the now united and prosperous Union.



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WAR PAPER No. 25.

**MICHIGAN COMMANDERY,  
LOYAL LEGION.**

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# THE RELIEF OF CHATTANOOGA

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A PAPER  
READ BEFORE THE

COMMANDERY OF THE STATE OF MICHIGAN,  
MILITARY ORDER OF THE LOYAL LEGION  
OF THE UNITED STATES,

BY

COMPANION HENRY S. DEAN,  
LATE LIEUTENANT-COLONEL 22<sup>D</sup> MICHIGAN INFANTRY,

AT

DETROIT, MICH., MAY 4, 1893.

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DETROIT, MICH.:  
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1893.



## The Relief of Chattanooga.

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### **The Opening of a Short Line of Communication by Way of Brown's Ferry and Lookout Valley for the Relief of the Army of the Cumberland, in October, and Construction of Pontoon Bridges, in November, 1863.**

After the battle of Chickamauga, Georgia, fought on the 19th and 20th of September, 1863, the Army of the Cumberland, under command of General Rosecrans, retreated to Chattanooga, Tennessee. On September 24 our forces on Lookout Mountain also fell back to Chattanooga.

The enemy, under General Bragg, in greatly superior force, immediately formed and fortified lines on the south, east and west of the town, thus gaining control of Lookout Valley, the river below Chattanooga and the short line of communication with Bridgeport, Alabama, the depot of supplies for the Army of the Cumberland. The only means left for subsisting the army was by wagon trains which had to be hauled seventy miles over a road on the north side of the river. This road crossed two mountain ranges and passed through valleys deep with mud. The enemy sent his cavalry to harass and obstruct the passage of trains over this difficult route, and succeeded in destroying a train of four hundred wagons loaded with ammunition and hospital supplies, of which the army stood greatly in need, it not having sufficient ammunition for one day's fighting.

The Army of the Cumberland was besieged, without ammunition, and starving. With these conditions maintained, its annihilation was only a question of time. Realizing the gravity of the situation, President Lincoln, on



October 18, 1863, issued an order creating the Military Division of the Mississippi, and assigned General Grant to its command.

This order also relieved General Rosecrans and assigned General Thomas to the command of the Army of the Cumberland.

The fate of the army at Chattanooga depended upon the solution of the problem of supplies. On October 19, Grant telegraphed Thomas, "Hold Chattanooga at all hazards." Thomas replied, "We will hold the town until we starve." At this time General William F. Smith was chief engineer of the Army of the Cumberland. He conceived a plan, the successful execution of which solved the problem. He submitted his plan to General Thomas, who gave it his approval, and directed him to make immediate preparation for its execution. General Grant arrived at Chattanooga on the evening of October 23. General Smith's plan was submitted to him, and on the morning of October 24, accompanied by Generals Thomas and Smith, he made a thorough reconnaissance of the river with reference to the feasibility of the plan proposed. Agreeing with those who proposed the scheme, he authorized its execution.

Fortunately the preparations were far advanced and their completion required little time. General Smith was charged with the enterprise and directed to perfect the necessary arrangements.\* By the river from Chattanooga around the base of Lookout Mountain to Brown's Ferry the distance is nine miles. The course of the river from Chattanooga to Brown's Ferry forms a neck of land shaped like an Indian's moccasin, from resemblance to which it derives its name, Moccasin Point. From Chattanooga to Brown's Ferry across the ankle of the moccasin the distance is less than four miles.

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\* Van Horn's "Army of the Cumberland."

On the left bank of the river at Brown's Ferry is a range of steep hills which come close down to the water. At the Ferry these hills are divided by a deep gorge which leads into Lookout Valley. From the point where Chattanooga Creek empties into the Tennessee at the base of Lookout Mountain to Williams Island, just below Brown's Ferry, a distance of seven miles, the enemy had possession of the left bank of the river. General Smith's plan was to throw a force to the left bank of the river at Brown's Ferry, seize the line of hills and entrance to Lookout Valley, lay a pontoon bridge and hold the position until General Hooker could come up with his forces from Bridgeport, and thus restore to the besieged army at Chattanooga its short line of communication. To accomplish this was no slight undertaking. From his position on Lookout Mountain the enemy could see every movement of our forces. To attempt to take a pontoon train and its support from Chattanooga to Brown's Ferry, in plain view of the enemy, was to invite such a concentration of force at the contemplated place of crossing, as to render the laying of a bridge impossible. It was decided that the boats for the bridge should be floated down the river to the point of crossing under cover of darkness, past seven miles of the enemy's picket lines and batteries. The rest of the material for the bridge was to be moved by night and concealed in the woods just above Brown's Ferry. Colonel, formerly Captain, P. V. Fox, of the First Michigan Mechanics and Engineers, was assigned to the duty of getting out material, building the boats and laying the pontoon bridge. For this purpose he took possession of two saw mills, one above, the other below Chattanooga. The enemy had removed part of the machinery from each of these mills. Through information furnished by negroes, Colonel Fox found where the missing parts had been buried, and soon had the mill in running order. Under his direction a detail from the Thirteenth Michigan Infantry

cut logs for the gunwales of the boats near Moccasin Point and drew them to the river. The ground was so soft and the animals so weak that it required twelve mules to draw a single log.

From the point where the logs were placed in the river they were towed to the lower mill with a yawl boat. For the bottoms, chess plank, balk and side rails of the boats, the Twenty-fourth Wisconsin Infantry cut logs further up the river and towed them to the upper mill. A detail of 100 men from the Twenty-first Michigan Infantry assisted in carrying material for the bridge. Colonel Fox also had under his command Companies B, C, D and K of his own regiment. Car wheels were used for anchors. Some baled cotton was found in a cellar, which was used for calking the boats. The nails used in their construction were brought from Bridgeport by couriers bringing dispatches.

Fifty-two boats were required for the bridge. Each was provided with five oars, one for steering and four for rowing. General Hazen was in command of the landing force, which was composed of his own brigade and that of General Turchin. Colonel T. R. Stanley, of the Eighteenth Ohio Infantry, had charge of the men who managed the boats on the trip down the river.

All the plans for the expedition were elaborated with the greatest care and the utmost secrecy. Its success depended upon the faithful execution of the part assigned to each one engaged in it. A failure on the part of one endangered the success of the whole. The complete success of the movement furnished conclusive proof of the fidelity and efficiency of all who participated in its execution. General Hazen selected fifteen hundred men, who, under his command, were to constitute the first landing party.

General Turchin, with his own and part of Hazen's brigade and three batteries of artillery under command of Major

Mendinhall, were placed in position in the woods on the right bank of the river above Brown's Ferry to cover the landing on the opposite bank, and to cross in support as quickly as possible. The material for the bridge was also placed in position in the woods above Brown's Ferry during the night of October 26. At 3 o'clock A. M., October 27, fifty-two boats with fifteen hundred picked men on board, started from Chattanooga for Brown's Ferry, under direction of Colonel T. R. Stanley. Before starting the boats were divided into sections, each section in charge of an officer who knew his exact place of landing.

This expedition, upon the success of which so much depended, must float with the current past seven miles of the enemy's picket lines. Fortunately for the success of the undertaking, a fog settled down upon the river. The boats, keeping close to the right bank, glided silently with the current past the enemy's pickets, unpursued by them. At least, they did not suspect what was passing them. That morning I was on the picket line, perched on a tree which leaned from the bank of the river out over the water, directly beneath which this procession of boats with their living freight silently passed.

The only evidence that the enemy gave of knowing that anything was floating by them, was when one picket called out to another: "Jim, is that a log floating down the river," and the other replied, "No, its one of the Yanks' pontoons going down stream." Fortunately, they did not discover that fifty-two of the "Yanks'" pontoons were "going down stream," with fifteen hundred live Yankees on board, bent on a mission which, if successful, meant victory for the Union and defeat for Bragg and his army.

In the early dawn the first section neared the shore at its appointed place of landing. The surprised pickets fired their pieces and ran. The succeeding sections quickly landed.

The men sprang on shore, formed in line and charged up the hills, where they had a sharp, but brief, engagement with the small force which had rallied in response to the alarm given by the pickets. The boats immediately crossed to the right bank and began to ferry the rest of the forces across. By daylight Turchin's and the balance of Hazen's brigade were across the river intrenching themselves on the line of hills which commanded the entrance to Lookout Valley.

Under a vigorous artillery fire from the enemy's batteries on the face of Lookout Mountain, Col. Fox immediately began laying the pontoon bridge. As soon as it was completed General Whitaker's brigade, of which my regiment at that time was a part, crossed the bridge and formed a junction with General Hooker's forces which had moved up the valley from Bridgeport.

Thus "the problem of supplies" for a starving army was solved by the successful execution of a plan, the brilliancy of which will command the admiration of all who are interested in military operations.

It had been conducted with such secrecy that its successful accomplishment was as great a surprise to the army in Chattanooga as it was to the enemy. It changed the whole aspect of affairs. From a besieged and helpless force, the Army of the Cumberland had been transformed into one ready for offensive operations. Without delay it entered upon its duty as such.

