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PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS
of
SERVICE

in
THE ARMY of the CUMBERLAND
and
Sherman's Army

From August 17, 1861 to July 20, 1865.



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Volunteer Infantry

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PREFACE.

This little book is written at the suggestion of relatives of the writer and is published without any apology for whatever it may lack as an up to date publication.

The incidents recorded are those of which the writer had personal knowledge, excepting where it is otherwise stated. The rapid transformation of a lad of seventeen to a seasoned veteran, was largely due to the wise counsel of the writers father, Andrew McNeil, who was an earnest christian man and was unflinching in his loyalty to the Union cause and believed that no sacrifice was too great if it would aid the proper authorities of our Government to crush the Southern rebellion and bring the seceding States back into the Union.

THE AUTHOR

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PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS

of

ARMY LIFE

The Battle of Stone River, Tennessee

Our first and only experience in the immediate rear of a large army during a great battle, was on December 31, 1862

Our brigade commanded by Colonel M. B. Walker was guarding a bridge over Stewarts Creek, not far from the Nashville pike and about midway between that city and Murfreesboro. General Joe Wheeler's cavelry was doing all sorts of mischief in the rear of our main army under Rosecrans, who had formed his lines the previovs evening, with the left resting on Stone River, and almost within cannon shot of Murfreesboro, the headquarters of the Commander of the rebel army. The foregoing will explain why we were hurrying South toward Murfreesboro on the morning December 31, 1863. with many miles between us and the cedars of Stone River, where at that hour, the right division of Rosecrans army was crumbling to pieces under a fierce attack of two divisions of Confederates, who had gained the rear of the Union right wing. South of the little hamlet La Vergne, we came upon Wheelers Cavelry burning a wagon train belonging to our army. Our brigade soon drove the confederates from the burning wagons-Van Hornes "Army of the Cumberland" says-"Walkers brigade recaptured eight hundred of our men and the train animals."

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Again we started for the front, the sound of the battle was distinctly heard and we realized that our army was fighting a great battle to decide the question of our farther advance toward the Tennessee river and Chattanooga.

As we marched south on the Murfreesboro pike the sound of battle was more and more distinct and the "thump, thump" of the artillery seemed to us an accompaniment to the constant roll of musketry. Though it was our first experience in the immediate rear of a great army at the opening of a battle, the noise of the battle was not a strange sound.

There is always a drifting away of more or less stragglers from a line of troops under fire, but the wreckage of an entire division, which had been swept from the Union right that morning, by an overwhelming force of confederates, was a real surprise to us, as we marched with ranks well closed, in the direction from which came the incessant roar of artillery and small arms. The soldiers we met were to a great extent members of one of the best divisions in Rosecrans army, and the misfortune which drove them from the field at the opening of the battle was largely the result of incompetency, or to put it mild, the gross negligence of officers of high rank.

Many of the severely wounded were helped along by their stronger comrades, and the greater number appeared to be overcome by the awful disaster of the early morning, but some were terror stricken and seemed to think of nothing except their own personal safety. We offered some advice to the latter class, and one of my comrades sugg-

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ested to one of the stragglers, that he ought to stop for dinner at a sand-pit. But in spite of our "kidding" if we had expressed our honest opinions, we were not encouraged. From our own knowledge of conditions just then the tide of battle was against our comrades on the battle line.

How is it going now at the front? was one of the questions asked the men we met. With few exceptions the exhausted soldiers would inform us that the Confederates were having every thing their own way. One bright boy with a shattered arm replied as follows, I will quote his reply from memory. "They drove our men back to the Nashville pike this morning, but I'll bet a brass watch that before Bragg gets through with this job he will want Rosecrans men to stop killing rebels." We cheered the boy who I hope lived to see the end of the rebellion. We had been in active service, at the front more than a year, and we really thought that ours was a regiment of seasoned veterans, but the anxiety of both, the officers and soldiers, was perceptible as our column approached the battle field.

In every regiment of soldiers of that war were men and boys who would indulge in card playing. The old game of "Seven up" and "drawpoker" served to pass away the time while in camp, and many of the comrades carried a "deck" in the blouse pocket, During the last two miles of our march toward Stone River, cards were thrown aside as undesirable property, and at one place the Murfreesboro pike was so nearly covered with the little paste-

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boards that one could imagine the cards had snowed down.

I have serious doubt about there having been one deck of cards left in the pocket of a soldier belonging to the brigade when we arrived at the front, Kings queens and spots were at a discount, but the pocket bibles and testaments held their own as they have in times of peace and in times of war for many centuries. When our command came within view of the battle lines it was afternoon and to our surprise the confederate attack had spent its force and from the bank of Stone River on our left, to the cedars on our right were solid lines of blue with ranks closed up, waiting for the next move in the great battle of Stone River.

To me the battle lines--the part of our lines we could see--were grand, and I never afterward doubted the ability of that Superb Army of the Cumberland to recover from a temporary disaster.

Chickamauga

When the Army of the Cumberland started from the vicinity of Winchester, Tenn. on the campaign which resulted in the battle of Chickamauga and the capture of Chattanooga, we climbed a range of mountains to reach the Tennessee river and crossed the river near the mouth of Battle Creek.

Our division (Brannon's) had no pontoons to bridge the river and the soldiers built rafts of timber and lumber taken from a sawmill, and from other buildings near at hand. A

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raft would carry one army wagon or one field gun. The motive power was long poles in the hands of soldiers. It required about as many men and as much time to make the return trip with no load as it did to take a wagon or a company of soldiers to the south side. The water in the river was at a low stage and the artillery horses and train mules were made to swim where the water was too deep to wade. Some of the men made canoes and dugouts and that was one of the many instances where the intelligence and skill of the soldiers of the rank and file accomplished wonders. Some of the rafts were marvels of boat architecture and when properly managed would carry almost as much stuff as the little ferry boats on southern streams at that period.

On several occasions during that war men who had not been graded high in discipline and soldierly conduct, sprung into prominence by showing their skill in some special manner which brought them to the notice of the commanding officers, and from that time those soldiers appeared to take greater interest in the prosecution of the war and evidently believed that each individual soldier was an important cog in that magnificent military machine. "The army of the Cumberland."

The horses crossed the river without accident, but the mules would sometimes get panicky in the water, and if a mule got loose from the others in the channel of the river, he was a gone donkey; instead of swimming with the others to shore he would keep going in a circle and bray most

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pitiously until his nose went under water and his tail appeared above the waves. If he had exerted himself in the right direction he could have reached shallow water from where he could have waded to the shore.

The faithful army mule was a factor in the war of the rebellion, and without him it would have been well nigh impossible to have secured animals to haul the miles of wagon trains, and later in the war, pack animals to carry camp equipage and intrenching tools.

While on the subject of "The army mule," which has been a subject of much ridicule and sarcasm. I will digress from the Chickamauga campaign and give one instance of the strong attachment of the army teamster, "mule whacker," for the faithful saddle mule of his team.

Elijah Lister was detailed as assistant teamster at division headquarters. This was at Savannah Georgia in the winter of 1864 and 1865, and comrade Lister is authority for the following. He was assigned as the assistant of a teamster who drove one of the finest mule teams in the 14th army corps. The six mules were almost perfectly matched in color—very dark Sorrel or dark tan—the "wheel" mules were unusually large, the swing team were not quite so large and the lead team were of ordinary size.

On the Atlanta campaign, and on the "March to the Sea". I frequently saw that team of six mules and noted their good condition.

It was up in North Carolina in March 1865, that, both teamsters were out on a foraging tour. They had gone

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The boys had some bacon and some North Carolina beans and were riding back to the road on which the wagon train was "parked." when a squad of Wade Hampton's cavalry took the boys and mules under their charge. Lister and his companion were ordered to dismount and a rebel soldier was about to lead the mules away when the head teamster put his arms around the neck of his saddle mule and weeping most piteously said, "Oh! Jennie, my faithful friend, good-bye." The animal placed her nostrils against his shoulder as though she really understood the sad part from her kind master. The war soon closed and both teamsters lived to get home.

On the South Side of Tennessee

It was the peach season when we started on the march up the valley and across the mountain ranges into the Chickamauga valley.

While crossing Lookout Mountain, some twenty miles south of Chatanooga, a comrade called attention to a dilapidated cabin not far from the mountain road on which we were marching. On investigation, we found a family of poor whites in a destitute condition. About that time the column halted and the shanty was surrounded by the first Yankees those wretched people had ever seen.

ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF TENNESSEE

Without any remarks, commands or suggestions as to what should be done in the case, each of us contributed from the limited supply of food in our haversacks until there was a pile of hardtack, pork, beans and genuine Yankee coffee (unground) on the floor of that hovel sufficient to feed the family for several days.

The sight of that poverty stricken family touched a place in the heart of every soldier there. It was a mute appeal, such as will always bring response from those who are brought face to face with human misery.

Before the next full rations were issued to our brigade the battle of Chickamauga had been fought and a number of the boys who had shared their scanty rations with the occupants of the mountain cabin, were left on the battlefield, dead, and doubtless the Confederate soldiers in going over the field, wondered why those boys had been carrying empty haversacks.

Chickamauga First Day

On Friday night Sept. 18, 1863 Brannons division of the 14th army corps, marched all night passing Crawfish Springs, Lee and Gordon's mill and the Dyer farm. Early in the morning of the 19th we halted at the roadside, on what I have since learned was the McDaniel farm and near the north line of the present Chickamauga National Park.

Before we got fires started to make coffee, the brigade moved east of the Lafayette road, some distance and we concluded that Colonel Connell our brigade commander was

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uncertain about where he should move his command We heard firing east or southeast in our front.

The 31st Ohio was taken from the brigade and we moved in the direction of the firing; we piled our knapsacks by companies, leaving one man of each company to guard them.

We moved forward some distance and formed on the left of the 10th Kentucky, which was the left regiment of Croxton's brigade, which had really opened the battle an hour previous, and had retired a short distance for a fresh supply of ammunition. The woods in our front was full of rebel troops and they were driving Starkweathers brigade back toward our line.

On they came with a howling mob of Confederates at their heels. The horses belonging to the Fourth Indiana battery and Loomis' battery, dashed wildly through the woods. The guns of these two batteries had fallen into the hands of the Confederates who had fiercely attacked Starkweather before his lines were properly formed. About this time I noticed that the faces of the comrades on my right and left were somewhat paler than usual; doubtless if I could have had one glance in a mirror just then, the absence of youthful bloom on my own face would have surprised me. An Officer came running back, he was thoroughly demoralized. A comrade near me brought his gun down and threatened to punch him if he did not halt and try to reform his men who were running over us.

The officer pushed aside the gun and went over us like a

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jack rabbit running from a greyhound.

We had been in active service about two years and had been under fire many times, but it was a most trying experience to lay flat in the woods, southeast of the Kelly field, while a disorganized mass of our own soldiers went pell-mell over us, with an irregular line of Confederates shoot and yelling at their heels.

The men in gray halted at a respectful distance in our front. The last bunch of our men had passed over to the rear, when at a signal our line raised up and poured a volley into the line of Confederates, which scattered those "Johnnies" and sent them back in the direction of Jay's Mill, with our line close at their heels. We pushed them southeast past the 4th Indiana Battery which they had taken from Starkweather within the hour previous to the time we got into the fight.

A detail of men under Capt. Bill Free hauled the guns and cassions back in the direction of Kelly's field; not a sound horse of the entire battery was within sight.

The 31st reformed its line of battle, moved to the right and joined again the left of the 10th Ky. who greeted us with, "bully for the "31st" Ohio." Here we checked another charge of the enemy and followed them to a point within gunshot of Jays Mill.—That position is marked by a marble tablet which stands north of Jays Mill and Brotherton road—

While at that advanced position a heavy force of the Confederates came up in our front and reached beyond

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our left. The Johnnies began to shoot down our line from left to right and we were ordered to retire slowly; while the enemy followed with their boasted rebel yell. It was here that the men of the rank and file displayed the splendid qualities of the American Soldier. In our efforts to delay the advancing lines of grey, I recall the fact that every boy in that retreating line of blue was a hero, Four or five hours of close work had fanned the timid fellows out of the line, and they were drifting somewhere in the rear. We loaded our Springfields as we walked back, then turning about fired into the faces of our foes, I venture to say that most of our shots knocked the dust out of some part of a grey uniform. In spite of their longer line which overlapped our left, we made that retreat of ours an expensive advance for Braggs' men. While loading for another shot at the Johnnies we almost bumped up against a line of our troops who had been sent in to take charge of the fellows who were crowding us back to the north west. Those fresh troops that relieved our depleted line were the finest appearing soldiers I had ever met.

Perhaps the knowledge that we had "bit off more than than we could chew" and the rapid decrease of weight of our cartridge boxes added to the appearances of the line of fresh troops, who gave the johnnies a rattling volley of minie ball, then drove them back in the direction of Jays Mill. Only those who have been there can fully realize my condition when the regiment, (what was left of it) marched back toward the Lafayette road, replenished our

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cartridge boxes and stretched out on the ground for a brief rest. To use the slang of to day, "I was all in."