One part of General Grant's plan for driving Bragg from Lookout Mountain and Missionary Ridge, was for General Sherman to cross the Tennessee river at a point four miles above Chattanooga and attack and turn the enemy's right, which rested on the northern extremity of Missionary Ridge. This crossing was to be made by means of two pontoon bridges. After the Brown's Ferry affair my regiment was

transferred from Whitaker's to the Engineers Brigade, commanded by General Wm. F. Smith, who had been assigned to duty as chief engineer of the Military Division of the Mississippi. With my regiment I was assigned the duty of taking the train for one of those bridges from Chattanooga to the point of crossing. In the performance of this duty I was enjoined to observe the utmost secrecy lest the enemy should discover what we were doing. I was directed to make myself thoroughly acquainted with the country and all the roads over which the train was to pass.

Capt. Preston C. F. West, A. A. G. on the staff of General Smith, went over the ground with me, and pointed out the roads over which the train could move, those over which General Sherman's forces would move into position, also the route each would take back to Chattanooga in case of disaster or failure to effect a crossing. I spent several days in making myself acquainted with the topography of the route selected, and although that was nearly thirty years ago, every little ravine and hill which furnished a hiding place for a wagon is as fresh in memory to-day as they were when used for that purpose. As with the bridge at Brown's Ferry, Colonel, formerly Capt. P. V. Fox, had charge of the construction and laying of this one.

The other bridge of regular pontoon boats which had been picked up between Chattanooga and Bridgeport, was in charge of Lieut. Geo. W. Dresser, Fourth Artillery, and was taken to the North Chickamauga, above the point where the bridges were to be laid. The place selected for throwing the bridges is a little below the mouth of the South Chickamauga. On the south bank of the river at that point, a low hill rises a short distance back from the bank, and gently slopes into the valley. On the north bank directly opposite this hill, a deep ravine comes down to the river, the hills on either side of which extend for some distance up and down the river,

furnishing concealment for troops, and a position from which artillery can sweep the valley back of the hill on the south side.

An experienced engineer could not have constructed a better place for throwing a bridge in the face of opposition, than nature has supplied at this point. The road from Chattanooga over which the train must pass was in plain view of the enemy posted on Lookout Mountain. Heavy rains had rendered the roads almost impassible; the mules were so reduced in strength from lack of forage, that when the poor creatures got down in the mud the men had to pull them out of the way. At nine o'clock, P. M., November 20th, Col. Fox sent the pontoon train from under the cover of Cameron Hill to the north side of the river, where it was delivered to me. At that time I did not know as much about pontoon trains as I did at the close of the war. That the train was to be taken to its destination without permitting the enemy to get sight of it we all understood, but of how it was to be arranged after it got there I was as ignorant as a child, so I asked Capt. Fox how he wanted it parked. He hesitated, and I repeated the question. Finally he said: "It is a delicate matter for an officer of inferior rank to give orders to a superior who is in command." I looked squarely into that honest face of his and said: "I am the smallest major in the army, if you know how this train ought to be parked tell me?" He said: "Place the balk here, the chess plank there, the spring lines so and so, the head line in such a place, and the anchors"—Hold on, I said, I know what an anchor is, but don't know anything about your balk, chess plank and spring lines, show me what they are. He did, and we started out with the train. It was raining and the night very dark. In many places the wagons would go down in the mud to the axletree. The poor, weak mules would get stalled in the mud and men would have to pull

them out. Wagon wheels would give out, and the men supplied their places with wheels taken from General Palmer's ammunition train, which was parked on the north side of the river opposite Chattanooga. Wagons would upset and men, by means of ropes, would right them.

When wagons got stuck so that the mules could not start them, men would pull them out by ropes fastened to the poles or forward axeltrees.

As the first grey of morning appeared in the east the wagons were quickly concealed in ravines and behind hills, or if they could not be gotten out of sight in that way, they were concealed by piling brush over them. The men and animals were moved behind the hills and not permitted to show themselves during the day. At 2 o'clock A. M., November 22d, we had the train parked in the ravine leading down to the river where the crossing was to be made, a thick growth of underbrush concealing it from the enemy's pickets on the other side of the river. On November 23d, concealed from view of the enemy, the men rested behind the hills. The strict guard established to prevent any of them from showing themselves was hardly necessary; they were completely worn out by three nights of labor, such as I have never seen perform by men before or since.

From the top of the hills which concealed them, one has a full view of Missionary Ridge, Lookout Mountain and Chattanooga Valley.

On the afternoon of November 23, from the top of one of those hills I saw through my field-glass the Army of the Cumberland move out from Chattanooga into the valley, columns closed in mass, deploy, rush forward and drive the enemy from his first line of works.

The enemy on Missionary Ridge got up on top of their fortifications to get a good view of what they appeared to think was going to be a review, but when that magnificent



line in blue moved forward, Bragg evidently comprehended what was coming, for he immediately began to move troops from the right and left toward his centre. At midnight November 23, one hundred and sixteen pontoon boats, with a brigade on board, started from their place of concealment in North Chickamauga Creek, and floated down the Tennessee to the place selected for throwing the bridges.

- General Smith, standing on the bank close to the water, was anxiously awaiting their approach. A small boat in charge of an experienced oarsman was awaiting his orders. The man, looking along the surface of the water, reported that he could see the boats coming. General Smith ordered him to row across and place a range light close to the water on the opposite bank to indicate the point of landing.

The leading boat changed its course from the centre of the river and headed towards the range light, each succeeding boat silently following its lead. The boats landed and the men disembarked so quietly that we did not hear a sound on our side of the river. The first indication that a landing had been effected was when the almost painful silence was broken by the sharp challenge of the rebel picket, as it rang out on the night air: "Who goes there?" Quickly came the response: "Grand rounds!" and the picket answered, "Advance sergeant with the countersign." The officer who made the rounds (I regret that I cannot give his name) advanced, placed a pistol close to the ear of the guard, and in a low voice cautioned him not to make any noise, and passed him to the rear. This was repeated thirteen times. The fourteenth guard discharged his piece, fortunately without injury to any one, and ran. When the guard fired, General Smith said, "Now we shall get it. Move your regiment down to the bank of the river and take your place with the train and await orders, which I will send."

But he was mistaken ; the enemy had regarded an attack in that quarter as so unlikely to occur that he had failed to place any force in the valley except a thin picket line along the river, which amounted to nothing as a resisting force, and it had failed to discover the slightest indication of what was going on within hearing distance of the guard composing it. General Sherman's force had been massed behind the opposite hills. General Brannan had planted forty pieces of artillery, which completely commanded the south bank of the river ; one hundred and sixteen boats had been placed in the North Chickamauga, and a heavy pontoon train had been moved over roads, nearly every foot of which was in plain sight from the commanding positions occupied by the enemy on Lookout Mountain and Missionary Ridge, but so admirably had all the details of the movement been conducted that the enemy was taken completely by surprise.

As soon as the men had landed from the boats which came down from the North Chicamauga, General Sherman's troops moved from behind the hills down to the river. The laying of the pontoon bridge was immediately started from both banks, the boats being used to ferry troops across until they were needed to place in position. General Smith ordered me to send enough boats and material from my train for a bridge two hundred feet in length, which was thrown across the South Chicamauga under direction of Col. Fox. By daylight on the morning of Nov. 24th, two divisions of General Sherman's troops had crossed to the south side of the river. While preparations for this crossing had been going forward, heavy rains had raised the river to such an extent that it was feared that a bridge could not be thrown at all, and if thrown that it could not be maintained as long as needed. The current was swift and the enemy were sending rafts and drift wood down to break the bridges at Chattanooga and Brown's Ferry. Under these circumstances it was decided not to attempt to throw the second bridge.

At 11 o'clock A. M. the bridge was completed, and General Sherman's forces crossed the Tennessee river to take their part in the battle of Missionary Ridge. General Smith ordered the second bridge to be taken back to Chattanooga and laid at that point. As we moved back to Chattanooga we could hear the roar of Hooker's battle on Lookout Mountain, and could have seen the forces engaged but for the clouds which enveloped the crest and hung down the sides of the Mountain.

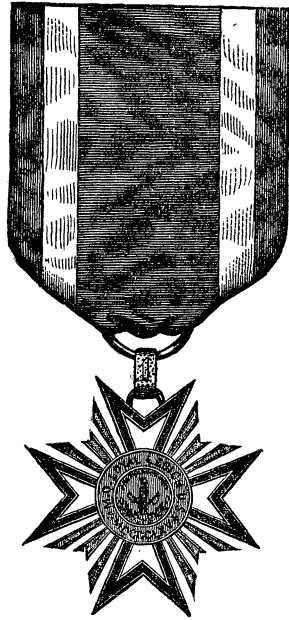
The next day, November 25, the bridge was thrown across the river at Chattanooga, Colonel Fox having the work in charge. The last pontoon was swung into place and the bridge completed about an hour before the forces under command of General Thomas made that famous charge without orders which resulted in the capture of Missionary Ridge.

It was peculiarly fitting that General Thomas and the men of his command, who, by their heroic fighting against overpowering numbers, had saved the Army of the Cumberland from destruction at Chickamauga, should deliver the final blow which crowned three days of battle with glorious victory.

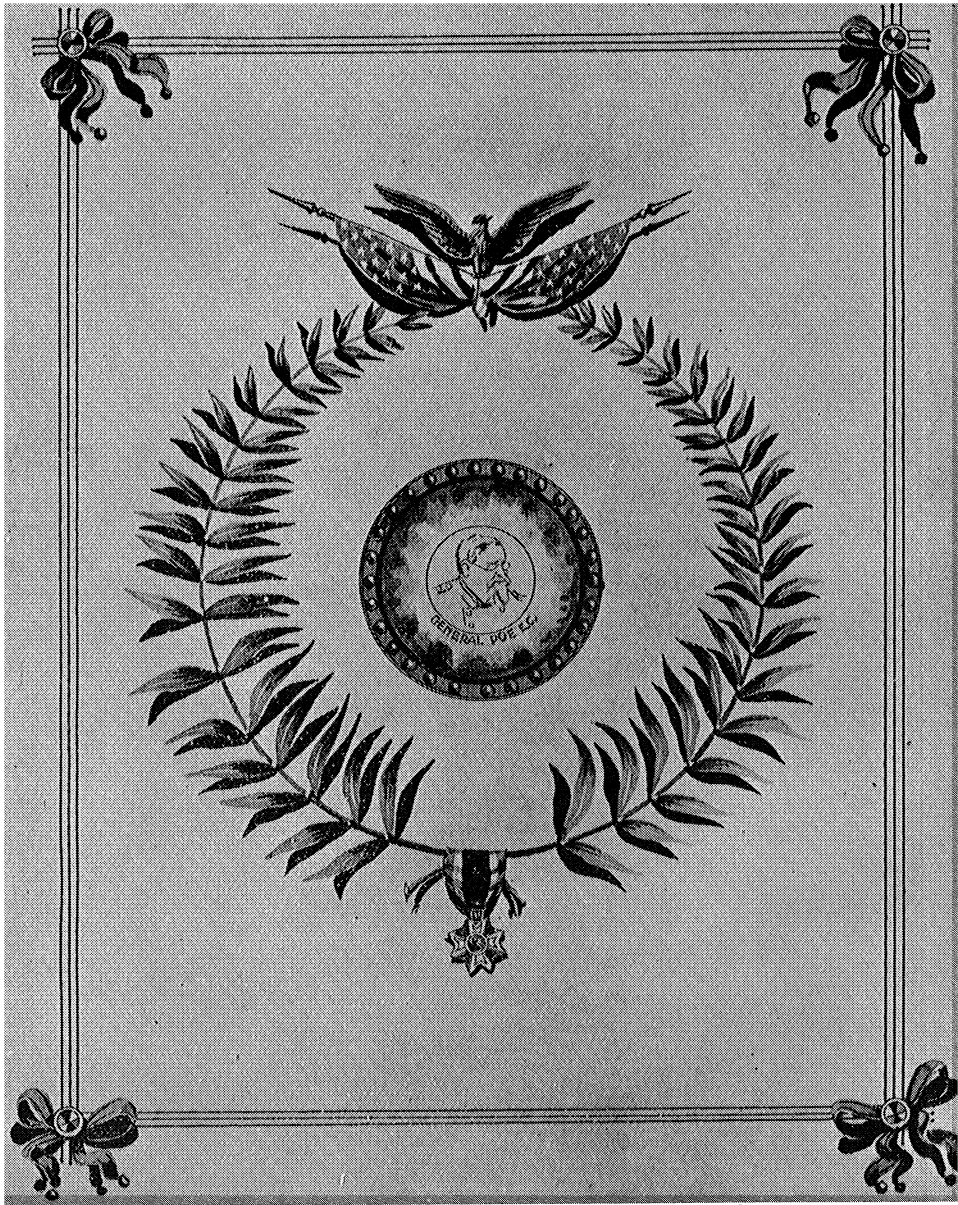
November 23, 24 and 25, 1863, will stand recorded in history as days upon which military skill and courageous fighting won one of the most brilliant victories ever achieved by an army.

History will also record the fact, that but for the masterly conception and successful execution of the movement which gave to the Army of the Cumberland its short line of communication with Bridgeport by way of Brown's Ferry and Lookout Valley, the victory of Missionary Ridge and Lookout Mountain could not have been won on those dates.









SUPPLEMENTARY PROCEEDINGS

OF

REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING

# Commandery of State of Michigan

MILITARY ORDER

LOYAL LEGION OF THE UNITED STATES.

DETROIT, MARCH 3d,

1892.





## Supplementary Proceedings.

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DETROIT, March 3, 1892.

After the regular business of the meeting of the Commandery had been disposed of, the companions adjourned to the banquet hall, where a bounteous spread had been prepared.

After the feast came the fun. Companion Poe was recently a member of a general court-martial, at Cleveland, and while there one of the papers published a wood-cut, purporting to be a likeness of him.

When the paper containing the cut was received in Detroit it was decided by some of the companions to have a little fun out of it.

The small newspaper cut was pasted in the center of a cardboard 22 x 28 inches, which was artistically embellished in colors, with the emblems of the order, and nicely framed.

The "portrait" was presented to Companion Poe in the following address:

PRESENTATION SPEECH  
BY COMPANION CHARLES E. FOOTE.

*Mr. Commander and Companions:*

There sits at this table one of our members who in a very large degree commands the admiration and the deep regard of this Commandery, one who o'ertops most men in his ability as a soldier as he does in physical stature; one who

in the fierce onslaught of battle and the varied and trying exigencies of life, has proven himself unflinching in duty, a patriot and a *man*.

It is upon you, Gen. Poe, that this Commandery gladly places this high estimate.

In our neighboring forest city, which sits a gem on the southern shore of Lake Erie, you have recently passed through a *trying* campaign, and through the *trials* connected therewith you have had the sympathy of this Commandery.

That sympathy was deepened when Col. White, one Saturday evening submitted to a few of the companions, who were partaking of a dry lunch in the armory cafe, your picture, taken on the spot by a special artist detailed for that special purpose by the Penny Press of Cleveland. As it was held before our bewildered gaze, surrounded by dark lines of type, it stood out on the white paper in bold relief, a startling spectre. Col. Sterling, with a short gurgling sound, closed his eyes and sunk back into his chair. Capt. Dupont smiled ghastly. Gen. Swift, with that speed his name implies, retreated. Companion Chamberlain smiled a quiet, uneasy smile. All others went under the table, except our worthy Commander Pittman, who, feeling the responsibility of his office, with undaunted front stood his ground and brought about order again. We knew it to be a picture of you because your name is plainly written under it.

You may not think it quite perfect; you may not have a friend who will recognize the picture as one of yourself. Every member of your household may repudiate it, and yet, as indisputable proof of its genuineness, there stands by direction of that special artist in plain, unmistakable type the name of *Gen. Poe, E. C.* To be sure there hangs about it a *wearied* look not your own; there is a sad-eyed expression to the spectacles, behind which the special artist had not

time to put the eyes, which we do not recognize (you may have been asleep, in which case we forgive the artist the eyes), the firm set jaw, that is evidently hard clinched upon some hard fact, lacks the kindly expression to which we are accustomed, and yet we recognize the picture by help of the printed name.

The artist, he being a special artist, must have been correct in his representation. We believed the *trial* through which you were then passing to be responsible for that unwonted look of sternness; for that relentless jaw, that generally dejected, sad and vacant expression, and believing that the like has never occurred before and never could occur again, some one proposed the picture be mounted and presented to you, in order that a new phase of your history, and that a face new to mankind be not utterly lost to the world.

I do not venture to pronounce the name of him who had the hardihood to propose this iniquity. Let his name be forever unknown; let no temptation, no desire for revenge induce you to hunt him out, that your descendants when they "point with pride" to the gallant record of Gen. Poe, may not point the finger of scorn at the memory of this man. Rather let whatever of discredit, whatever of shame there be, if there be any, rest with the special artist, whom nobody knows and whom nobody cares to know.

I have the honor, Gen. Poe, to present to you on behalf of the Michigan Commandery of the Loyal Legion of the U. S. this unique token of affection, accompanied with the earnest hope that if you ever did look like that you may never look so again.

Companion Poe accepted the "portrait" in a few well chosen remarks, closing his address with the following :

## I.

Some cussed, measly Legionees,  
Quite filled up with numerous beers,  
Bethought themselves 'twould be great fun  
To "set up a job" on a "son of a gun."

## II.

They ransacked the place where their brains should be,  
In quest of a thing he called an "idee";  
"Aha!" shouted one, "I've got it, I guess,"  
We'll give him a portrait cut from the *Press*.

## III.

They polished it up and they rubbed it down,  
'Till nothing was like it in all the town,  
Then brought it here as a specimen brick  
To throw at a man who doesn't "kick."

## IV.

It might be worshiped without any sin,  
For it images nothing the Heavens in,  
Nor the earth beneath, nor the waters below,  
Nor that nether depth where the fires glow.

## V.

It's rather hard that a warrior bold,  
Should be pictured thus so hoary and old;  
I therefore trust you will "*set on Foote*"  
A search for the chaps who went on the "toot."

ON THE  
PRESENTATION OF A PORTRAIT OF O. M. POE.

*The Michigan Commandery.*

BY COMPANION WILLIAM LUDLOW.