In the close, hard fighting of September; 19 th 1863. Company F. was roughly handled by the enemy. David M. Cahill was killed. Lt. J. J. Miller, James Cooley, H. N. W. Simmons, W, S. Winters and others were wounded.

An enlisted soldier can not see all that occurs in his own company during a battle, but I remember some incidents of that eventful Saturday. While the Confederates were driving one of our brigades over us as we lay in line on the left of the 10 th Ky, a color bearer stopped at our line and said "boys if you promise to stand by me and this flag, I will not go one step farther to the rear." a group of our boys promised to carry his flag if he fell in the battle. The brave Sergeant was not with us very long. An officer of his regiment came with an order for him to join his own command which was forming in line a short distance from where we first met the advancing Confederates.

As was John Jordan, color Sergeant. of the 21 st Wis, Infantry, captured the next day Sept. 20.1863. and died in Andersonville Prison. This information was given in a letter from a member of the 21 st Wis. Inf. to the writer in 1883.

All of the dead and many of the wounded of both armies were left on the ground over which we fought. Each side had held and lost the same ground twice or thrice during the day. The dying soldier, whether he wore the blue or the grey, spoke the last message for friends at home

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into the ear of him who would pause and hear it.

The wounded soldiers on that field were all Americans. James Cooley was on his way to a point where the ambulance train was loading up with wounded men. His arm was shattered and the blood was flowing freely, Jim was indulging in adjectives addressed to the fellow who shot him in the arm, whoever that fellow was, when he heard a pitiful call, "Oh give me a drink of water." Jim looked at the wounded boy, in gray uniform, and said something about his own condition, and his canteen being almost empty. A moment later Jim stood in front of his wounded enemy saying, "Here Johnnie, drink all you want."

A ball wounded a soldier in the finger, Under the intense excitement of the moment, he ran full speed to the rear swinging his wounded hand and yelling "For Gods sake, somebody carry me off the battle field."

The most trying moment of that day was when the confederates were forcing us back, and we were stubbornly yielding ground.

I had just fired at the advancing rebels, and faced about to load when I saw Bartley Dew of Co, A. cap his gun and aim at the enemy. I was almost in front of Dew, and stepped aside to pass him, when a bullet struck him.

Poor Bart fell forward, dead., The sickening sound of the ball striking him. and the boy lying there at my feet, for an instant, rattled me. and I could hardly resist an impulse to run away from danger.

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I had seen many of the boys shot down that day and thought I was proof against a nervous attack, while under fire, but the death of Dew made me a coward for the moment. Nelson F. Swank, helped a wounded comrade back to the rear, and was returning to the battle line at the front when a squad of Johnnies who had become separated from their own command, took Swank under their care.

One of the Southerners said, "Here Yank, I will carry your gun, I know you are tired." Swank was a prisoner and could almost see the gate of a Southern prison pen opening to admit him into the presence of untold misery and starvation.

The confederates had taken their prisoner a short distance, when several guns clicked and Swank's captors were looking into the barrels of a dozen guns in the hands of as many determined Yankies, "Johnnie" said Swank very deliberately, I will carry my own gun, I know you are tired." and taking his own gun from the confederate Swank soon found the regiment and got busy with the rest of us.

The above incident will give the reader some idea of the mix up of friends and foes where Brannon's division fought back and forth between the two roads leading to Alexander's bridge, and Reed's bridge. A brigade was sent in where it was needed. Sometimes a regiment or two was fighting far out in front, "all by themselves," It was a fierce deadly struggle, a rough and tumble fight of irregular lines of battle, successes and reverses. Doubtless

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many of the soldiers of both armies got into a mixup that day similar to comrade swank's capture and escape.

A bunch of confederates threw down their guns, saying, "Yanks we surrender." They were told to go back to somebody who had time to guard them.

In the evening the 31st joined our own brigade, which had been where the Reeds bridge tower now stands.

We bivouaced near a pile of straw in the Dyer field that night. Our knapsacks had fallen into the hands of the enemy about 4 P. M., and doubtless while the writer was shivering, under a bunch of straw, through the long hours of the night, some Confederate was snoozing comfortably under a U. S. blanket.

It is safe to say that the Confederate would improve the first opportunity to read certain letters he would find in the knapsack.

In this connection, I will state that early in the following month while, on the outpost picket line in front of Chattanooga, a member of the 31st. was informed by a Confederate picket that he (the confederate) had a knapsack which formerly belonged to a soldier of the 31st Ohio. The Johnnie was informed that he must be mistaken, because that, regiment had not carried knapsacks for some time past.

Chicamauga, Second Day

We were roused from our straw beds in the Dyer field before daybreak Sunday morning, Sept. 20, 1863, and were placed in position in the timberland along the west side

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of the Poe field,—the position is marked by the 31st Ohio monument.—

The sun came up in all the splendor of a southern autumn morning. Hardly a shot was heard to disturb the peace and quiet of the Sabbath. A heavy mist or smoke hung over the field soon after sunrise, so we could not see our own skirmishers.

We could hear the wounded begging for water. One man seemed to be only a short distance in our front. Jerry Gladhill of Co. F. with a canteen filled with water volunteered to relieve the poor fellow. He had been gone a few minutes when a shot broke the stillness of the early morning and Jerry came out of the smoke running like a deer. When he had sufficient breath to talk, Jerry related how he had found the poor fellow who had been there all night and while in the act of handing the canteen to the wounded soldier, a shot was fired, and a bullet cut one of the straps by which he held the canteen. "Then" said Jerry, "I came away."

Stones, rails and logs were piled up to shelter our line from the musketry of the enemy. We held that line against every charge of the enemy until about noon when our position was attacked from the rear by a confederate force passing through a gap left by the withdrawal of two brigades of Wood's division, on the right of our brigade.

Lieutenant J. J. Miller gave the order to our company to retire from that position.

A detachment of the regiment rallied on Snodgrass

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Ridge, where a marker now stands, and fought till night on the line where our beloved commander General, Geo. H. Thomas, earned and won the title, "The Rock of Chickamauga." After we left the Poe field the writer was with another detachment of the 31st which had the regimental flag and was commanded by Lt. Col. Lister.

Many writers of the battles of the Civil war have impressed the idea that the second days fighting at Chickamauga was the gigantic struggle of the two days battle.

This is true so far as it relates to that part of the army which beat back the enemy on Sunday morning, when Bragg was determined to crush the left of our army, and it is especially true concerning General Thomas and his men in holding the line on Snodgrass Ridge, against the determined and repeated attempts of five times their number of Confederates to carry the position. There is nothing in the annals of the Civil war that shows greater courage, and heroism, than the defense of Snodgrass Ridge by General Thomas and his soldiers, on the afternoon of Sept. 20, 1863

It is also true that in dramatic features the second days battle over shadowed the first. But the writer has always insisted that the war of the rebellion furnished no better test of the fighting, and staying qualities of the American soldier, than was shown by the army of the Cumberland in the first days battle.

There was no choosing of positions for lines of infantry and field artillery. There was no time for maneuvering troops or for military tactics. Brigades, and even single

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regiments, were hurried forward to points where the enemy was most aggressive. It was an all days fight by the enlisted men. Almost every available regiment in Rosecrans army was heavily engaged, some place along the line, in Saturdays battle. The battle of Sunday was begun on positions selected by an army Commander and his subordinate generals, and the entire right wing of the army of the Cumberland was swept from the battlefield, as the result of a mistaken order issued by the commander of the army, and which was obeyed too promptly by a subordinate officer commanding a division.

Since the close of the Civil war the sentiment prevails, even in the North, that Chickamauga was a Confederate victory. The only possible ground for such conclusion is the fact of the enemy having held the battlefield for two months after the battle.

The battle having been fought along the Chickamauga, ten miles South of Chattanooga, was an accident. General Rosecrans compelled the Confederate commander, Bragg, to evacuate the city of Chattanooga without a battle. Bragg retreated South until Longstreet, with 25,000 men from Lee's army, was within supporting distance, when Bragg attempted to place his army between Rosecrans, and Chattanooga. Bragg was making good progress when Brannon's division struck the confederate infantry Saturday morning and brought on the battle.

More than two thirds of the soldiers of Roseceans army never saw Chattanooga, which was the objective point of

EXCHANGE OF WOUNDED

the campaign, until after the battle of Chickamauga was fought. To sum up the results; the battle was fought for the possession of Chattanooga—the gateway to the interior of the South—the loss of which was disastrous to the southern cause. The union army held Chattanooga and it was never afterward in the possession of the Confederates, but to them it was lost forever. And Chattanooga became the base of supplies for Shermans army on the Atlantia campaign, and later on, to supply the army for the March to the Sea,

Exchange of Wounded

A few days after the battle of Chickamauga, we were firmly intrenched and did not fear the result of an assault by the enemy, investing Chattanooga. An exchange of wounded Confederates within our lines, for an equal number of our own wounded comrades left within the enemy's lines was arranged for. About the 30th of September a long train of ambulances filled with wounded Confederates passed outside of our intrenchments, near the right of our brigade. Late in the afternoon the ambulance train returned to Chattanooga, with our wounded, who had been left within the enemys line about ten days before.

Hundreds of our soldiers lined up along the Rossville road to greet our wounded comrades as they came inside of the Union lines.

Although they had been prisoners less than two weeks, it was a joyful home-coming to the boys in the ambulance

AN ENTERTAINMENT

train. Those who were able to make any demonstration were almost overcome when they saw the line's of rifle pits with the regimental flags waving here and there, and the lines of soldiers in blue uniforms. One of the wounded soldiers exclaimed. "Why, There is the Old flag sure enough." another said "Thank God we are home." and "you boys look mighty good to me."

To them, rebel flags and gray uniforms were associated with hunger, misery, suffering and death. But the very sight of the men in blue with the Stars and and Stripes waving above them, meant better care, something good to eat and letters from home.

An Entertainment

One Sunday there was a crowd of soldiers gathered at the headquarters of Van Derveer,s brigade.

It had been announced that Prof. Murdock of Cincinnati would entertain the soldiers of our division for an hour. Mr. Murdock was a fine elocutionest and was roundly applauded by the soldiers. A glee club belonging to the 35th Ohio sung patriotic songs. The Confederates had some heavy guns on the point of Lookout mountain. When an unusual gathering of soldiers were seen in camp in Chattanooga, this battery on the mountain would send their huge shells in that direction. A gentleman from Ohio—I cannot recall his name—was delivering a speech on the progress of the war. I remember he spoke highly of our record in the war, and spoke of General Thomas as the

CHATTANOOGA RATIONS

“Rock of Chickamauga.” Near the close of his speech he declared that within a few weeks, a battle would be fought on the heights around Chattanooga, that would have a greater effect in bringing the war to a close, than any battle fought prior to that time. He was going along nicely when a puff of smoke shot out from the point of the mountain, more than 1000 feet above us and more than one mile away. The report of the gun seemed to shake the ground, and a large shell burst in the air before it reached us. The speaker winced and looked anxiously in the direction of the mountain, then closed his speech.

We smiled and trudged back to our part of the line. That shell knocked the oratory out of the gentleman from Ohio.

Chattanooga Rations

From Sept. 21st to Nov. 1st 1863, the army at Chattanooga was hungry all the time. The enemy had possession of our short route to Bridgeport, making it necessary to haul our rations over the mountain roads which were in such bad condition that the half starved train animals could not haul more than half of an ordinary load.

The only square meal enjoyed by our mess in that time mentioned, was secured through a business transaction, of which my comrade and bunkmate A. I. Higgins was the promoter. Higgins was busy for several days with the men who had the care of the officers horses. He finally secured ten ears of corn, which one “Hosler” had saved, one ear at a time, by cutting off that amount from the

NIGHT ATTACK AT CHATTANOOGA

regular rations allowed for the horses. The consideration for the ten ears of corn was a pound plug of tobacco, which had been captured by our forces when Chattanooga was taken from the enemy, and distributed among the men.

The corn was shelled and it made a big mess pan full of old fashioned lye hominy.

We got away with that hominy at supper, and during the evening told stories and boasted of having had one square meal since our arrival in Chattanooga.

I expected a good nights rest and sought my bed of rough boards, with a gum poncho for a mattress and a single blanket for a covering; but there was no sleep for me that night. My entire system was in a great commotion and I would not have given five cents a bushel for all the hominy in Tennessee.

Night Attack At Chattanooga

When one attempts to write of events which occurred more than forty years ago, the mind becomes active on that special subject. I now recall one amusing incident during a night attack of the enemy. We were busy strengthening our works during the week following the battle of Chickamauga, and Braggs men were pushing their lines up close to ours, and the Johnnies were boasting that they could take the town, in spite of our fortifications.

A regiment on our left had found some telegraph wire which they fastened to trees and stumps, about one hund-

OHIO SOLDIERS COULD VOTE.

red yards in front of their rifle-pits. The wire was placed about six inches from the ground and was drawn tight. That night our pickets were driven back to our main line of works, with the confederates close after them. When our pickets were safely within our line of works the order was given to open fire on the enemy.