Commander grave, and Brethren brave,  
Lend ear unto my woe :  
As a ditty I sing, and the praises ring,  
Of Orlando Metcalfe Poe.

A man of great renown is he,  
Of stature great also ;  
For a giant's bed doth rest the head,  
And take the strain of the massive brain,  
And eke of the legs of Poe.

At West Point he took high degree,  
Full six feet high or so ;  
Nor less than eight if we calculate  
The spread from heel to toe.

From '52 until '56  
He learned to fight the foe ;  
To shoulder and carry, to thrust and parry ;  
Bayonets fix, and such warlike tricks,  
Did the youth from Ohio.

Accomplished then in the arts of men,  
He came to Detroit to show  
How to cover the lakes with survey stakes,  
And cleverly land on the solid strand,  
If the winds began to blow.

When the war broke out his valorous shout  
 Astonished the Southern foe ;  
 And the flash of his glance made the rebels prance,  
 As the Twooth Michigan led the patriot van,  
 Under Colonel Orlando Poe.

At Yorktown he did manfullee ;  
 At Williamsburg also ;  
 Virginia was spread with the hostile dead ;  
 Fair Oaks and Manassas were but cakes and molasses,  
 To Brigadier-General Poe.

Then westward he hied and at Sherman's side  
 Taught the Johnnies back to go.  
 Massing the ranks on their tender flanks,  
 And with mighty thwacks on the stubborn backs  
 Of Johnston, Hood and Co.

The March to the Sea was carefullee  
 Mapped out by our Hero ;  
 Where potatoes sweet entangled the feet,  
 And sorghum and bacon could best be taken ;  
 And much of it cached by Poe.

Savannah was won and the tramp begun  
 Through the Carolinas low ;  
 But he shinned up the trees with the greatest ease,  
 And mixed "red-eye" with the waters high ;  
 Which saved the life of Poe.

When Robt. E. Lee and Confederacee  
 Had met their overthrow,  
 At the great review of the Patriot crew,  
 The Bummer's Parade of their festive trade  
 Was headed by O. M. Poe.

The War was done and Freedom's sun  
 Shone out with spotless glow ;  
 And its brightest ray illumined the way,  
 And burnished the head and the martial tread  
 Of the Engineer-Soldier Poe.

The Ship of State in splendor great  
 Was cruising to and fro ;  
 But was loath to sail with the favoring gale,  
 And backed and filled in hands unskilled,  
 Till on her deck stood Poe.

The Lighthouse Board with a wonderful hoard  
 Of lenses and lamps and so,  
 Made its valiant boast to illumine the coast  
 From the Bay of Fundee to the Mississippi ;  
 And the boss of the job was Poe.

At Sherman's right hand he studied the land  
 From Maine to Mexico ;  
 And the eagles that flew 'neath the arching blue  
 Made their royal nest and returned to rest,  
 On the shoulder straps of Poe.

Again to Detroit, for new exploit,  
 When duty bade him go,  
 To open the gates through the narrow Straits,  
 And build the locks of the big stone box,  
 To navigate the Sault.

The Legion strong, a rubicund throng,  
 Adorned with beards of snow,  
 As of old turned out with a mighty shout,  
 And hearkened again like soldier-men  
 To the voice of Commander Poe.

Long may we greet, in house and street,  
 Our brave Companion Poe ;  
 There's never a man, in Michigan,  
 Whose health we'll drink with readier clink  
 Than our "own and only" Poe.





ADDRESSES OF COMMANDERS  
AT  
ANNUAL BANQUETS  
OF THE  
COMMANDERY OF THE STATE OF MICHIGAN.  
MILITARY ORDER OF THE  
**LOYAL LEGION**  
OF THE  
UNITED STATES,  
AT  
DETROIT, MICH.

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DETROIT, MICH.:  
WINN & HAMMOND, PRINTERS.  
1893.



# INTRODUCTORY.

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At the Annual Banquet of the Michigan Commandery  
of the Loyal Legion, at the Russell House,  
Detroit, May 5, 1886.

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By COMPANION ORLANDO M. POE,  
Brevet Brigadier General, U. S. Army, Commander.

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“ When the oldest cask is opened,  
And the largest lamp is lit ;  
When the Chestnuts glow in the embers,  
And the Kid turns on the spit ;  
When young and old in circle  
Around the firebrands close ;  
When the girls are weaving baskets  
And the lads are shaping bows.”

“ When the goodman mends his armor,  
And trims his helmet's plume ;  
When the goodwife's shuttle merrily  
Goes flashing through the loom ;  
With weeping and with laughter  
Still is the story told,  
How well Horatius kept the bridge  
In the brave days of old.”

The traditions of martial glory “in the brave days of old,”  
were kept alive in the home circle, amidst the ordinary  
avocations, and their recital stimulated emulation amongst

the younger folk. Somehow it has become customary to extend the circle, and to celebrate the memory of deeds of valor by eating, drinking and speech making.

In former times war was the only honorable profession outside of mother church. We live in a time when the honorable pursuits are not so limited, but none the less we revere the church and grow enthusiastic over the stories of feats of arms. Although we no longer mend our armor, and the trimming of helmet plumes is relegated to younger men, it is proper that we, a small portion of the survivors of the greatest conflict the world has ever seen, whilst not especially straining our relations with the church, should occasionally meet together to renew the memories of the camp and battle, and if we prove to be somewhat noisy in our demonstrations, it is only because our blood is warmed to youthful heat by the recollections which crowd upon us.

In the responses which are to follow, it is not improbable that we may recognize some "Chestnuts." If so, you will doubtless good-humoredly assist in drawing them from the embers, and seem to relish them as greatly as if they were not a little "wormy." As we listen to the unprepared bursts of eloquence now snugly reposing in the coat pockets of those who are to reply to the toasts, you will see that you are not alone to be banqueted upon hard-tack and — its accompaniment. It is proposed to give you something more palatable and more headachy. The "feast of reason and the flow of soul" will lie around loose, and will contribute to the head trouble. The viands will be guiltless. Notwithstanding the heaviness of the speeches to which you will be compelled to listen, now that we have you securely here, I beg you will give your undivided attention to the speakers, and award them that measure of applause which they crave. Even if you do not subscribe to every sentiment, sprinkle in the tremendous applause after the manner of the public printer

in the speeches of the Members of Congress as they appear in that hilarious publication, the Congressional Record. It will do you no harm, and will encourage the orators. Remember how badly they feel, and the great embarrassment under which they labor.

We have no kids turning on the spit, but some of us have "kids" at home, whose juvenile ears we kindly fill with tales of what we did "in the war." What an appreciative audience the little folks make, and how unquestioningly they place us in the front rank of heroes. The strategy of Hannibal, the stern fighting of Frederick, the cunning of Marlborough were as nothing compared with the way their fathers fought and overcame the rebels. They learn what a glorious privilege it will be to inherit, through us, first-class membership in the Loyal Legion and to partake of future banquets. Long may it be before they come into their heritage. Meanwhile they will have to be satisfied with membership of the second class, and practice the virtue of longing and waiting.

The customs have greatly changed since the days of Horatius. It is the lads who now weave baskets, shingles etc., in their moments of leisure from weary cigarettes and beer, whilst the girls devote their attention to the catching and shaping of beaus, trusting to the milliners for their bows and other furbelows. Our goodwives, too, no longer waste their energies at the loom, yet Companions Smith and Curtiss can tell you how "Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." This shows how wonderfully our civilization has advanced beyond that of the Romans.

It may be asked what are we here for, anyhow. In the earlier days of my membership in the Loyal Legion, an anxious inquirer desired to know what was the object of our Order. I told him it was to meet occasionally and "swop lies." I am better informed now, and am satisfied that a

searcher for the lies must go to the Official Record of the War of the Rebellion. In this assemblage will be heard nothing but the truth. If any body doubts it we will all swear.

After the speeches shall have been delivered, let us indulge in reminiscences of the days when the ear piercing fife, the rattling drum, and sometimes the blaring trumpet ("Chestnuts,") awoke us from our slumbers, and set us to wondering what fiend invented reveille. If there be a deeper depth of damnation, it is reserved for that devil who invented this torture. In case of another war the opposing armies should strike against the reveille, and by arbitration arrange for its abolition, probably by declaring a truce between the hours of sunset and 10 a. m. next day, (standard time), during which no movement should be made, and no military duty be performed. It would notably ameliorate the horrors of war. This suggestion is not patented, and as there is no "job" in it, the digression will perhaps be pardoned.

There are many interesting memories stored away in the pigeon-holes of your minds. Pull out the drawers and overhaul the records, set your tongues to wagging, but don't all talk at once. Give the other fellow a chance to tell how he saved the day at Gettysburg, or how he and Grant captured Lee, or how contemptible it was in Sherman to steal from him his plan for the "March to the Sea." It would be cruel to deprive him of the pleasure, and it would be selfish in you to monopolize the conversation.

The story of the war will never grow stale,

"When the oldest cask is opened,  
And the largest lamp is lit;

\* \* \* \*

With weeping and with laughter,  
Still is the story told."

And as our hearts warm up with the good cheer before us, and the glistening eye but reflects the gleam of its neighbor, there is little danger that our thoughts will become prosaic, or that the current of our feelings will run in too stagnant a stream. Let us drink deeply of the draught of pleasure in each other's company,—again feel the magnetic touch of our comrade's elbow.