When the firing ceased we heard a few Johnnies wrestling with the wire in front of the troops on our left. Every time a Johnnie stumbled over the wire, the sound would locate the victim, who would get a few shots before he could escape from the mysterious thing which was throwing him down. Doubtless those fellows wondered what sort of a contrivance the Yankees had placed out there in front of the breastworks.

Ohio Soldiers Could Vote

Among the states that passed a law giving their soldiers in the field the right to vote, was the Buckeye State. The evening before the day on which the Ohio election was held, the 31 st was sent to relieve the 17 th Ohio, on the picket line. By an agreement entered into by the Yanks and Johnnies, on our part of the line, (Turchins brigade) there was no picket firing during the hours of daylight, unless by order of the proper officers, and if such an order should be given, a certain signal was agreed upon. Hence it was a a daily occurrence for the blue and the grey to discuss the issues of the war and exchange courtesies on the picket line, or on the skirmish line, in front of Chat-

THE YOUNG REBEL

tanooga. C. L. Vallandigham was the Democrat—copper head—candidate for Governor of Ohio, and John Brough was the Republican—Union—candidate. On the morning of election day the 82nd Indiana of our brigade came out and took the place of the 31st. on the skirmish line. As we were preparing to return to our camp the boys in gray inquired about the new rule of changing the pickets in the morning, instead of in the evening as formerly. We informed them that Ohio troops voted for state officers that day. I reckon you all will vote for Vallandigham.” Said one Johnnie. Another fellow asked, “Got any copperheads in your regiment. Yank,?” “Not a one,” we replied. “Well” he continued, “We hear that Indiana is solid for Vallandigham.” Both sides laughed, and as we marched away the same fellow shouted. “Say Yanks what are you all going to do about them copperheads up North”?

The confederate soldiers seemed to be well posted as to political conditions in the North.

The Young Rebel

On the 26th or 27th day of October 1863, Hazen’s and Turchins brigades, by a well executed movement, captured Browns Ferry; the possession of that crossing of the Tennessee river enabled General Thomas to connect with Hooker who was bringing the 11th & 12th corps, from Bridgeport.

It was hardly daybreak when we crossed the river in pontoon boats, which had been floated down the river

THE YOUNG REBEL

during the night. The enemy's outposts were taken by surprise and climbed the hills on the south side of a ravine leading from the river to the valley, about eighty rods west. The enemy fired into our ranks from the hills which appeared to be thickly populated by confederates, and their bullets sounded "powerful wicked", as one of our men put it.

The hills were soon cleaned of the enemy excepting a single confederate who kept up the shooting, giving a rebel yell after each shot fired. From his voice we thought he was a very young soldier, and he was surely a plucky boy to fire several shots after all of his companions had left the hill. I never think of Browns Ferry without recalling the young confederate who stood his ground alone, shooting and yelling, after his command had ceased firing and had left the position.

We fortified and stayed there three days. During that time Hooker came into the valley and fought the night battle at Wauhatchie. In the three days, the only rations issued to our regiment was a small slice of fresh beef to each man. Our bill of fare was parched corn for breakfast, the same for dinner and ditto for supper. Oh ye epicures, and chronic, kickers of nineteen hundred and nine. I wish you could have three meals such as were served to one of Turchin's soldiers at Browns ferry in Oct. 1863. You would then quit your everlasting grumbling and your patient wife could get a much needed rest from the old topic. "My mother cooked the best meals I ever sit down to."

OUR FLAG—MISSIONARY RIDGE
Our Flag On Lookout mountain

From our position we could see Hookers men fighting, near the Craven house, on the side of Lookout mountain. Nov, 24th 1863. Once, in the afternoon, a heavy mist hung along the side of the mountain between us and the soldiers under Hooker, hence the name. "The battle above the clouds". The morning of Nov. 25th was clear. About sunrise we saw a regimental flag, the Stars and Stripes, waving on the top of old Lookout.

"Our flag is on Lookout" was the word passed along the line, and the boys cheered and shouted, It was a dramatic scene. From the foot of Lookout to the Railroad tunnel under Missionary ridge, and from the river, where it passes Chattanooga, to Orchard Knob on the East, were regiments brigades, divisions and army corps, numbering perhaps fifty thousand soldiers, all cheering at the sight of a single flag waving away up on the north point of Lookout mountain, and about 1300 feet above the valley.

Before the close of that day the men who had carried the Stars and Stripes through the battles of Stone river and Chickamauga had swept Braggs army from Missionary Ridge and our flag was waving over four miles of Confederate rifle-pits.

November 25th 1863 was a glorious day in the history of the army of the Cumberland.

Missionary Ridge

In the battle of Missionary Ridge the 31st Ohio was in

MISSIONARY RIDGE

Turchins brigade, Bairds's division, 14th A. C.

In the afternoon of November 25th, orders were given, to prepare for business. Canteens were filled, blankets were folded closely and twisted rope fashion, the ends tied together making an oblong hoop, which was thrown over the head and rested on the shoulder.

D. J. Cheney and the writer swapped work that day, and Cheney insisted on having his blanket twisted to the limit remarking that it might stop a rebel bullet. Strange to relate a bullet did pass through his blanket, which prevented the ball from going through his body. He recovered from the wound and lived many years after the war. The signal to advance was six cannon shots fired from a battery on Orchard Knob, which was to the right of our brigade as we formed for the assault. It was late in afternoon when the six shots were fired in quick succession and we moved rapidly toward the ridge sweeping the confederate skirmishers and their reserves before us like chaff before the wind. Their artillery on the crest of the ridge, five hundred feet above the valley we were crossing, sent a perfect storm of shot and shell into our ranks, but the lines of blue kept steadily on until the rifle-pits at the foot of the ridge was in our possession. I remember we got the impression, somehow, that we were to stop there, but the firing from the crest of the ridge, above us, was terrific, and as if by impulse, the boys in the ranks began to climb the west side of the ridge, shouting, "Come on boys." and on we went, without any orders,

MISSIONARY RIDGE

so far as I know, excepting our own.

We were nearly exhausted by the race to the foot of the ridge, and we made slow progress. About half way up, we encountered an enfilading fire from a force of the enemy who held a position north of a ravine on our left.

Farther up and to the right I saw a man waving a United States flag. He was too far away to see his uniform but I believed, at the time, that he was a confederate, tauntingly waving a captured flag at our line. While looking up at the flag, a rebel musket ball, evidently fired from the point to our left, struck me just below the jaw bone passing through my neck. Two streams of blood caused me to believe an artery was opened and that I would soon bleed to death. The first impulse was to get back down the ridge, as far as possible before I should fall from the loss of blood, This I did and reached the rifle-pits at the foot of the ridge. A shower of shot and shell was falling around me as I lay where I really thought was my last resting place while in the flesh.

An awful thirst came over me and in my frantic efforts to get at the canteen strapped under the waist belt, I cut the canteen strap and got the water to my lips. That warm water was the best drink I had ever taken, and I thought perhaps it was my last. There was no fear of eternity, which it seemed to me was very near. The thought of the possible failure of the assault, and that my body would be left within the enemy's lines, was worrying me more than anything else just at that time.

MISSIONARY RIDGE

Under the excitement of the charge, I believed victory was certain, but after that bullet had put me out of the fight our defeat seemed almost as certain. Many times since I have thought it was strange how I could get the impression that the artery had been severed and yet I was living and able to walk. After resting a few minutes I found that the blood was not flowing so freely. In the pocket of my blouse was a silk handkerchief, a present from mother. By pressing the soft silk into the wounds the flow of blood almost ceased. I was the happiest boy in the army. From where I lay our irregular lines of blue could be seen as they slowly but persistently moved up the ridge. To the South Wood's and Sheridan's divisions were moving up toward the crest. I started back toward Orchard Knob to find a surgeon, but became dizzy and was resting when a mounted officer came up, making a few remarks about stragglers and cowards. I never had much respect for officers who kept out of a battle for the avowed purpose of stopping stragglers. My Springfield rifle was loaded and bringing it to a "ready" told him to git. Doubtless he then saw the blood on my clothes, for he muttered a sort of an apology and rode away, but not in the direction from which I had come.

During one of the frequent halts for a brief rest I saw the flags of Turchin go over the works along the crest and heard the cheers of my comrades. Off to the south other flags were going over the Confederate works and, "presto change".

IN THE HOSPITAL

The thunder of the enemys guns ceased. A military band on Orchard Knob struck up. "Our flag is there" I raised my hat to those boys of the army of the Cumberland and did my best to cheer them, but my voice would'nt go off. Within a short time after witnessing the defeat of Braggs army, I found a surgeon of Woods division, who gave me a place in one of his ambulances in which I was taken to Bairds division hospital in Chattanooga.

In The Hospital

In the hurry and excitement, I neglected to get the name of the surgeon who ordered one of his drivers to take me to Bairds division hospital, which was a mile out of his route. Perhaps it was my youth and the nature of the wound that appealed to his sympathy.

Dr. Arter, formerly surgeon of the 31st recognized me and promised early attention, but they were brought in by scores and it was near midnight before I got any attention.

Many were so severely wounded that I really thought I was fortunate in having the use of my hands and feet. One poor fellow asked the men who carried him in, to place him in a sitting posture against the wall. He was deathly pale, and I soon found that it required both hands to keep his bowels from falling out through a ghastly wound in the abdomen. He was still there when I finally went to sleep. I was awake at day-break. The room was crowded full with the wounded, but the Soldier holding both hands against his poor battered body, was not

ONE INCIDENT—ANTIC'S OF SHOT AND SHELL
there. His dust, no doubt, reposes in the beautiful National Cemetery at Chattanooga. After breakfast I went out toward an alley, back of the building used for the hospital, and opened the door of a small out building and was about to step inside, when I saw a pile of arms, legs, hands, feet, fingers and toes, which caused me to shut the door and hurry on my way.

One incident

On the crest of the ridge, comrade Uriah Cahill helped a wounded officer from his horse. The officer stated that he was chief of ordinance on General Grants staff, and requested Cahill and another comrade to assist him to an ambulance.

While assisting the wounded officer, a General, commanding a division in the assaulting column, met the party and ordered Cahill and his companion to leave the wounded man and join their commands at once. The officer told the boys that they must obey the order and leave him, which they were compelled to do, by the orders of a general officer who seemed to lack any feeling of compassion for those in distress.

Curious Antic's of Shot and Shell

Among the many wounded in the division hospital at Chattanooga, was Cyrus Carter of the 31st. The ball went through the lower lip and smashed all the lower teeth on that side, passing out without serious injury to

THE ATLANTA CAMPAIGN

the jaw bone.

During the same battle a ball, which had about spent its force, struck David McIlroy on the leather shoulder belt of his cartridge box, then bounced into a tin cup which was fastened on the belt strap of the man next in line.

In July 1864, while on guard at regimental headquarters, Mike Blue was wounded in the wrist by a ball which was really a "A stray ball." No enemy was within less than a mile of where Blue was on guard, and there was not a single shot heard at the time. yet he was wounded by a ball coming from the direction of the enemy. We were not superstitious. but the affair seemed to be spooky and uncanny.

The Atlanta Campaign

The story of Shermans Atlanta campaign has been written by abler pens than mine, but the scenes witnessed by the Blue and Gray on the skirmish lines during that campaign will, to a great extent, remain forever as a part of the unwritten history of the war of the rebellion. The skirmish pits, were sometimes known as "gopher holes" a name given them by the western troops, and were of the greatest importance. When the line of skirmishers were advanced close to those of the enemy, axes, picks and shovels were brought up and while some of the men kept the enemy down, the others were digging pits, eight or ten feet long, throwing the dirt outward towards the en-

THE ATLANTIC CAMPAIGN

emy. Each pit would hold three or four soldiers and were made at intervals of a few rods, with the ends turned slightly to the rear for protection against an enfilading fire of the enemy. A twenty-four hour service in a skirmish pit located in the open country with no shade to protect one from the July and August sun was an experience not to be forgotten.

The writer remembers such an experience while Sherman was pounding away at Kenesaw mountain. We were ordered to keep up a regular fire from the skirmish pits. During the day I shot away seventy-five rounds and cleaned my gun several times. Once during the day the three of us in our pit ignored the shots from the enemy's skirmishers and fired at a group of men on the side of Kenesaw who appeared to be viewing our lines. After several shots had failed to move the group, John D. Mather declared that 2000 yards was about the proper distance. Our gun sights were not marked that high, so we raised our guns to what we supposed was the proper elevation to carry a ball that distance. The group of Confederates soon dispersed, but whether our shots was the cause of it, it is a question which I cannot answer.

About noon the heat was intense, and the canteens were empty. By running about forty paces to the right, we could have a safe trip the remainder of the way to the stream where we filled our canteens. Somehow, I got a foolish notion that I would show those comrades that I was not afraid of rebels bullets, so I got out of the pit and deliberately walked back sixty or seventy yards before reaching any protection from the bullets of the enemy, who improved the chance to send a fusilade of shots after me. Strange enough, not a shot touched me, but I then and there promised that never again would I make myself a fit subject for the "fool killer" by such silly conduct.

CAPTAIN JAMES A. CAHILL

A line of skirmish pits at intervals of twenty yards, with four nery fellows in each pit, could be held easily against a charging party of thrice that number advancing over open ground. Through the months of July and August, 1864, the writer was the only duty sergeant of Company F subject to detail for duty on the skirmish line, and therefore can write from actual experience. The reader should bear in mind that the skirmishers of an army have nothing but the atmosphere between them and the enemy; then you can imagine something about the close work required in advancing from one position to another for a distance of more than 100 miles, and finding the enemy every time in a fortified position of his own choosing; and the reader must remember, too, that all of this was accomplished in about 100 days.

Captain James. A. Cahill.

James A. Cahill commanded Company F on the Atlanta Campaign, and was killed near Kenesaw mountain. June 23, 1864. His brother Uriah, now of Richwood, Ohio, started to take the body back to Ohio. Before he reached Chattanooga he found it would be impossible to get the body of the Captain back to Ohio for burial, and securing some rough boards, Uriah made a coffin and the body was laid away in the National cemetery at Chattanooga, Tenn.

From an article by the writer, and published in the Marysville Times in the year 1887, under the title of "Our Captain," I quote the following:

"Captain Cahill, was a grand example of the natural American soldier. He become a soldier because he was a citizen. While he was prompt to enforce the orders of his superiors, he never lost sight of the fact that private soldiers have rights which Officers are bound to respect. He did not hesitate to punish the guilty, nor was he slow to reward the

THE BLUE AND THE GRAY

worthy.

“Captain Cahill commanded the respect of those above him in rank, but he was no cringing follower of his superior officers. If being equal to every emergency constituted a hero, then truly our Captain was a hero. But it was not for him to pass through that ordeal unscathed. One morning, only a few days before the stars and bars on Kenesaw gave place to the stars and stripes, his lifeless body was carried back, and Company F was without a Captain. They shot him down as a boy would shoot a bird. All day long the sound of the rattling volleys of our skirmishers would die away for a few moments, only to break out again with a fury that showed fierceness of the conflict. Occasionally a motionless form on a stretcher was carried to the rear. In the midst of our unspoken sorrow, a strange officer came to take the place of our dead Captain. We said nothing, but, Oh, how we despised those men in gray, across that open space, in the shadow of Kenesaw, the men who had killed our Captain.

“That night, as we lay on the ground with the sky for our roof, we tried to reason why the sacrifice of such men as Captain Cahill was permitted, and wondered if the coming years had in reserve a sufficient punishment for the misguided men whose action made necessary the lonely graves which marked the pathway of Sherman’s Army.”

The Blue and the Gray.

When the Confederates crossed the Chattahoochie river, our men were close after their rear guard and captured the pontoon bridge, which the enemy had not time to take up. The bridge was fastened to trees on our side, and the enemy would fell large trees into the river above our position. Sometimes the current carried one of the floating trees against the

A BAND CONCERT

bridge, but the ropes were strong and we held on to the bridge. The skirmishers of both armies were separated by the river, which at that point was not very wide. The blue and gray were on good terms and agreed on a certain signal, if orders were given to renew hostilities. Once while changing sentinels about midnight, to convince a sleepy comrade that it was his turn for duty, the writer lighted a match to see his watch. Just then a floating tree struck the wooden pontoon at the upper end of the bridge, making a loud report, followed by a volley from the boys in gray across the river. Only one of our boys lost his nerve and fired back. The Johnnies soon ceased firing and one of them inquired, "What are you all up to?" We protested against them raising a disturbance at that hour of the night, but they insisted that "You all were doing something with the pontoon bridge."

A Band Concert.

While occupying the same position on the Chattahoochie river, the officer in command of the Confederate outposts requested the officer in charge of our line to ask our brigade band, which we could hear as they played every evening, to come down to the river. The band responded and was accompanied by a number of officers and soldiers. It was the old regimental band of the 19th Illinois Infantry, which General Turchin had retained for his brigade band. They were a good bunch of musicians. I recall that scene. A band of musicians in their blue uniforms, standing out on the captured pontoon bridge, playing to an audience on each side of the river—on one side the blue, on the other side the gray. We cheered "The Red, White and Blue," and other old national airs. They yelled when the band struck up "Dixie" and "The Bonnie Blue Flag." Both sides applauded "Annie Laurie" and "The Campbells are Coming," but no demonstration fol-

IN FRONT OF A CONFEDERATE BATTERY

lowed "Home, Sweet Home," which closed the concert.

I have read of similar musical entertainments, said to have occurred during the civil war, and once heard a public speaker relate just about such an incident, which he said took place on the banks of the Rhappahannoek in the East. However similar to other incidents of the war this may be, I can vouch for the truth of the foregoing incident as being correct in every detail, as I now remember it.

The officer in gray thanked the musicians, then got into an argument with some of our officers about the issues of the war.

That night, "Billy" Williams, Jerome Oatley and the writer entertained the men in gray until our entire stock of war songs and home songs were used up. "Yanks, that's all right, give us another," was the frequent call from the other side of the river. We finally gave them "John Brown," including the verse "We'll Hang Jeff Davis to a Sour Apple Tree." That song went without any demonstration of approval from the men in gray.

In Front of a Confederate Battery Near Big Shanty Georgia.

The morning of June 18, 1864, our line was annoyed by a battery which had got us so nearly located that a fuse shell would sometimes burst directly over us. Fifty men of the 31st were called for. The ten from Company F volunteered and the writer was one of that number. The ground was soaked by a heavy rain which was still falling. We were deployed in heavy skirmish line and worked our way over a plowed field until we reached the crest of a slight elevation running almost parallel with and about two hundred yards in front of the field works of the enemy. Our boys fired from the higher ground and crawled back a few yards and reloaded.

CORPS BADGES

Each group of eight or ten were instructed to aim at the field gun in their immediate front. [The rebel guns were protected by field works made of log cribs filled with earth.] The first shots from the battery struck the ground in our front and bouncing up passed over us without injury to the skirmishers, excepting an occasional mud bath. However, we lost several men during the day and night.

Within a half hour after commencing operations against that battery we had every gun silenced for the rest of that day. We could detect any movement of the rebel gunners by watching the small opening through which the cannon was fired, and, like the fellow in the riot, "When we saw a head we went for it."

Our heavy line of skirmishers were in full control of the enemy's position in our front. The Confederate infantry could do us very little harm, a single head shown above their works would draw a volley of shots from our side. We wallowed in the Georgia mud till we were plastered from head to feet. I doubt if any fifty men of Sherman's army got better results from a single day's work during the Atlanta campaign.

The sorrowful part to record is the death of the brave boys who went down on that line. Among the dead was John Smith of Company F, a Richwood boy; he was a splendid boy and a good soldier.

Corps Badges.

The Acorn was the badge of the 14th Army Corps, a different color for each division. The 1st division was red, the 2nd white and the 3rd blue. [Note the blue acorn on title page of this book.] The 20th Corps badge was a five pointed star.

The following story passed along the line while the army was pounding away at the city of Atlanta: For several days the skirmishers of the 14th Corps had kept up friendly rela-

CORPS BADGES

tions with the outposts of the enemy. One night the Union line was moved some distance to the right, leaving the skirmishers of the 20th Corps on a part of the line recently held by the 14th Corps. Early next morning a Confederate called out, "Say, Yanks, I reckon we will go over your way this morning and gather a few acorns." Back went this reply from the soldier of the 20th Corps: "Say, Johnnie, if you come over here for acorns today, you will see stars, sure as——."

Captain G. W. Pepper in his "Personal Recollections," relates the following "badge" incident: "An Irish soldier of the 15th Corps came by the headquarters of General Butterfield at Chattanooga. He was a tired and weather-beaten straggler, one of those who made Sherman's March from Memphis to Chattanooga, thence to Knoxville, and was now returning in the cold of that march from Knoxville to Chattanooga. He was thinly clad, one foot covered with a piece of rawhide bound with strings about a sockless foot. "Arms at will," he trudged past the headquarters guard intent only on overtaking his regiment.

"Halt," said a sentinel with a bright gun, clean uniform and white gloves.

"What do you belong to?"

"Eighth 'Misshory,' sure."

"What division?"

"Morgan L. Smith's, av coorse."

"What brigade?"

"Giles Smith's, second brigade of the second division."

"But what army Corps?"

"The Fifteenth, you bloody fool, I am one of the heroes of Vicksburg. Any thing more, Mr. Sentinel?"

"Where is your badge?"

CAPTURING THE JOHNNIES

"My badge is it, what is that?"

"Do you see this star on my cap? That is the badge of the 12th Corps. That crescent on my partner's cap is the badge of the 11th Corps."

"I see, now. That's how yez Potomick fellers git home ov dark nights. Ye takes the moon and stars with ye."

"But what is the badge of your corps?"

Slapping his cartridge box the soldier replied:

"D'ye see that? A cartridge box, with a U. S. on a brass plate and forty rounds in it, and sixty rounds in our pockets; that's the badge of the 15th Corps that came from Vicksburg to help ye fight Chattanooga."

It is said that when Logan heard of this incident, he adopted the cartridge box, with the inscription "Forty Rounds" as the badge of the 15th Corps, [Note—The 11th and 12th Corps were consolidated and formed the 20th Corps which served in Sherman's army until the end of the Civil war.]

Capturing the Johnnies.

It was August 5, 1864, according to an entry made that day, that four companies of the 31st deployed in front of the works, then advanced to our skirmishers who were within close gunshot of the enemy's skirmish pits. Fortunately for us, on the right of the line we were protected by woods with a growth of underbrush. According to instructions, at the sound of the bugle we made a dash for the enemy's skirmishers, who had fired one volley and were about ready to give us the second round when we stood over them. "We surrender, Yanks," and dropping their guns, the Johnnies were bunched together and taken back to brigade headquarters. The four companies had captured sixty Confederates, with a loss to us of seven; one killed and six wounded. This I get from the reports. My personal knowledge of the affair was only what

CAPTURING THE JOHNNIES

I saw. The intrenching tools were brought forward and it was only a few minutes work to change the pits so they faced the intrenchments of the enemy. From our new position to the main line of the enemy the timber land was more open, and we could see something and hear more of the commotion caused by the loss of their skirmishers and the loss of the ground which we now held.

One of our squad picked up a ramrod belonging to the guns just captured, and found it was easily broken, like pot-metal. We fired a number of those short pieces of iron at the head logs on the enemy's works. Those pieces of ramrod could be heard singing through the air, and they doubtless left the Johnnies guessing as to what sort of ammunition we were using that day. But our target practice was cut short by a battery of the enemy, which cut loose for almost a half hour, shooting large limbs from the trees, and one shot, striking the fresh earth bank of our pit, half buried four of us. We kept our places in the pit, preferring to be covered with earth, rather than expose our bodies to that storm of shot and shell. I have sometimes thought it might have been the same battery I helped to put out of business, back at Big Shanty. However that may be, I can imagine the grim satisfaction of the gunners as they sent in shot after shot which almost buried the Yankees in the skirmish pits. Although no attempt was made by the enemy to regain their lost ground at that point, we braced ourselves for the charge of infantry which we expected would follow the fierce cannonade. Resuming our target practice, we kept them behind their works and held the position till evening, when other troops took our places.

This was one of the many nerve-testing days of the Atlanta campaign. Imagine, if you can, our first movement in the

CROSSING THE CHATTAHOOCHEE.

morning—stealthily working our line up to the outposts, then the suspense of waiting for the bugles to sound “forward;” the rush and the capture of almost every Confederate skirmisher on their line; the call for intrenching tools, when moments of delay seemed hours; the hustling to shovel the dirt and change the pits; the terrific thunder of the cannon, while shot and shell swept the ground; then, going higher, shot off great limbs, which fell over our place of shelter; the suspense, again, while waiting the charge, which we were sure would follow the cannonade, and the last hours of constant firing from our position, and the eternal vigilance to prevent the enemy from making a move to assault our hard earned position. All this in a few hours, was a test of courage and endurance which pen cannot portray. Yet this was the work of only one little detachment of soldiers on a battle line eight miles in length, and was what we did in the hours of sunshine of ONE day.

Dear reader, do not think it strange that so many Civil war veterans are old, broken down men at the age of 60, when men should be but little past the prime of manhood.

Crossing the Chattahoochee.

It was not the intention of the writer to record these incidents in the order of their occurrence. The preceding chapter gives an account of one day during the investment of the city of Atlanta. The reader will pardon me if I go back almost a month. It was about the 17th of July, 1864, and a few days after the “band concert,” that we were on outpost duty at the river, and noticed an unusual commotion among the boys in gray on the other side. They were packing up their cooking utensils and camp equipage and hastily forming in line. On our side everybody seemed to take notice, and

ALONG PEACH TREE CREEK.

one of our fellows inquired the cause of their hurried movements. A Confederate replied: "Oh, nothin'," only you all are coming down the river on our side." and our foes marched rapidly back from the river. A few minutes later some one called attention to something up the river. Imagine our surprise when looking to the left we saw a heavy skirmish line of blue coming down the south side of the Chattahoochee, at quick time and with their guns at "trail arms." Not a shot was heard from the retreating Johnnies, or from the advancing Yankees. It was a new phase of war, and we, who had been so chummy with the Alabama boys, almost regreted their sudden departure. They were jolly good fellows and we had carried on quite a business in trading coffee for tobacco, and some of our boys had swapped pocket knives with them.