But let our laughter and merriment be mingled with sadness as we remember those who went with us to battle, never to return.

“ They lie at rest, our blessed dead ;  
The dew drops cool above their head.”

Our hearts are wrung with sorrow at the memory of their fate, but swell too, with pride at the recollection of their patriotism and knightly gallantry. Our tears bedew their graves, whilst history records their exploits for the admiration of posterity.

In all this we are doing right, and continuing it from year to year as we move on to our end, we may feel well assured that we are laying, broad and deep, the foundations of patriotism amongst our descendants, and that our beloved country will find them as ready to do and die for her in her time of need as we were in the “brave days of old.”

God save the United States !



# INTRODUCTORY.

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At the Annual Banquet of the Michigan Commandery  
of the Loyal Legion, at the Russell House,  
Detroit, June 1, 1887.

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BY COMPANION ORLANDO M. POE,  
Brevet Brigadier General, U. S. Army, Commander.

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At our banquet last year a visiting companion related an anecdote which probably illustrates the popular notion of these gatherings of old soldiers. He stated that upon an occasion which called a large number of them together, a street arab remarked to his companion, that "them is the fellers what fit, and fit, and fit," whereupon the other replied, "Yes, and they haint got done a-blowin' about it yit."

However much we may be inclined to blowin', in the aggregate, individually we are opposed to anything of the kind.

The story of the whole life of any one man is seldom interesting, nor do we meet for any purpose of listening to such. So far as the members of the Loyal Legion are concerned, our life's history is concentrated in the four years covering the duration of the War of the Rebellion. That period, in point of time comprises but a comparatively small fraction of our lives, but in events it tells nearly all there is of interest attaching to a great majority of us.

It is proper that we congregate from time to time to interchange our experiences in camp and field, in trench and assault, and, by a little effort, preserve for future reference the personal observations of our members. In a few years the last of us will have disappeared from earth forever, and such stories as Trowbridge, Duffield, Withington, Swift and Pittman have told us during the past year will have a value to our descendent successors that no laboriously compiled history by a non-participant can ever equal. These reminiscences will stimulate those inheriting membership in our order to greater interest in the affairs of the Union saved by the very life-blood of their fathers, and arouse, in the highest degree, that patriotism which ennobles a people. Does any member of the Loyal Legion, who is such by virtue of his personal service, flatter himself with the belief that his response to the call of his country in 1861, was more prompt or patriotic than will be that of his successor by inheritance? If so, he can readily have his answer in the faces and bearing of the splendid young men whom he daily meets on our thoroughfares, and be disabused of any such conceit.

Let us tell and tell again the story of Fort Sumpter, of Donelson, of the Peninsula, of Antietam, of Gettysburg, of Vicksburgh, of Chattanooga, of Knoxville, of Atlanta, of the Wilderness and Petersburg, of the March to the Sea, the Campaign of the Carolinas, of Nashville, and of Appomatox, as well as of hundreds of other fields and campaigns where men died by the thousand in evidence that we have a Nation worth this supreme sacrifice. If our "oft told tale" results in greater love of country, in profounder respect for her constitution and laws—in forming a nucleus around which may rally, in time of National trial, all the patriotic elements of our people,—then indeed will our efforts have served their purpose.

Much has been written, said and published about the Rebellion. Generals are quarreling about this battle, and statesmen wrangling about the disposition made of that question, but all seem to forget that each, in his own sphere, only did his share of the work allotted him. Seldom does success or failure in the great events of nations depend upon one man, and our Civil War was no exception to the rule. Generals there were who were mighty men of war,—but there were others who were weaklings of their kind. Privates there were who were only fit for the “coffee-cooling” station they so persistently filled,—but there were others who would have graced the double stars of the Major General. We know it was neither the weaklings nor the “coffee-coolers” who bore our glorious flag to its pinnacle of fame. Notwithstanding the graceful diction of the professional writer, illustrated by the highest skill of the engraver, there is more of downright truth, and therefore of historical value, preserved in the papers of the Loyal Legion than in a cart load of volumes made to glorify the writer or some pet subject of his. The story of the soldier, told in the presence of soldiers, is, and must be related in simple words, free from self-laudation, untruthfulness, and all other unrighteousness. No vague forms of expression nor confusion of words can conceal from such hearers misconduct or blunders. He tells a plain unvarnished tale. We are gratified by its clearness without being dazzled by any reflected light, and when it is completed we know what he has been talking about and believe what we have heard.

Trowbridge has given a better and clearer account of the operations of the cavalry on the right, at Gettysburg, than has any other man thus far. It is most satisfactory because we know he was *there*, and we know the *man*.

S. E. Pittman has given the clearest account of the operations of Gen. A. S. Williams' command at Chancellorsville.

It is invaluable because we know he was *there*, and we know the *man*.

H. M. Duffield has described a portion of the operations at Chicamauga. We have no difficulty in comprehending the story and mentally following all the movements with perfect confidence, for we know that he was *there*, and we know the *man*.

And those of us who were present will remember the pathos of that story of prison life and return to the cover of the flag as told by Swift. The breathless silence, the moistened eye, the twitching face lines of his comrades truly showed how deeply they were in sympathy with him, and our love and reverence for the glorious stars and stripes were heightened as he recounted the emotions of himself and his fellow sufferers as they passed under its folds.

The chapter which Withington has added to the history of the earliest movements in Michigan, and the organization and dispatch of her first troops to the seat of war is of inestimable value, and all Michigan men should be grateful to him for his labor.

Companions, I have but little respect for the patriotism of any man whose blood does not bound with higher impulse ; whose nerves do not tingle with thrills of pride ; who does not glow with greater ardor at the recital of the glorious deeds of his country's defenders. I cannot believe that any considerable portion of our people would willingly have them forgotten. It is sometimes said that we should forgive and forget. The Loyal Legion will carry forgiveness to the very extreme, for that is incumbent upon the Christian gentleman, and distinguishes him from the unrelenting savage, but they will never forget. They are not made of the milk and water stuff that forms the pabulum of babes. Neither do we expect our opponents to forget their heroic deeds, nor to cease to tell of them. We only ask that in doing so they

will give us the same meed of praise that we give them, and that they will be as fair in their relation of events as we are. They were magnificent in war ; their prowess was worthy of our antagonism, our chief glory consists in having beaten them, and we do not intend to forget it.

To the guests who have honored us by their presence, I beg to say that we meet in no vain-glorious spirit. Our object is to keep alive that feeling of comradeship which had its origin amid the stirring scenes of actual war, and to cultivate among the younger generations, upon whom the burden of future wars must fall, that sentiment of true loyalty to our country and its institutions which will carry it forward to "a fame that no tongue can be telling," and to the proudest place in the history of nations.

It may not be amiss, in the presence of this distinguished company to publish the principles and objects of the Order as set forth in the language of our Constitution.

The fundamental principles are :

*First.* "A firm belief and trust in Almighty God ; extolling Him under whose beneficent guidance the sovereignty and integrity of the Union have been maintained, the honor of the flag vindicated, and the blessing of civil liberty secured, established and enlarged."

*Second.* "True allegiance to the United States of America, based upon paramount respect for and fidelity to the National Constitution and Laws, and manifested by discountenancing whatever may tend to weaken loyalty, to incite to insurrection, treason or rebellion, or to impair in any manner the efficiency and permanency of our free institutions."

The objects of the Order are "to cherish the memories and associations of the war waged in defense of the unity and indivisibility of the Republic; to strengthen the ties of fraternal fellowship and sympathy formed by companionship-in-arms; to advance the best interests of the soldiers and

sailors of the United States, especially of those associated as members of this Order, and to extend all possible relief to their widows and children; to foster the cultivation of military and naval science; to enforce unqualified allegiance to the general government; to protect the rights and liberties of American citizenship, and to maintain National honor, union and independence.”

Gentlemen, upon such a platform of principles and objects we are prepared to expect the countenance and respect of every lover of his country, and claim for our Order the same degree of regard so freely bestowed upon our revered progenitor, the Order of the Cincinnati.

For the further information of our guests I venture to give a short account of the organization and present condition of the Michigan Commandery.

In mid-winter of 1885, at the suggestion of Col. H. M. Duffield, a meeting was called of the members of the Loyal Legion then residing in Detroit, with a view to the organization of a Commandery for the State of Michigan. At that meeting only five persons could be gathered, and after inquiry it was ascertained that only seven members were resident in the State. As thirteen was the minimum number that could be granted a charter, it was necessary to secure the requisite additional membership before anything further could be done. But little effort was needed, and when application was duly made for a charter, General Hancock, then Acting Commander-in-chief, promptly gave it his approval. At a stated meeting of the Acting Commandery-in-chief (the Commandery-in-chief was not organized until later), held in the City of Philadelphia, February 4, 1885, the charter was issued to

**BREVET BRIGADIER GENERAL, ORLANDO M. POE,**  
Of the Commandery of the District of Columbia.

**BREVET BRIGADIER GENERAL, HENRY B. CLITZ,**  
Of the Commandery of the State of New York.

FIRST LIEUTENANT HENRY M. DUFFIELD,  
 BREVET MAJOR GENERAL, LUTHER S. TROWBRIDGE,  
 BREVET BRIGADIER GENERAL, JOHN GIBSON PARKHURST,  
 BREVET MAJOR GENERAL, RUSSELL A. ALGER,  
 Of the Commandery of the State of Massachusetts.  
 SURGEON, SIDNEY L. FULLER,  
 LIEUTENANT, FORDYCE H. ROGERS.  
 BREVET BRIGADIER GENERAL, JOHN PULFORD,  
 BREVET MAJOR LEVI T. GRIFFIN,  
 BREVET MAJOR JAMES BIDDLE,  
 Of the Commandery of the State of Wisconsin.  
 BREVET LIEUTENANT COLONEL, ROBERT BURNS,  
 LIEUTENANT, DEMING JARVES,  
 Of the Commandery of the State of Illinois.