The point for the exchange of goods was a rock near the middle of the stream. One morning a Confederate came across and ate breakfast with members of Company F, after which he returned to his own side of the river. The temporary truce on the skirmish lines was a matter which was arranged by the enlisted men of both sides. Our officers never objected to such a compact with the enemy, and the Confederate officers seldom interfered. It seems to me, now, that it was a sensible plan and doubtless saved many lives, and did not injure the cause for which we were fighting, namely: to crush the Southern rebellion and restore the Union.

Along Peach Tree Creek.

About the 20th of July, 1864, Companies F and K were deployed as skirmishers and advanced to locate the position to which the enemy had retired the previous night. I remember the instructions given to us just before the signal "forward" was heard. It was to keep well in line, "guide centre"

ALONG PEACH TREE CREEK.

go slow until the enemy was sighted, then quietly signal "halt" to the next man on the right and left who were to pass the signal on, giving time for all to get shelter as best they could before a shot was fired at the enemy. Advancing a half mile, the bush undergrowth was not so dense and I saw, within gunshot, a bank of fresh Georgia earth. Signaling right and left as instructed, I dropped behind a small tree from from where I saw four Confederates near the bank of earth playing cards. Off to the left some boy in our line discovered another bunch of Johnnies near a skirmish pit and forgetting instructions, blazed away at them. In a twinkling there was something doing. A little cloud of dust arose as the Johnnies tumbled into the skirmish pit in our front, and a number of musket balls went "pinging" by my tree. We fired at every gray hat shown above the bank of earth. We could keep our four Confederates from doing much harm, but some Johnnies farther to the left got range of my little tree which afforded about eight inches of protection from the front.

How I wished for one of the big trees, such as we had chopped down for coon up in Union county, Ohio. Those Georgia trees were mere saplings, and the longer I stood behind that one the smaller it seemed to get. We were sure that we had located the Johnnies, but they had also located me; that was evident from the shots coming in "sideways." It is said that Gen. Gordon once accosted a Tennessee soldier who was running to the rear and the soldier stopped long enough to say, "I tell you, General, that's no fit-ten place to be, up thar whar they are shootin.'" So, I also thought, as I edged up against that miserable excuse for a tree. Sam Merritt was mortally wounded and Elijah Lister was shot through the arm. Company K lost three men.

All this occurred in less time than I have taken to write it.

MOVING UP TO ATLANTA.

Intrenching tools were sent forward and we established another of the many lines of skirmish pits of the Atlanta campaign, and our brigade built a line of field works in the rear of our position.

Moving Up to Atlanta.

On the 22nd day of July, 1864, we advanced within cannon shot of Atlanta and began intrenching. A battery of heavy guns near us fired shells into the Confederate lines with a regularity that must have been very trying on the nerves of our enemies. The enemy had some heavy guns, too. Huge shells came over into our lines, causing the headquarters people and teamsters to hustle around pretty lively. The enemy formed in two or three lines in front of their works.

We could see the mounted officers and hear the cheers of the rebel troops, which, no doubt, was in response to General Hood's bombastic orders issued to his army about that time. The enemy then moved toward the division on our left, while all their artillery on that side of the city opened on our lines. Long before they came within musket range, our artillery fire began to have its effect on their charging column, which seemed to lose its aggressive force, then went to pieces and drifted back toward Atlanta, battered and beaten. No doubt, this demonstration was made to help Hood's right wing, which was then engaged in a desperate struggle with McPherson's two corps, some five or six miles to our left. Hood was defeated, but the army of the Tennessee lost their commander.

A Plucky German.

In one of the scraps during the siege of Atlanta, a German belonging to the regular brigade was wounded and lay for two

A PLUCKY GERMAN—ARTILLERY DUELS.

days and nights between the lines. A heavy rain fell during the second night, and the soldier made out to crawl back to our side. I was present when the surgeon dressed the wounds. The soldier was first shot in the cheek and, while laying on his face, a ball cut a furrow down his shoulder and missing his waist, had ploughed through the flesh of the hip. On both shoulder and hip the wound had opened to a width of two or three inches, and the rain of the previous night had colored the raw flesh so it resembled old beefsteak, flecked with fly blows. He was stripped of his clothing and seated on a camp stool. The poor fellow had evidently kept the flies away from the wounds in his face, but the pests had done their work on his shoulders and hip. It was enough to cause even an old veteran to feel "creepy" to watch the worms wiggle out and drop to the ground as the surgeon drenched the wounds with some kind of a solution. The Dutchman must have suffered, but he stood the ordeal bravely, and caused some merriment by his inquiry: "Doc, are you gitten dem all oud?"

Artillery Duels.

During the stirring days of the summer of 1864, when the field guns of Sherman's army would send a shot at a battery of the enemy or when the other side fired the shot announcing the challenge for a test of accurate firing, there was a sort of pride among us infantry fellows in the battery engaged on our side. On one of the lines of rifle pits we built near the Sandtown road a battery was posted about two hundred yards to the left of our regiment. I think it was Battery I, Second Illinois Light Artillery. Almost every day we witnessed a duel between the Illinois boys and a Confederate battery in their front, which was a good one, too. From their

ARTILLERY DUELS.

positions, both sides had a fair range. Sometimes our boys would stand on the rifle pits and watch the effect of the shots from the Illinois battery. More than once we saw shells burst among the Confederate gunners and occasionally one of their shells exploded near the guns of the Illinois boys. One day a puff of smoke, from the battery across the field, shot out straight toward our regiment. One of our soldiers yelled, "Down," and down we went into the trench just in time to hear the s-w-i-s-h of the shell, which barely missed the "headlog" of our rifle pits and exploded a hundred feet in our rear. Our sudden change of position was fun for the Johnnies, who gave us the rebel yell. Another day, when the men across the way were directing their shots at our regiment, a shot hit the ground in our front and, bounding up, passed over us into the captain's tent, destroying the ledger containing the clothing account of every member of Company F. I believe we were on same line and were eating dinner one day when that mischievous battery opened up for business.

"Dick" Eastman moved his coffee pot, frying pan and entire outfit into the trench, remarking: Now, let 'em shoot their cannon." Before Dick finished his dinner, a shot struck the end of the head-log and as it went down it carried about one half a cubic yard of loose earth into the trench.

We thought Dick was a gonner, but a moment later he came out covered with Georgia soil and minus a coffee pot and frying pan. He was greeted with such a shout of laughter, and Dick was so thoroughly disgusted with the whole affair that he did not even smile as he brushed the soil from his whiskers. It was a busy time, indeed, when the boys failed to see something funny.

Letters from Home.

Those August days when we were fighting for Atlanta were

LETTERS FROM HOME—SWAPPING.

not all bright days. The path of Sherman from Ringgold to Atlanta and Jonesboro was marked with graves of our comrades, some of whom were schoolboys with the writer up in Ohio, "Gods country," as the boys reverently named the North.

We had not received a penny of our pay since we re-enlisted as veterans, almost eight months before. But the mail from "Gods country," came to us away down in that war scourged state. The letters from home were laden with parental solicitude for the boy who was fighting the battles of his country. How we prized those messages of love, which seldom omitted the kindly admonition: "Be brave, obey your officers, be true to your country and may God bless and keep you." I believe that the soldier who had no home people to write letters of affection and encouragement to him in the sixties, and who still did his duty as a faithful soldier deserves more praise than he who was thus favored. But fathers, mothers and children were not the only persons who wrote letters to the boys. Almost every soldier who could sign his name could boast of a lady correspondent some place up North, and if closely watched, would often be caught looking at a tintype picture carried in the inside pocket of the blue blouse and inspected only on rare occasions when the soldier was alone. Those noble, loyal girls in the North were important factors in that war for the Union.

Swapping.

Some may marvel that so much space in this little book is devoted to the writer's experience on the skirmish line. I have passed without mention the heavy battles of Resaca, Kenesaw Mountain and others of less note, because the reader can pick up any reliable history of that war and find a detailed account of those engagements. Further than a few

SWAPPING.

incidents said to have occurred on the skirmish lines in front of our armies, I never read much about the men who stood next to the enemy day and night, in sunshine and storm. Official reports and newspaper accounts of the Atlanta campaign scarcely mention the boys out in front of the battle lines. The fact that officers of high rank and press correspondents very seldom visited the boys out in front, fully explains the cause of said omission. Once, during the siege of Atlanta, General A. Baird, our division commander, came out on the line where the writer was stationed. We of the rank and file had arranged a temporary truce for that day.

Our line officers on duty were glad enough to have a cessation of hostilities for a few hours. The blue and the gray were mixing up between the lines. One group of four, two Yanks and two Johnnies, were playing a game of cards. Others were swapping coffee for tobacco. One-fourth of our number were between the lines, visiting and trading with the Johnnies. Not a man came to attention nor offered the military salute as the general approached the skirmish line. Here I will state that general Baird was very popular among the soldiers. He had the confidence and respect of his men, but those were not the days of "dress parade." Almost every day of that campaign the men on our skirmish lines witnessed acts of cool bravery, which would have won a medal of honor and honorable mention by the president of the United States if the same had been brought to the notice of Mr. Lincoln; hence our general had a profound respect for the boys on duty along the front of the army.

Making some inquiry of the officer commanding our part of the line, general Baird seemed pleased with conditions and, after talking further with the officer, returned to the main line.

SWAPPING—A DEAD BUSHWHACKER.

Our commanding officer gave orders to commence firing on the enemy at the sound of the bugle. Meanwhile the conference between the lines went on. Yanks and Johnnies were discussing the war, and our boys were trading coffee, pepper and salt for tobacco or any old thing the Johnnies had to trade. When the clear notes of the bugle, back on the battle line, sounded "commence firing," and one of our men shouted, "Hunt your holes, Johnnies," there was fun for about two minutes. No doubt several important business transactions stopped then and there, as the blue and gray instantly separated and made frantic efforts to reach their respective "gopher holes" before actual hostilities should begin. In obedience to orders, as soon as the last Johnnie had vanished we opened a brisk fire from our line, to which they responded with a vim that proved they were still in the fight. The firing on our side began to slacken and the other side began to slow up. A Confederate called out, "Is that all, Yanks?" Being assured that was all, they took our word for it and within a few minutes the men of both sides were again walking about, without arms, as though nothing had occurred to interrupt our friendly relations.

In connection with the above incident, I give a few lines of "A Veteran's Address to Father Time," written in 1888 by Sergeant Harry Alspaugh of Company H, 31st Ohio. Comrade Alspaugh died a year later at Rock Rapids, Iowa.

"Father Time, give us a glimpse of the muskets and sabers,

With the shot and the shell and the boys in the gray,
With whom we oft' swapped while on picket, like neighbors,
Then shot at each other like demons next day."

A Dead Bushwhacker.

Horace S. Colver a member of Co. F was on duty at brig-

A DEAD BUSHWHACKER.

ade headquarter, during the Atlanta campaign, and is authority for the following: While Sherman's army was pounding away at the Gate City of the South, in August 1864, a few wagons, under a strong guard, were sent by the brigade quartermaster, to bring in green corn, which was then in hard roasting ear. Colver was one of the train guards. Some miles out, they crossed a small stream beyond which was a field of corn. Before the wagons were loaded with snapped corn, a storm came up and the rain fell until the little creek was out of its banks. The stream was too deep to think of crossing with the loaded wagons until the waters went down. The officer-commanding the guard called for a soldier to swim the stream and carry a message back to the commander. Colver was the only one to volunteer. He was among the best long distance swimmers in the regiment. Wrapping his clothing around his gun and accoutrements and securing the bundle on the back of his head he reached the opposite shore some distance down stream. Hastily dressing he trudged along barefooted under the August sun, which with the sharp sand was too much for his barefeet. On a seat in front of a cabin at the roadside was an old woman. Colver spoke to her, and seating himself near the old lady, began to wring his stockings and ask questions. The aged Georgian was evidently suspicious until Colver gave her a handfull of unground coffee. The coffee acted like magic, she seemed to know that Yankee soldiers were the only persons at that time who carried genuine coffee. Her story was a thrilling one as she answered the numerous questions of the Yankee soldier. Two small boys were hanging around trying to size up the stranger who carried genuine coffee, and each of the lads were presented with a handfull of the luxury. The boys were her grandchildren, and the family was known among their neighbors

A DEAD BUSHWHACKER.

as being opposed to secession, and for the Union. The husband and son, the later was the father of the two boys, had "hid out" to avoid the Confederate conscripting officers.

One day her husband took his ax and his shot gun to a "clearing" which she pointed out to her soldier visitor, who was now all attention. During the forenoon she heard the report of a gun from that direction and hastening to the clearing, she found her husband dead. Some time after the death of the father, her son went as usual to the spring for water. The mother heard a shot fired and running to the spring found her boy had been shot down. "I raised him up a little, and he died with his head in my lap," said the mother. "Who killed your husband and son, or do you know?" asked Colver. "Yes, indeed, I know." "Was he a rebel soldier?" "No, sir, it was Abe Gilman a low down coward and bushwhacker; I saw him skulking through the brush when I found my dead husband." "Do you know where he is now?" The older lad, said, "Yes, grandma, I seen Abe up at the corners, 'tother day." The woman's bony hand pointed at the boy, and her sunken eyes almost snapped fire, as she hissed: "Kill him the first chance you get." The boy had brought out a shot-gun of ancient pattern, that he was cleaning. He told Colver they could not get powder, and asked about the amunition the Yankees used. To please the boys Colver gave them a few cartridges, showing them how the ball could be detached from the paper holding the powder. The older lad emptied the powder of a Springfield cartridge into the barrel of the old gun, and Colver warned them against loading too heavy.

Giving the woman the rest of his coffee, he was about to move on when the woman asked which way he was going. He said back to the line in front of Atlanta. "If Abe sees you, he will kill you sure; the boys seen him not long ago; you

A DEAD BUSHWHACKER.

better look out." With her words of warning in mind he kept a sharp lookout. The sand hurt his feet, and remembering the old lady's warning, he left the traveled road and going into a brushy growth of timber, from where he could see the road, put his shoes and stockings on. From his place of concealment he saw a man step into the road from the timber on the opposite side, about one hundred yards from the point where Colver left the road. The man was in citizen's dress and carried a shot gun, and was watching the place where Colver had struck out into the timber. The later, placing a fresh cap on his Springfield and passing through the brush stepped into the road, and leveling his musket at the man ordered him to throw down his gun. The fellow dropped his shotgun and was still looking into the muzzle of Colver's gun when the sharp report of a gun close by led him to believe that he was fired at by a companion of the stranger. For an instant he was dazed, then he saw the man lying dead in the road, and the two boys to whom Colver had given the cartridges came out of the woods repeating, "We got him, we got him." "Who is he?" asked Colver. "Abe Gilman," said the older boy, "the low down pup that shot pap and grandpap."

The older boy put a load into the old shot gun and fired it into the body of the bushwacker. The younger boy run home to tell the news of Abe's death. After drawing the loads from the dead man's gun, which was a modern double barrel shot gun, Colver presented it to the lad who was so delighted that he seemed to forget the wretch he had sent into eternity only a few moments before. Meantime the other boy who had carried the news to the cabin at the road side, returned with his grandmother and a woman much younger, who proved to be the mother of the two boys, but had not made her appearance while Colver was resting at the house. The sight

A DEAD BUSHWHACKER—THE DEAD LINE.

of the dead bushwhacker seemed to enrage both women beyond description. They stood over his ghastly corpse cursing him as the cowardly brute who had murdered their husbands, the father and son, and by his acts both were left widows with two fatherless boys. To Colver's inquiry as to what should be done with the body, the old lady said they would drag it away from the road, pile brush and logs on it and set fire to the pile.

Young Colver delivered the message at headquarters, and the wagons came in the following day. Mr. Colver is no longer a young man, but he has not forgotten the tragic death of the Georgia bushwacker who, doubtless, was laying in wait for the Yankee soldier, when the latter left the road to put his shoes on, and had he not chanced to visit that humble home perhaps "Abe" would have lived to relate how he got the drop onto one of Sherman's men, and the military record of Horace S. Colver would read something like this: "Reported missing in front of Atlanta, Ga., August, 1864. No further record found."

The Dead Line.

Just before dark on the evening of August 7, 1864, our regiment formed outside of the works and advanced, making a right half wheel, until the left of the regiment joined the right of the regular brigade, which had advanced during the afternoon. We built rifle pits within a hundred yards of the enemy's skirmish line. At 10 o'clock that night the Confederates advanced and for a half hour it was hot work, and the firing was kept up all night. I did not see a Johnnie, but kept busy shooting at the flashes of their guns. That night and during the following days that we held that position we lost many of our boys, and it was known ever afterwards as

THE DEAD LINE.

the "dead line."

The night of August 7, was a trying ordeal for the 31st. To me there was terror in the sound of a 54-caliber rifle ball fired from a point two or three hundred feet away, as it passed my head, but it was fierce to hear one as it struck the quivering flesh of a comrade. When morning came we were partly protected by earthwork, but we lost about twenty men killed and wounded. Sergeants Talbot, of Co. G, and Mc-Broom, of Co. B, were among the killed, and Capt Barber severely wounded. "Billy" Williams was standing in the trench, near the writer, when a ball struck his head. Billy was the leading tenor of our quartet. I helped to carry his body to a knoll in the rear of the main line, where we found a number of newly made graves. We prepared the grave, wrapped the body in his own blanket and laid him away to rest. You may think it was a rough burial, but we did the very best we could do. There was no time for ceremony, nor for eulogy of the dead soldier. There was no farwell salute by a squad of soldiers. The sound of Confederate shells as they came over from the enemy was the only requiem sung at Billy's funeral. Sergeant H. N. Simmons of Co. F, with his pen-knife, carved the name, company, and regiment on a board taken from a cracker box. This board was placed at the grave.

A few days after the events just related, we were again on the "dead line" and found a stream of water in a ravine between the lines. By mutual agreement the soldiers on both sides filled their camp kettles and canteens at this running stream. In the Confederate ranks were soldiers who at heart were "Union men," and had been forced to enlist in the rebel army. During the days last mentioned our boys induced six or seven of the men they had met at the stream to quit the

TO JONESBORO.

stars and bars and come inside our lines under the old flag. The following days no Confederates came to that ravine for water.

To Jonesboro.

About the time Sherman was preparing to "silently fold his tents and steal away" to Jonesboro, a funny incident was related by Sergeant Harry Alspaugh, of Co. H, who was on the skirmish line at the time of this occurrence:

"It was near midnight and our friends in gray were changing outpost sentinels every two hours. Neither side had fired a shot all day, although the troops on our right and left kept up a regular fusilade. A Confederate corporal and his relief guard missed their bearings and were coming close to our line. One of our boys" called out:

"Halt! Who comes there?"

Promptly came the answer in Southern accents:

"Cohporal of the relief gueard."

"Go back and relieve your own men; we are Ohio troops."

The astonished corporal muttered something about getting into the Yankee lines, and hustled his "gueard" back to their own lines."

Before daybreak, about August 27, we left our trenches and marched back to a wagon road which was filled with marching soldiers. Here we waited the passing of the troops, and we of the ranks and file realized that it was a new move of Sherman's to get Hood out of Atlanta. "Silence" was the order. I recall the suspense of waiting, and in spite of orders, there was a distinct hum of conversation along the marching column. I thought of the rebel battery in front of the trenches we had just left, and was trying hard to not think about the effect of a few shells from that battery thrown into the mass

TO JONESBORO—BACK TO ALABAMA.

of soldiers grouped along the road. But the enemy, it appears, did not suspect any such a move and we felt a sense of relief when we got our place in the marching column. While on the march to Jonesboro the story got out about Sherman warning the officers that the soldiers should not be permitted to pay such high prices for chickens. We lived well on the stuff that came in our way. The last night of August our brigade got to the Macon railroad and made rifle pits in the form of a square, and destroyed the track for some distance. No more trains went south from Atlanta over that part of the Macon railroad until the close of the war. The position we held that night was known as "the bull pen."

On the afternoon of September 1, the army assaulted and captured the enemy's intrenchments at Jonesboro.

It is said that a Dutchman of the 14th Ohio jumped into the rifle pit among the Confederates and, throwing aside his gun, began knocking them right and left with his fists, and shouting, "Mine Gott, I have no patience mit you." Our division lost heavily in this battle, which ended the great Atlanta campaign.

Back to Alabama

After enjoying a rest of almost a month in camp near Atlanta, the 14th army corps got into the chase after Hood, who was moving his army north. We were not far from Kenesaw mountain when Sherman signaled the famous message from Kenesaw to General Corse at Altoona: "Hold the fort, I am coming." We skirmished with Hood's rear guard through Snake Creek gap and across Taylor's ridge. The Confederates were short on rations as shown by the chewed stalks of sugar cane which littered their camps. Crossing the line into Alabama we passed through a rich country, which had so far es-

BACK TO ALABAMA—MARCHING THRO' GEORGIA
aped the ravages of war. Corn, sweet potatoes, fresh pork
and beef were our bill of fare.

At one plantation, three daughters mounted on three large
mules were lined up near the road, grimly watching the pass-
ing army of blue coats. The girls were not homely, and their
scheme worked all right. Sherman's men did not get papa's
three mules. Starting south again toward Atlanta we hoofed
it over the greater part of the route, the third time within
five months. There was nothing funny going on in our camp
the night we reached Kingston, Ga., in a drenching Novem-
ber rain, and could not find enough dry wood to start fires.

Marching Through Georgia.

The regiment held its election November, 1864. Every
soldier was absolutely free to vote the ticket of his choice
Abraham Lincoln received 205 votes and George B Mc-
Clellan 16 votes. McClellan was formerly the commander of
the Potomac army, but Lincoln was "Father Abraham," be-
loved and honored by the soldiers of the Union army. Gen-
eral Sherman's order, dated Nov. 9, 1864, describing the
order in which the army was to march from
Atlanta southward was read to the regiment, and I recall the
splendid spirit shown by the soldiers and how enthusiastic
we were. Although the order did not name the place of our
destination, we had such faith in Sherman, that we were sure
of success when our colors pointed south from Atlanta on the
16th day of November, 1864. After the last train went north
from Kingston and we began destroying the railroad on Nov-
ember 12, from the latter place to Atlanta, the humblest pri-
vate understood that the next letter to reach him would
travel by some route other than "via Chattanooga and
Atlanta."

MARCHING THROUGH GEORGIA.

Two days out from Atlanta, November 18th, we first heard through an old native of Georgia that Lincoln was elected president.

Passing through the little town of Covington, I remember a crippled Confederate soldier was among the few bystanders. One of the boys called to him, "Hello, pard; what regiment?" The soldier gave the number, "— Jawjay, sah," and gave us the military salute.

We became very proficient in the work of destroying railroad. The railroads of the south were, as a rule, in poor condition. The old fashioned slot, or chair, was used to connect the ends of the rails. The regiment, and oftimes the brigade, formed in line near the track and "stacked arms," and at a signal the men would seize the ends of the ties and turn the long line of rails and ties topsy turvy. Various plans were employed to draw the spikes. We had nothing but picks, shovels and axes, and these would not aid us in tearing up the track.

But the men always got the rails loose from the ties. Thirty or forty ties were piled up and a fire started. The rails were placed on the burning ties as one would balance a plank across a board fence for a see saw. When the rails became red hot the ends settled to the ground. When time would permit and forest trees were close by, two men at each end of the rail would carry it to a tree, and bend the middle of the rail around the tree, as you would bend wire around a fence post. I have seen green trees more than a foot in diameter half burned off by this girdling process.

In this connection I will record an experience of Uriah Cahill, a member of Co. F. Only a few years after the close of the war, Mr. Cahill was at Savannah, Ga. He did not think it worth while to tell the people there that he went with Sher-

MARCHING THROUGH GEORGIA.

man through Georgia. Boarding at the same hotel were a number of young men.

In their conversation one day a young man from central Georgia told of seeing many iron rails twisted around trees like ropes, and the railroad conductor said that was done by Sherman's men. The young man said it was a mystery to him as to how Sherman's men managed to coil iron rails around trees and the others could not explain the matter. Mr. Cahill could have given them the desired information, but he seemed to have no interest in the subject of their conversation.

One of the party whose home was in the path of Sherman's march, told of his mother sending him to the mill with a few bushels of corn.

He was driving the family horse, harnessed to a one-horse wagon, and felt secure because he was too young for conscripting officers to "press" into the military service. A force of Confederate cavalry was passing him when one of the soldiers dismounted from an old blind horse, remarking: "Here, boy, I want that hoss," and leaving the blind animal rode away on the family horse. He harnessed up the old horse and was driving toward the mill when he was overtaken by a company of Yankee cavalry and one of the number said, "Here, boy, I want that horse." The horse was unharnessed and taken away. The young man said, "I hung the harness on the fence and footed it back home." The other fellows laughed at the story, but it is a safe conclusion that the boy did not get much fun out of his experience with Wheeler's and Kitpatrick's troops at the time of the occurrence.

We passed through a beautiful country, and lived on the fat of the land. The guerillas, or bushwackers, murdered many of our men who were away from our line of march, foraging for supplies. Before reaching Milledgeville, hun-

MARCHING THROUGH GEORGIA.

dreds of negroes were flocking after us, on foot, in old wagons, in carts and in ancient family vehicles. Poor mortals, not one of them ever drew a disloyal breath. I seen wagons filled with negro women and children, their wooly heads showing up among feather beds and straw-ticks like so many black kittens in a rag basket. Many of the women walked, carrying their household goods.