Just the requisite thirteen members.

The permanent organization was effected in Detroit, April 13, 1885, and has remained with little change as to its officers until the present time.

Meanwhile our membership has grown to 139, and we have thus far had a career of remarkable prosperity.

Having been the commander first elected, and having been twice re-elected, by a unanimous vote on each occasion, I am very proud of the success which has attended our undertaking, and reckon amongst the first honors of my life the confidence which my fellow-soldiers have reposed in me.

With the close of this meeting I transfer the command of the Michigan Commandery to that knightly Michigan soldier and chivalric gentleman, General Russell A. Alger, "on whose bright plume of fame not a spot of the dark is." His unanimous election this evening betokens a continuance of the wonderful harmony that has prevailed amongst us from the first. With him to lead us we are sure to increase in numbers, and, as an Order, in the estimation of our fellow citizens.

I say then, with an overflowing heart, long life and prosperity to the Michigan Commandery of the Loyal Legion, and beg the company to rise and join me in three hearty cheers for the commander elect.

# INTRODUCTORY.

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At the Annual Banquet of the Michigan Commandery  
of the Loyal Legion, at Hotel Cadillac, Detroit,  
Mich., May 1, 1889.

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By COMPANION BYRON R. PIERCE,  
Brevet Major General, U. S. V., Senior Vice-Commander.

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## *Companions and Friends:*

If I had words or wit I could not be eloquent at this time; if I can only hold the front line steady and firm and render possible a right royal good time at this banquet I shall be satisfied.

My position this evening is made by the unaccountable absence for several months of our commander, which yet remains clouded in mystery, a brave soldier, whose service was of that earnest, enthusiastic character which entitles him to our grateful and lasting remembrance.

Occasions like this speak to us of memories measured by years, recalling old associations, renewing that patriotic feeling that bound us together, always remembering the brave who stood by our side, in which are emotions that will never die. Woe to us and to those who come after us when those battle fields are forgotten, or when we feel called upon to apologize for maintaining with stout heart and a victorious



hand, the promise, the integrity, the permanence of the American Republic.

The members of a society like this, based on the friendship and associations of army life, to whom the four years spent in fighting for union and freedom, whose dangers were bravely met, and victories nobly won, is the most interesting period of our lives. The links that bind us were welded when we stood as comrades on hallowed ground, fighting for the eternal right; hallowed by the red laurel of war, but now mantled with the tender grass and sweetest flowers.

But who among us would not endure the same hardships of war for such a result?

As I look around and see the heroes here, I know there is not one man who would not freely give his life to engage again in the great work that was accomplished.

Our cause was right, and may we ever continue to look treason steady in the eye and call it crime.

With the advancing years we realize every season gathers many of our members, and amid the joyous festivities of this evening we would pause to pay a tribute to the memory of those of our Order who have crossed the river during the year. Those of us that remain find our locks whitening and our joints stiffening. We shall soon pitch our tents beyond the valley, amid the shadows of the dim unknown, but over all and forever may that starry banner, whose folds are emblazoned with the proudest victories ever won, continually wave as the ensign of a re-united Republic.

# INTRODUCTORY.

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At the Annual Banquet of the Michigan Commandery  
of the Loyal Legion, at the Russell House,  
Detroit, Mich., May 1st, 1890.

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By COMPANION FREDERIC W. SWIFT,  
Brevet Brigadier General, U. S. V., Commander.

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## *Companions :*

One more year has rolled away. We have made one more march toward the "eternal camping ground" and to-night we sit again around the festive board, and gaze into each other's eyes, and grasp each other by the hand and note the changes time has made since the days of old, and pledge each other that loyalty and companionship which none but those who have stood shoulder to shoulder in fierce combat can ever know.

Time has dealt kindly with us during the year past, and yet we have not fully escaped its ravages.

Five of our companions have been dropped from our roll of honor, and have gone into bivouac with the great majority.

The kind-hearted, fatherly Clitz, the genial Remick, the gallant and soldierly Tyler, the ever popular Bell and Vernor the courteous and warm-hearted will join us no more in our

camp fires. We miss their kind greetings and their cheery voices, and we look into each others faces and ask ourselves, Who next?

Twenty-one companions have been added to our membership, and three have been dropped from the rolls for non-payment of dues, leaving a net gain for the year of thirteen companions.

I cannot help expressing regret at this slight growth of the Michigan Commandery, and my conviction that if every companion would but exert himself to promote the interests of the order as its objects deserve, the coming year would give us a membership of nearly double our present number.

These objects are, as expressed in the constitution, "to cherish the memories and associations of the war waged in defence of the unity and indivisibility of the Republic. Strengthen the ties of fraternal fellowship formed by companionship in arms." \* \* "Enforce unqualified allegiance to the general government, protect the rights and liberties of American citizenship, and maintain national honor, union and independence."

I hold, then, that it is a sacred duty of every companion of this order to use his best endeavors to interest all who are eligible to membership on all proper occasions and by all proper means to induce them to identify themselves with us and to assist us in carrying out its glorious and patriotic work.

We should not forget that the Loyal Legion is the offspring, as it were, of the Society of the Cincinnati, formed at the close of the American Revolution and whose founders were Washington, Hamilton, Steuben, Knox, Green and Putnam, with many others of like fame and renown.

Will you bear with me a few moments and go back to the cantonment of that little army at Newburg, on the Hudson? It is the spring of 1783. A general treaty of peace had been signed at Paris on the 20th of January.

On the 23d of March a French war vessel arrived at Philadelphia bringing the joyous news, and while, as Irving says, "sadness and despair prevailed among the Tories and refugees in New York, the officers in the patriotic camp were not without gloomy feelings at the thought of their approaching separation from each other.

Eight years of dangers and hardships, shared in common and nobly sustained, had wedded their hearts together, and made it hard to rend them asunder.

Prompted by such feelings, Gen. Knox, ever noted for generous impulses, suggested, as a mode of perpetuating the friendship thus formed, and keeping alive the brotherhood of the camp, the formation of a society composed of the officers of the army. The suggestion met with universal concurrence and with the hearty approbation of Washington. Meetings were held, at which the Baron Steuben, as senior officer presided. A plan was drafted by a committee composed of Generals Knox, Hand and Huntington and Capt. Shaw, and the society was organized at a meeting held on the 13th of May, at the Baron's quarters in the old Verplanck House, near Fishkill. By its formula the officers of the American army in the most solemn manner combined themselves into one society of friends, to endure as long as they should endure, or any of their male posterity, and in failure thereof, the collateral branches who might be judged worthy of becoming its supporters and members.

In memory of the illustrious Roman, Lucius Quintus Cincinnatus, who retired from war to the peaceful duties of the citizen, it was to be called "The Society of the Cincinnati."

\* \* \* \* \*

Individuals of the respective States distinguished for patriotism and talents might be admitted as honorary members for life, their numbers never to exceed a ratio of

one to four. The French ministers who had officiated at Philadelphia, and the French admirals, generals and colonels who had served in the United States, were to be presented with the insignia of the Order and invited to become members, and Washington was chosen unanimously to officiate as its president until the first general meeting to be held in May, 1784."

As the time approached when the first annual meeting was to be held, Washington saw with deep concern that a popular jealousy had been awakened concerning it, Judge Burke of South Carolina had denounced it in a pamphlet as "an attempt to elevate the military above the civil classes, and to institute an order of nobility."

Irving says: "The Legislature of Massachusetts sounded an alarm that was re-echoed in Connecticut and prolonged from State to State. The whole Union was put on its guard against this effort to form a hereditary aristocracy out of the military chiefs and powerful families of the several States."

\* \* \* \* \*

"The society met at the appointed time and place, Washington presided, and by his sagacious counsels effected modifications in its constitution. The hereditary principle, and the power of electing honorary members were abolished, and it was reduced to the harmless but highly respectable footing on which it still exists.

In notifying the French officers included in the society, of the changes which had taken place in its constitution, he expressed his ardent hopes that it would render permanent those friendships and connections which had happily taken root between the officers of the two nations. All clamors against the order now ceased. It became the rallying place for old comrades in arms, and Washington continued to preside over it until his death."