"Where are you going, auntie?" we asked a portly woman with a huge bundle on her head. "I dunno." was the reply, "I'm just gwine along with you all." The simple faith of those black people in the soldiers who marched under the stars and stripes was really pathetic.

We saw many Confederate soldiers who were crippled for life, and in every instance, so far as I can remember, they were treated courteously.

One day a mounted orderly, belonging to headquarters, got off his horse and rushing into a shanty was looking for smoked bacon. A large vat of sorghum molasses, sunk in the ground, was covered with boards. He stepped on the boards which broke and the fellow went into molasses up to his hips. When dragged out he was a comical sight. His high top boots were full and running over, and his long overcoat was dripping a trail of molasses as he led his horse away.

We stopped at Milledgeville one day. Some officers of the 20th army corps organized a mock legislature in the state house. General J. S. Robinson, of Kenton, Ohio, was chosen speaker of the house. They had a high old time in the same hall which was so suddenly vacated the previous day by the Georgia lawmakers.

While marching through one town the boys went into the postoffice and inquired for their mail.

Foraging parties, commanded by officers detailed for that purpose, were mounted on captured horses and mules. Wag-

MARCHING THROUGH GEORGIA.

ons were with every regular foraging party, and they were loaded with meat, sweet potatoes and other food. The fat hogs were driven to the point where the troops camped for the night. From Covington to Milledgeville it was not unusual to see a few fat hogs and a wagon load of sweet potatoes left at the camp of the previous night. But the country beyond the Capitol City was less productive. Before we reached Savannah, we "Longed for the flesh pots of Egypt."

Baird's division was sent to the support of Kilpatrick, off toward Augusta. Again we passed through a good country and lived well. Our division marched through Waynesboro in support of the cavalry who had driven Wheeler's cavalry through the town. A woman was kneeling over the dead body of a Confederate cavalryman; perhaps it was her husband.

General Joe Wheeler has, in recent years, been rated as one of the ablest cavalry leaders of either side in the Civil war. From personal knowledge of some of his campaigns I should rate him in a class below such soldiers as Judson Kilpatrick. Wheeler seldom, if ever, boldly attacked an equal number of Union cavalry under a competent leader. His brilliant exploits were chiefly in rapid marches across a country of which every mile was familiar to many of his troopers, and in burning feebly guarded wagon trains and capturing small garrisons along railroads, and thus making the job of burning railroad bridges and long lines of wooden trestle work a comparatively easy task.

When Sherman's army reached Savannah many of the soldiers wore clothing of many colors, like Joseph's coat. At Milledgeville, Ga., I swapped a crownless hat for an old fashioned silk plug hat. It was the plug hat or a gray butter-

MARCHING THROUGH GEORGIA.

nut, so I took the former. My blue trousers were hanging on the ragged edge, so I paid a forager \$2.00 for trousers of gray and black plaid; the stripes were very wide. It was a swell garment, and must have belonged to the Sunday suit of some young southerner. It was with some misgivings that I cast aside the blue trousers, which had done good service for many months, and put on the heavy plaid cassimeres, made after the fashion that prevailed among well dressed men of that period. They, the trousers, were made very small in the legs almost to the ankle, where they expanded to such dimensions that they almost covered my shoes. Many soldiers wore citizen's clothing on that march, but I think there was only one stovepipe hat in our brigade. It was really annoying to be away from the company on that march.

If I happened to leave the column to fill my canteen I was greeted with something like this, "Hello, Chaplain, where do you preach next Sunday?" "Look at his feet," etc. The hat was rain-proof, and the trousers were much warmer than the regulation blue. The first Sunday in Savannah brought the long neglected brigade inspection, and our inspector smiled audibly when he came to my place in the company. In the first "draw" of government clothing, the plug hat and plaid trousers went to a colored man, who seemed to think he had struck it rich.

Andersonville

When Sherman started south from Atlanta, we of the rank and file, supposed one of the army corps and Kilpatrick's calvary would reach our starving comrades at Andersonville, Ga. But the right of our army had hardly reached Macon when our boys were hastily transferred from Andersonville to other southern prisons. We did not know until after the

ANDERSONVILLE.

close of the war that General Sherman, himself, was so determined to accomplish what his men were so anxious to have done.

In a letter written to Mr. James E. Yateman of the United States sanitary commission, dated May 21, 1865, General Sherman said: "I don't think I ever set my heart so strongly in any one thing as I did in attempting to rescue those prisoners at Andersonville, and I almost feared instead of doing them good I had actually done them harm, for they were changed from place to place to avoid me and I could not with infantry overtake railroad trains. But at last their prison doors are open."

I remember it was a matter of regret among the soldiers that we of Sherman's army could not rescue them from that loathsome stockade, the story of which will ever be a reproach to our boasted civilization.

I will digress, and give the reader a few facts concerning conditions at Andersonville prison. These are accepted as facts because they were written by one who survived the horrors of that place. About the year 1880, it was stated on the floor of Congress, that Andersonville was no worse than northern military prisons. In reply to the above, a comrade who spent the greater part of the year 1864 in the stockade at Andersonville, wrote the following:

"The man who speaks of Andersonville as no worse than northern military prisons can never comprehend what Andersonville was.

"He can never be made to understand the horrors of that dread place, where a seething mass of humanity festered and rotted beneath the rays of southern sun; where corruption was in the air and men were food for worms long before they were dead. No pen can paint the terrible sights that greeted

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ones eyes everywhere they turned; of men's gums protruding beyond their mouths and teeth dropping from their jaws, or limbs twisted into horrible shapes and swollen until the skin glistened; of hundreds with their mouths eaten away with canker; of the fearful array of dead which every morning laid by the gates, with drawn faces, distorted limbs and staring eyes. If a poet wished to depict, as Dante did, the tortures of the damned in the Inferno, a visit to the gangrene ward of the hospital at Andersonville would have left little for the imagination to supply. There he would have found several hundred men whose tissues were being devoured by the virus of gangrene. Hands and feet were rotting off, or else mortification had begun under the skin of the back, and was rapidly eating away the soft tissues between the epidermis and the ribs; agonizing shrieks and groans went up constantly, but when at intervals, the attendants made their rounds and drenched the sores with solutions of blue vitrol in the vain hope of stopping the sloughing, the outcries were sufficient to appall the heart of the strongest. We think it not over-estimating the case to say there was more actual misery in that single ward than in all the prisons of the north combined; and in the utter needlessness of having such misery occur, consists much of the deep damnation of the guilt of those responsible for Andersonville."

JOHN MCELROY, (in the Toledo Blade).

The same author, who is the present editor of the National Tribune, in his book "Andersonville" says: "A few wagon loads of roasting ears and sweet potatoes would have banished every trace of scurvy from the camp and healed up the wasting dysentery and saved thousands of lives. Any day the Confederates had chosen, they could have gotten a thousand volunteers, who would have given their solemn parole

ANDERSONVILLE.—ACROSS THE CAROLINAS.

not to escape, and gone any distance in the country to gather the potatoes and corn, and such other vegetables as were readily obtainable and bring them into the prison. Whatever else may be said in defense of the southern management of military prisons, the permitting seven thousand Union soldiers to die of scurvy in the summer of 1864, in the midst of an agricultural reigon filled with all manner of green vegetation, must forever remain impossible of explanation."

Andersonville is not a subject one cares to revive, but in view of the recent attempt to perpetuate the memory of Capt. Wirz as a hero of the "lost cause," I am prompted to reproduce the foregoing facts as to the conditions existing at the prison, which was under the management of this same Wirz. The terrible punishment visited upon our Union soldiers at Andersonville by brutal starvation, the stocks and the chain gang, outrivaled the diabolical torture of their white prisoners by the American Indians in the seventeenth century.

Across the Carolinas.

Leaving Savannah, Ga., about January 20, 1865, we marched up the south bank of the Savannah river to Sisters Ferry. The river was on a rampage and water covered the bottom lands on the South Carolina side. We camped there until we could cross over with our artillery and wagons. The Georgia farmers would drive into our camps with oysters by the barrel. I do not remember the price per gallon, but to us, who had been paying fifty cents for a measly little can of cove oysters, the price asked for a gallon was a nominal sum. We had sent our money home, when paid off at Kingston in November, but our mess wanted oysters and wanted them mighty bad. My faithful bunkmate, A. I. Higgins, called a meeting

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of the members of the mess, namely, A. I. Higgins, T. M. Beathard, L. F. Wade and the writer. Comrade Higgins proposed trading his old watch for a gallon of oysters, if the dealer would pay him three or four dollars to boot. The rest of us agreed to even up on the expense, the next pay day. Higgins could not induce the Georgian to trade that way, and rather than miss a mess of those large fresh fellows, he traded the watch for twelve gallons—as he put it, “took it all in oysters.” It required all the mess pans and coffee cans we could borrow in Co. F. to hold the oysters. Some of the utensils were loaned for our use only until time to cook the next meal, but Higgins was equal to the emergency, and succeeded in borrowing some camp kettles of the teamsters, paying the rent in oysters. We entertained our friends, regardless of expense, and for a few days “put on airs to beat the band.”

While passing through the Carolinas we gathered the “fat” pine knots for our evening camp fires, and for cooking purposes. The pine logs had long since decayed leaving the knots which were glazed with resin. The black smoke from the burning knots would stick to the faces of the soldiers hovering around the fires, until we sometimes bore a striking resemblance to the troops that stormed Fort Wagner. One morning in February we stood for an hour around the fires, before taking our place in the marching column. About the time we were started for the day’s march a mounted officer, who was trying to reach the head of our column, inquired, “What troops are these?” Some comrade promptly answered, “General Foster’s troops.” It was reported that Foster commanded a force of colored troops which would cooperate with Sherman’s army. As the officer passed I took note of the faces near me, and, no mistake, the complexion

ACROSS THE CAROLINAS.

did not correspond with the color given on the muster-in rolls of Company F.

It was a fearful winter campaign. Our brigade, now commanded by Col. M. C. Hunter, built many miles of corduroy road. Once, on that march, it rained steady for almost a week. One morning a six-mule team stalled before getting out of the field where we had camped. The mules were unhitched and a long "picket rope" was brought out, the ends of which were fastened to the front axle of the wagon and about sixty of the 31st, at a given signal hauled the loaded wagon into the road. It was a practical demonstration of the fact that ten men could pull a greater load through soft ground than one mule could draw. The crossing of the Catawba river was made under great difficulties. The river was booming high and the swift current had twice broken our pontoon bridge. The night was pitch dark and Wheeler was pushing our rear guard. Great bonfires were kept burning at each end of the bridge. General Baird stood at the south end of the pontoon. When a wagon was fairly on the planking, the mules were unhitched and led across and ten men hauled the wagon to the north side. I recall the scenes of that night. The fires lighting up the pontoon bridge showed the teamsters with their wagons as they came out of the dense darkness into the fire light. The frightened mules crowding from each side of the narrow passage, as the rushing waters surged against the canvas covered boats, which rose and fell with the flood and threatened the anchor ropes holding the structure in line, the shouts of the men as they helped the teamsters up the hill on the north side of the river, the shots of the rear guard who were keeping Wheeler at a safe distance over on the south side, the inky darkness of the night outside of the space lighted by the huge fires, all formed a picture, which

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to put on canvas is beyond the skill of any artist.

I remember as we were trudging along one night in North Carolina, a soldier who seemed to have come from the rear of our regiment and was tramping along at the side of our column, began to talk about where Kilpatrick was at that time, and the distance to the roads on which the other army corps were marching. Some of our boys got into conversation with the straggler and found that he was not thoroughly posted as to the names of division and corps commanders in Sherman's army. At last some one inquired the number of his regiment. He gave the name of a regiment in our division, and immediately disappeared in the darkness. The boys concluded at once that one of Joe Johnson's spies had been marching with us.

Our brigade was in advance when the army reached Fayetteville, North Carolina. As was often the case in that campaign the mounted foragers had skirmished into the town just ahead of us. The Fayetteville Observer was "half out" and the editor was "not in," but the copies of the unfinished issue, which were the first newspapers we had seen since crossing the Savannah river, were distributed on short notice. Here we saw General Sherman, the first time since leaving Savannah.

Our bill of fare at Fayetteville was flour "flapjacks," ham and eggs. As Comrade Higgins remarked at the time, "This is too good to last very long." Within ten days from that time we were living on mush cooked in open mess pans into which a quantity of North Carolina sand had been sifted by the March winds. I recall now just what that mush and sand did for my teeth.

While on the march, one day, a little girl of perhaps ten years came from a house wringing her little hands and cry-

ACROSS THE CAROLINAS.—HOMEWARD.

ing, "Soldiers, our house is burning." At least a hundred of our regiment hastened to the dwelling, a snug frame, near the road and found a log outbuilding on fire, in rear of the dwelling. The intense heat from the burning pine logs, had fired the pine siding of the dwelling. Willing hands threw water against the dwelling and tore down the burning logs, and in ten minutes the fire was out and we marched away with many a "God bless, you, soldiers," from the mother and child.