I am inclined to the opinion that Irving is in error as to the abolishing of the hereditary feature and honorary membership at the first meeting. It is likely that Washington did recommend it, but Companion Mitchell in his able paper on the subject before the California Commandery in War Paper No. 2, says:

“In the minds of the meeting at Philadelphia in May, 1784, already referred to, this matter was fully discussed, and it is recorded that General Washington in confidence introduced a report of a committee of Congress, that ‘no person holding a hereditary title or order of nobility should be eligible to citizenship in the new State they were about to establish,’ and declared that he knew that this was leveled ‘at our institution,’ and that our friends had prevented its passing into resolution till the result of this meeting should be known, but that if we did not make it conformable to their sense of Republican principles we might expect every discouragement and *even persecution* from them and the States severally.

“An attempt was made to propitiate the public sentiment and the society recommended to the State societies certain modifications of the institution, but as the assent of all the States was necessary to the change and that assent never being given, the society retains to-day the hereditary feature. The opposition seems soon to have died out, and as an indication of the estimation in which the society was held, when the time for its next general meeting came around it appears that the convention which adopted the Constitution of the United States was convened to meet in Philadelphia in May, 1787, with direct reference to the fact that the Cincinnati would meet there on the first Monday of the same month, and in order to give Washington an opportunity of presiding over both sittings.”

Curiously enough the order excited opposition in France as well as at home. Lafayette was proud to wear its

decoration, but the extreme and radical Mirabeau, the great agitator and Jacobin of the French Revolution, said, "In less than a century this institution, which draws a line of separation between the descendants of the Cincinnati and their fellow citizens will have caused so great an inequality that the country which now contains none but citizens perfectly equal in the eye of the Constitution and the law will consist altogether of two classes of men—politicians and plebians. This order, which America beholds with indifference, will, when consolidated by time, convert the children of our military chiefs into a distinct, a privileged and a commanding race. Lying poets and fawning orators will prostitute their eloquence to confer the honors of an apotheosis on the parricides who will have enslaved their country. The rest of the citizens will be nothing but an obscure, spiritless, degraded and degenerate rabble, unworthy of regard and devoted to oppression."

Senator Manderson in his report to the Senate, June 12, 1888, says of the above: "In the presence of the historic events that followed the birth of the order and the patriotic results that have come from all the great military associations that were called into being by the three great wars of the Republic, we can well afford to laugh at the fears expressed by the opponents of the Cincinnati and those of later days who have condemned the existence of kindred societies. The nation has nothing to fear from their teachings, and their aims are so noble and patriotic that good only can result from their maintainance."

Companions, you all know of the origin of our noble order. How, after four years direful war the dark cloud had been lifted at Appomattox only to come down on the nation still darker, more appalling than ever, in the assassination of our beloved Lincoln. Three gentlemen who had served in the Union armies during the war, Lieutenant-Colonel

Mitchell, Lieutenant-Colonel Zell and Captain Keyser met on that sad and sorrowful morning of April 15, 1865, and determined to call a meeting of all the officers and ex-officers then in Philadelphia and express their horror of the act of assassination, and do whatever the necessities of that critical time might require. The meeting was called and was largely attended and steps were taken for the formation of the society, out of which grew the order known as the "Loyal Legion."

Let us then strive to emulate the glorious example set us by our fathers. Let us seek to preserve what they fought to create, and what we fought to save. Year after year rolls by and we are a little grayer grown. We incline more and more to the ease of the arm chair and the comfort of the fire side. We find ourselves dreaming of the days gone by as we sit and smoke our fragrant cigar or pipe, and see faces of our companions perhaps in the curling smoke, and a tear will fall now and then as we think of those who have gone before. Yet we have duties to perform although we are getting old, and we find our sons looking us "square in the eye," and their shoulders as broad as ours, and we feel that the mantle must soon fall upon them. Yet we can serve as the "Videttes of the Republic." We must still remain on the picket line and sound the alarm if need be. Has our beloved country no danger menacing her? Are our free schools unassailed? Is the right of voting as one choses safe and unmenaced? Are there no demagogues? Have we taught our sons to love the dear old flag which means so much to us? Have we taught them that it is better to die for liberty than to live as slaves? Have we taught them to guard with jealous care that for which we fought to save? And our companions died to save? I am full of hope for the future for I believe in the Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States. I believe in the glorious Republic for which



we gave the best of our days and the best of our endeavors. I believe in the permanency of its glorious principles and institutions. I believe in the loyalty of our sons who are soon to fill our places. I accord all the honor that time and history can give to those who fought under the starry flag that the Republic might endure.

I drop a tear to the sacred memory of those who stood shoulder to shoulder with us and went down to death, sealing with their hearts' best blood their devotion to a country in peril. I seem to see them now on the bloody slopes of Antietam, on the storm rent heights of Fredericksburg, of Lookout Mountain, of Kenesaw, of Spottsylvania, in the trenches of Vicksburg, of Atlanta, Petersburg, aye from an hundred other fierce fields of honor, as they enter the fearful strife turning for one long last fond look at their beloved Northland and their loved ones with a far'away gleam in their eyes. I seem to hear them say, with a salute, as did the gladiators of old, "We who are about to die salute you."

Then gather closer around our camp fire, companions. Let the glance of your eye be that of kindly greeting and of loyal comradeship. Let this festal night be one of a life time. Raise high the social glass and "let joy be unconfined," for the days that are left us are few. And may they be joyous. Let each heart say to its fellow :

" Were't the last drop in the well,  
 As I gasped upon the brink,  
 Ere my fainting spirit fell,  
 'Tis to thee that I would drink.  
 With that water, as this wine,  
 The libation I would pour  
 Should be—peace to thee and mine  
 And a health to thee, Tom Moore."

# INTRODUCTORY.

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At Annual Banquet of the Michigan Commandery of  
the Loyal Legion, at the Russell House,  
Detroit, May 7, 1891.

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By I. C. SMITH, COMMANDER,  
Brevet Brigadier General.

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*Companions of the Loyal Legion:*

We assemble here to-night to enjoy one of life's blessings, a sumptuous spread. To cement friendships formed by those who risked their lives in a common cause. To listen to those who are gifted in speech, and hear extolled the genius of our great captains, who led us on to victory. Also, to recount the gallant deeds of those who fell, that their memory may be an inspiration for generations to come.

## INTRODUCTORY.

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At Banquet of the Michigan Commandery of the  
Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United  
States, at Detroit, May 5, 1892.

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BY COLONEL SAMUEL E. PITTMAN, COMMANDER.

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Thomas Carlyle says, "Whoever can speak \* \* becomes a power. \* \* It matters not what rank he has, what revenues or garnitures, the requisite thing is that he have a tongue that others will listen to." And again he says, "A person making what we call 'set speeches' is not he an offense?" Here is a dilemma. We must speak, but we must not prepare speeches; however, he who now stands before this assemblage will not upon this occasion be an offender.

Memory will carry some of us back to school days when it was the fashion to declaim weekly. We recited Mrs. Heman's then thrilling lines, "The Boy Stood on the Burning Deck;" Byron's "There was a Sound of Revelry by Night," and later from Webster, Hayne, Chatham, Burke—looking forward to the time when we would electrify the world with our eloquence. Your present speaker has been looking forward ever since and at last the supreme moment seems to have arrived. Courtesy and duty, however, both

demand that opportunity shall be afforded the distinguished gentlemen whose names appear on the programme before you and they shall not be forstalled. Postponement, then, of electrifying from this quarter must be had.

It may have been the practice of some of the retiring Commanders to deliver something in the nature of an annual message upon these occasions, and it were well, perhaps, to review the past and forecast the future briefly. Within the past eighteen months the Commandery has taken leave of the Merrill Block with its dust and rodents and is now happily domiciled under the roof of the Detroit Light Infantry, illustrating that two families can live harmoniously in the same house. We shall naturally point to our amiable tempers as the important factor in this instance, yet will admit that much of this commendable harmony is the product of the high soldiery and gentlemanly deportment of the Light Infantry. Expressing my own convictions and, as I believe, of the Commandery, it can be said that not a State military organization north, east, south or west can be named as superior to this fine body of young soldiers.

The opportunity afforded by the Grand Army of the Republic encampment in August last, for the Michigan Commandery to extend its hospitality to such companions of the Loyal Legion as were in attendance, proved to be a rare boon to us. The particulars of the entertainment by our Commandery of such visitors and many others, have already been given in glowing sentences by Companion Swift on behalf of the several committees, and we need but say that the insignia and button of our order received fresh brilliancy from the interchange of fraternal godspeeds between members from every loyal State in the Union.

Papers may not have been as numerous as in some former years but those we have had were so excellent they would go far towards making up for the limited number. Col. Ludlow's was the first. Col. Sterling closed up a long gap

and Companion Sibley's historical sketch of the Society of the Cincinnati brought to light much of that society that many of us had never heard and sympathetically stimulated a larger interest in our own order. The Poe incident was equal to a "paper" evening, and thanks to its literary productions the event has taken an important place in our history for the past year.

Companions—The call to "fall in" to perform our last duties to deceased companions has frequently sounded—too frequently, we are apt to say. You will readily recall their names: Leggett, Dodge, Lemon, Merrill, Burns, Hull, Osburne. All these have passed over the river, and in their memory let us for a moment pause.