Homeward.

General Johnson surrendered his army to General Sherman April 26, 1865. Our army marched to Washington via Richmond, Va. The second day out from Raleigh we passed the residence of an old gentlemen who had a United States flag floating from a high pole at the side of the road. We heard the cheering of the soldiers before we could see the flag. The North Carolinian, with hair and beard of several years growth, stood near the flag pole, hat in hand, bowing to the soldiers. He explained by saying when Ft. Sumpter was fired upon, he made a vow that he would not shave nor have his hair cut until he could hoist that flag and see it wave over a united country. We gave the old man an ovation and, with heads uncovered, marched under the flag.

The colored people along the line of march would gaze in wonder at the long column of blue coats. Many of those black people said we were the first Yankee soldiers to pass through that country. It was a triumphant march for Sherman's men, but a sad home coming for the men who had been with Lee and Johnson, and were then returning to their homes. North of the Roanoke river an old colored man and his wife were working in the field. I inquired, "Do you get

HOMeward.—THE COW BELL.

pay for your work?" Both were astonished when told they were no longer slaves, but were free. The old man said, "If Lincoln did free us, we are still in slavery." We could not convince them that the Emancipation Proclamation, with the final defeat of the southern armies, gave absolute freedom to the colored people in the south. In view of conditions since that time in some parts of the south, the old man was not far wrong. Although the brutal murder of President Lincoln had aroused the indignation of Sherman's men, I do not recall a single act of lawlessness on the part of our soldiers in the entire march from Raleigh, N. C., to Washington.

The Cow Bell.

The reader must allow me to go back three years. During the siege of Corinth, Miss., heavy picket lines were maintained in front of the intrenched lines of General Hallack's army, but the skirmishers did not intrench as they did two years later. In front of our brigade the tinkle of a cow bell was heard night after night. It was a first-class imitation of a bell strapped on the neck of a cow as she "browsed" among the bushes. The men on outpost would discuss the matter, some contending that the bell was carried by a bovine, while others insisted it was a ruse of the enemy to get in close proximity to our outposts. At that period in the war it was a serious matter for a soldier on outpost to fire at random during the night. A single shot on our picket line at night would arouse the entire division. Two years afterwards the sound of a cow bell near the line of outposts would have been the signal for a volley of shots, which would not disturb the men on the main line of battle. About the time the Confederates evacuated Corinth, one of our soldiers found a cow bell with a short hand strap. It was found between the outer

COW BELL—CELEBRATING 4th.—CON. DUDE

lines of both armies. At that period of the war we had men who would take chances in order to learn something about the enemy, but I cannot imagine why that Confederate "toted" a cow bell back and forth night after night in front of our picket line.

Celebrating the Fourth of July, 1862.

After the evacuation of Corinth in 1862, General Buell's army occupied the country east from Corinth, Miss., toward Chattanooga, Tenn. The division of General George H. Thomas was at Tuscumbia, Ala., on the 4th day of July. About noon a national salute was fired by a battery of six guns, and Colonel M. B. Walker of the 31st Ohio made the address. In the evening the division was massed at the crossing of the two principal streets, where a stand had been erected for the speakers. The flags of the twelve regiments were grouped in a circle around the stand. Colonel Fry of the 4th Ky. Inf. read the Declaration of Independence and made a short address. Among the other speakers were Col. J. B. Steadman, 14th Ohio; Col. Harlen of the 10th Ky; Col. Connell of the 17th and Gen. Robert L. McCook of the 9th. Ohio, and I think, Major H. V. Boynton of the 35th Ohio.

A number of citizens were present, some of whom showed some interest, but the greater number looked on in silence and seemed to be angry that we should parade their streets clad in our blue with a liberal display of the stars and stripes.

A Confederate Dude.

While camped at Tuscumbia, a Confederate Lieut. Col. who resided in the village was at home as a paroled prisoner. At that period of the war both sides paroled many prisoners. The officer paraded the streets in full uniform with a colored

A CONFEDERATE DUDE.—PEACH COBBLERS.

body servant tagging after him carrying a basket to hold the flowers presented to the officer by his lady admirers. A squad of our soldiers were cleaning up the neglected streets of the village one day, a task often imposed during General Buell's day—and perhaps the boys raised more dust than was necessary as the rebel officer was passing. So the dude proceeded to give the boys a lecture on the superiority of an officer as compared to a common soldier, using some profanity to emphasize his remarks. This was too much for our boys, who dusted the young dandy from head to foot, scattered the flowers broadcast and ordered him to stay indoors until he learned how to address Northern gentlemen who were his superiors. The officer had the matter presented to our brigade commander, Gen. Schoeff, who ordered the boys sent to the guard house but they were soon released.

“PeachCobblers.”

I am reminded of some good times at Tuscumbia, and especially of the immense “peach cobblers” baked in large mess pans. We had flour and sugar of our own, pork fryings made good “shortening” for the crust, milk could be bought by the gallon and these, with a basket of large Alabama peaches, made a feast, the memory of which lingered with us to the last days of the rebellion.

Many times during the subsequent three years, and especially when living on rice in front of Savannah and when eating sandy mush in North Carolina, some reckless comrade would be rash enough to mention something about an Alabama “peach cobbler” only to be called down as a “blooming chestnut.” Public sentiment just at that time would not stand for that sort of ancient history.

Honor to Whom Honor Is Due.

As one of the humble survivors of the war of the rebellion, which closed with the collapse of the so-called Southern Confederacy about forty-five years ago, I am glad to extend full pardon to those who for four years tried to destroy the government. But I deeply deplore the vicious sentiment that has gained prominence in recent years and which has been introduced into some of the school books of our country, that the Southern rebellion was not an act of treason, but a "War between the states."

Our leaders were Lincoln, Grant, Sherman, Thomas, grand old "Pap" Thomas, Sheridan, Logan and others. Led by them we conquered TREASON in its most hideous form and, led by men who had received their education at our National Military Academy at the expense of this government and who had sworn eternal allegiance to the same government that had supported them, they were defeated in dissolving a united government. Robert E. Lee never held as much as the office of Road Supervisor in his native state. All of his distinction before the war of the rebellion came to him from the government of the United States and his only fame today rests in his brilliant efforts to overthrow the same government that educated him, supported him and honored him. What is the real difference, if any, between such conduct and the viper which "Stings the hand that has warmed it?" General Lee has been accredited with purity of purpose and sincerity. If such is the fact, why did he in March, 1861, write a letter to his son in which he denounced secession as anarchy. His partisans today should explain why Robert E. Lee deliberately adopted a course which he had declared was anarchy.

I think better of Lee than I do of Davis, who in his

HONOR TO WHOM HONOR IS DUE.

place in the United States senate did his best to encourage discord and disunion and later on as the head of the secession and anarchy heresy, tolerated, if he did not instigate, the horrible inhuman treatment of defenseless Union prisoners who could hardly muster strength to step over their dead; helpless prisoners who starved, rotted and perished from exposure that was needless.

On Dec. 28, 1862, Davis made an appeal to the legislature of Mississippi. Here is an extract: "You in Mississippi know but little of the savage manner in which war is waged by your barbarous enemies. Our enemies are a traditionless and homeless race. From the time of Cromwell to the present moment, they have been disturbers of the peace of the world. Gathered together by Cromwell from the bogs and fens of Ireland and England, they began by disturbing the peace of their own country. They disturbed Holland, to which they fled, and they disturbed England on their return. They persecuted Catholics in England and hung Quakers and witches in America. I had intended to fight our battles on the field of this enemy instead of suffering him to fight them on ours. Failure to do this was not my will, but the power of the enemy who had at their command all the accumulated wealth and military stores that had been laid up for seventy years. They had grown rich from the taxes wrung from you."

In view of the fact of the secession leaders having managed to get possession of almost every U. S. fort and arsenal and of their leaving the U. S. treasury empty before they fired on the stars and stripes that waved over Fort Sumpter, as a sample of hypocritical lying, the foregoing has no superior. His attempt to revile the ancestry of the men who saved the

HONOR TO WHOM HONOR IS DUE.

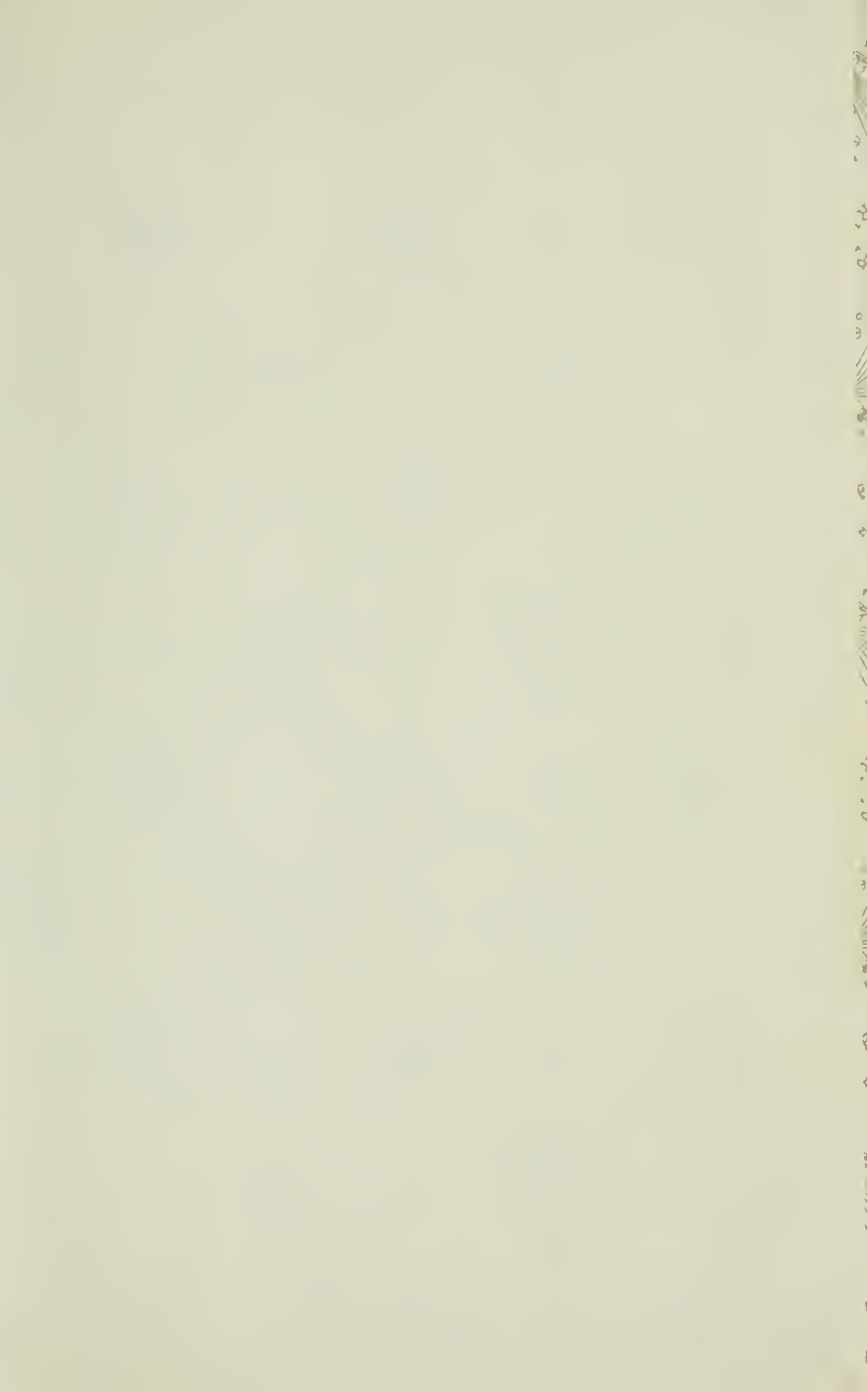
Union needs no comment. Yet Davis lived after the war, trying to pose as a martyr of the "lost cause;" he lived on to whine and complain, refusing to recognize the great forbearance of a united country that could even tolerate his presence.

In striking contrast with the foregoing appeal made by Jefferson Davis, I will quote from Abraham Lincoln's words to the people, whom he dearly loved:

"With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in: to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who has borne the battle and for his widow and his orphans; to do all of which may achieve and cherish a lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations."

I protest against the erection of monuments to Lee and Davis, because they are not proper object lessons to teach future generations loyalty to the flag and to our country. I would not raise a single note of discord in these times of peace, but I appeal to all true Americans who desire to cherish and perpetuate true patriotism, that they make proper distinction between our leader (Abraham Lincoln) of the Union cause and the leaders of an unholy cause, who seldom mentioned the name of Lincoln but to revile him as a brute, a gorilla and a monster.

In memory of the thousands who in their youth gave up their lives for the integrity and unity and greatness of this country, and whose blessings are yours today, make distinction between the leaders of the men who preserved this Union and the leaders of secession, who did their very best to destroy it!







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