With these losses, however, our membership is larger than a year ago, yet recruiting from the participants in the rebellion war alone cannot last long at the best, and attention should be paid to adding membership to class 2. Companions of this class, which may be termed the inheritance class (and others eligible) are making their way into the ranks of representative men and in due time it will rest upon them to keep prosperous the order their fathers loved so well. More of them should be with us now and acknowledge in the language of our Constitution: "First, a firm belief and trust in Almighty God, extolling Him under whose beneficent guidance the sovereignty and integrity of the Union have been maintained, the honor of the flag vindicated, the blessings of civil liberty secured, established and enlarged. Second, true allegiance to the United States of America based upon paramount respect for and fidelity to the National Constitution and laws, manifested by discountenancing whatever may tend to weaken loyalty, incite to insurrection, treason or rebellion, or impair in any manner the efficiency and permanency of our free institutions."

Members not residing in Detroit have in common with all the proud consciousness of membership in this unique order, an organization that received its first inspiration upon the announcement of one of the greatest crimes ever committed ; an organization that adopted in its charter both acknowledgement of dependence upon Divine power and the highest loyalty to state and free institutions ; an organization that we believe will exist as long as a pulse of patriotism shall throb from an American heart. The opportunity for membership becomes a legacy to hand down to successors that no money can buy, no genius can obtain, but simply through the lines of inheritance. This is surely a grand possession, but looking at it from a practical standpoint, to such members the annual meeting and banquet sums up their annual dividends, therefore it has been the practice to concentrate most of our energies and finances upon the banquet. We would recommend that annual meetings be for the entire day, the forenoon for business, thus giving ample time for full discussion of any question ; the afternoon for a more free companionship between members assembling from different parts of the State, and the evening for the usual rollicking around the banquet table. At present candidates for the several offices are frequently voted for by members whom the candidate hardly knows, even by name, and in turn members know only by name the men they vote for. This, however, is not a suitable subject for long presentation upon such an occasion as this, yet worthy of consideration.

A cordial greeting to our guests for the evening can ever go without saying, still should always be and is now extended. Upon many occasions our guests have been our soul stirrers, and to-night doubtless will prove to be no exception.

“We may now enjoy the pleasure of the passing hour, bidding adieu for a time to grave pursuits,” recalling the poet’s words slightly paraphrased :

“ The act of feeding as you understand,  
Is but a fraction of the work in hand.  
Its nobler half is that ethereal meat  
The papers call the intellectual treat.  
Songs, speeches, toasts around the festal board,  
Drowned in the juice the Legion men afford.”

(The Commander then read certain letters of regret, after which the regular order of toasts proceeded.)

# INTRODUCTORY.

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At Annual Banquet, Hotel Cadillac, Detroit,  
May 4, 1893.

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By WILLIAM H. WITHINGTON,  
Brevet Brigadier General U. S. V., Commander.

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The past year cannot be said to have been an eventful one in the history of the Michigan Commandery of the Loyal Legion. In former years there have been some important events, such as the National Encampment in Detroit of the Grand Army of the Republic, re-unions of some of the army societies, or trips away, to give the year especial mark. The year closing drops to its place in column with no such distinction.

It was the cherished purpose of your retiring Commander to invite the Commandery to his home and hearth at Jackson for one of its meetings, but the illness of his wife, prolonged through a period of five months, compelled him reluctantly to forego this pleasure. The interest of the companions, however, has shown no signs of flagging. The attendance upon meetings has been large and remarkably uniform. Since the resumption of the meetings in October, the smallest number present at any meeting has been 30 and the largest 40, and the average for the seven meetings (not including the present) has been a little over 35.



The year began with a total membership of 261. There have been added 24 companions and lost 8, leaving a total membership at the date of the last meeting of 273. Six companions have responded to the last call within the year, and have passed on to join the gallant spirits of the greater army. These are: Major N. B. Hall, of Jackson; Lieutenant Chas. S. Draper, Saginaw; Lieutenant A. A. Thompson, Flint; Colonel James I. David, Grosse Isle; General B. F. Partridge, Bay City, and Captain Chase H. Dickinson, of Kalamazoo. It is notable that of all these companions not one was a resident of Detroit.

The contributions to our records and incidents of the war have been increased within the year by the addition of seven papers. These papers have awakened and reawakened the thronging memories of the illustrious past. Its deeply graven experiences and thrilling scenes have a portraiture in the papers which have been read before the Commandery, of abiding interest to the members of the order and of great historic value. The Commandery is to be congratulated upon their possession, and upon the action taken at the last meeting to place these separate printed papers in a more compact and enduring form. The historic period of this age of our country's existence lies in the war for the Union, and the Loyal Legioner, of the original First Class, who would remind himself that he was once an embattled hero, and marched with those whose names are emblazoned high on the scroll of enduring fame, must naturally turn and return to this page of his life. If it becomes a habit, who shall gainsay it or question a just pride in such recurrency? Certainly none but ourselves. Possibly it might be wise for us to question how far and how wholly the papers at our meetings should be confined to the past, glorious as it was. To the end of adding, while the veterans are still living, valuable facts and incidents from the personal knowledge and experience of the

writers, these summonings of the past should go on. As a period overflowing with examples of heroic deeds, and full of inspiration to noble, self-sacrificing patriotism, it can be drawn on indefinitely by tongue and pen. No danger of going too far under these motives. The only danger in this direction, to the soldier himself, lies, to my mind, in accepting the past as the all, and in resting upon it; in regarding his services in the war as fulfilling all demands upon him for heroism and high achievement. No habit or attitude of mind which tends to satisfy a man with what he has already done in life, to lull ambition and benumb effort is good for his mental or moral health. I do not think the members of the Loyal Legion stand much in need of preaching upon this head, but we have all of us seen soldiers to whom it might possibly be profitably applied. We have seen soldiers who proclaim that their deeds in the army were an all-sufficient discharge of any obligation to further public service or personal effort. We have seen soldiers upon whom the youth of to-day must look and wonder how they could have been heroes, and yet they were. The default is that they did not keep on so being; that they failed to realize that they owed something more to *themselves* though they owed nothing more to their country. We may know of a soldier's bravery and understand his shortcomings, but to impress the citizen of to-day with a just sense of his service in the war the veteran must *be* something as well as have done something. With the citizen the quality of soldiership in 1861-65 is measured by the quality of citizenship in 1870-90.

The Loyal Legion brands its members as high types of soldiers, citizens and patriots. The brand is really valuable only so far as the member lives up to it. He owes it to the order to live up to it, and he owes it to himself not simply to live upon his record but to live up to its standard. There is a vast difference in the two. The one means stagnation, the

other continued activity, continued effort, continued zeal, continued interest in the affairs of to-day, and participation in them so far as health and ability permit. This brings me back to the subject of the papers and to some consideration of the future of the Loyal Legion. There are reasons, I think, why there should be introduced into our meetings more of the "to-day." The plan of the Loyal Legion is that it shall be a continuing body. To this end membership is open to our sons. While, no doubt, they are interested in the war period and in the deeds of their fathers, it may be well for them and for us that our faces should not turn altogether backward; that we should confront the life and and discuss the conditions of to-day. It is within the scope of our organization to do this. There is a broad field of discussion and action open to the Loyal Legion, and legitimately open. What are its objects? Let us look to the constitution for an authoritative statement of them. Article third of the constitution reads: "The objects of this order shall be to cherish the memories and associations of the war waged in the defense of the unity and indivisibility of the republic; to strengthen the ties of fraternal fellowship and sympathy formed from companionship in arms; to advance the best interests of the soldiers and sailors of the United States, especially those associated as members of this order, and to extend all possible relief to their widows and children; to foster the cultivation of military and naval science; to enforce unqualified allegiance to the general government; to protect the rights and liberties of American citizenship, and to maintain honor, union and independence." Here is past, present and future committed to us. We are to "foster the cultivation of military and naval science." There are various ways in which this may be done, but we are not likely to do it at all unless we keep up our own interest in military and naval affairs, and not likely to do it

intelligently unless we keep in some measure informed of the changes and developments in these departments. Arms are changing, organizations are changing, tactics are changing, naval architecture and armaments are changing. In both arms of the service there seems to be continued progress in two opposite extremes, heavier ordnance on the one hand and quicker action and higher speed on the other. We have in this commandery both army and naval officers. There are officers of the regular army stationed here who could entertain and instruct us with papers or talks upon the changes taking place, and the probable results of these changes in coast defenses and field operations, and give ideas upon needed legislation on behalf of both the regular army and the State militia. Gen. Poe and Col. Ludlow have had long experience and great knowledge of lighthouse construction and service. If they would draw upon their experiences and knowledge for the benefit of the Loyal Legion we could become possessed of a great deal of valuable information and entertaining incident pertaining to lighthouse systems and service on the great lakes which envelop our State. Col. Ludlow, perhaps, could give us some interesting chapters from recent experience, if he would let himself be as funny as he could upon this subject.

Another object is to "protect the rights and liberties of American citizenship." Here, indeed, is open a wide range for thought and discussion in which our youngest members may join, and perhaps contribute ideas which our older ones ought to hear, if they do not adopt. Of course, we cannot enter upon political questions in their narrower or party limits. But there are public questions upon which parties do not divide, and upon which the better sentiment of all parties is agreed, in their professions at least, which might be discussed here with profit and interest. Of these questions there are Civil Service Reform, the Problem of

