A TRUE SKETCH
OF
HIS ARMY LIFE
BY
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I volunteered at Otterville, Jersey county, Illinois on August 11, 1862, being twenty years and nine days old, having first secured my parents consent. At this date there was a recruiting officer in the neighborhood seeking recruits. Quite a number of the young men enlisted at this time. Soon the day arrived for us to go to Springfield, Ills. This meant very much to us—to leave home and friends. The probabilities were some of us would never return, which time proved to be true. Most of us were young and thought we were able to make good soldiers, anyway we were willing to try. The first sixteen miles were made in wagons, when we reached the nearest railway station. In due time the train came along which took us to Springfield.

Springfield was the largest city many of us had ever seen. Our first night at this place many slept but little, our beds being the floor of a hotel. In the course of a few days the men who went to make up the one hundred men who composed our Company—Co. C. 124th Regiment of Ills, Volunteers, assembled in the city, and organized by electing officers to command said Company from their numbers.

When we were fully organized with Company officers elected, being the third Company ready for “muster” of the ten who composed the 124th Reg. were permitted to choose our letter, which we did, choosing “C.” The first Company chose “A.” Their position was always on right of Reg. The second Company chose “B.” Their position was on the extreme left. Company “C” was the right center of the Reg. and was “Color Bearer.” These three positions were selected or obtained by priority. The Flag of the Reg. in time of battle or anywhere was what the men centered around, being the center. Now all Reg’s. used the same letters but in different positions in their respective Reg’s. But the right center Company always carried the Flag of the Reg. Company “C” was made up of three squads of men from as many different neighborhoods and as far as possible each squad had their percent of officers.

After a few days we were ordered to move to Camp Butler which was five miles distant. We had to march, and Oh- how tired we were when we reached this camp. We had no covering either day or night for several days. The examining officer came and examined us and those
though until for soldier's duties were rejected I think of my small hat were rejected.

The Government then issued to each man a blanket, suit of clothes, a knapsack, haversack and canteen; but no gun as it did not have them at this time.

After several days there were barracks built that we might have shelter. We were eating government rations that we had to cook ourselves. We had very much to learn to be soldiers so we could go through all the military movements, that we could know what was wanted of us by word of command. We had to learn how to cook our rations, pack our knapsacks, to stand guard, to mount guard. Company drill, Regimental drill, all of which we went through every day.

The day came when we the 124th Reg. was mustered into the U.S. service. When will we get our guns? That we did not know; and when we would be sent South to meet the enemy nobody knew. We used sticks in our drills in place of guns. At this camp were perhaps fifteen thousand soldiers all eager to meet the Southern fellows, not without guns however. As Reg.'s were armed they were ordered to the front where needed the worst, to indulge the realities of war. After we had been at this camp four or five weeks our Reg. received marching orders to go to Cincinnati, Ohio. By this time many of us would rather have gone home to our mothers but we were sworn to Uncle Sam or during the war. Many of the boys had wives or sweethearts; but that rebellion had to be put down and we must help to do it. So we cheered up, took fresh courage to do the part assigned to us.

A train of box cars on the Wabash railroad stopped at camp for us and we were marched on to this train. Meantime there had been issued to every man a gun and accouterments. Before we reached Decatur received orders to go to Cairo I11s. At Decatur we were transferred to the Illinois Central road and went on to Cairo. Our time here was short; long enough however to see some of their monstrous rats that were so plentiful along the wharf. They were surely twice as large as any I had ever seen. We were glad to give them a wide berth. Here we were ordered aboard a steamboat, for where we did know.

We were soon ploughing down the great Mississippi river. Our destination proved to be Columbus, Kentucky. The rebels had possession of the Mississippi river below Columbus, Ky. As we were nearing the enemy our authorities issued us some ammunition for our guns. We were soon trying them to see what we might expect of them when we met the enemy. Imagine our surprise when we found a majority of them would not burst a cap and those that did were otherwise disabled. The one I had — when the hammer was set back to fire the gun I could not see the top of the gun barrel. The men did raise a storm of protest when we found we were armed with a lot of condemned guns. We were willing to fight but we wanted arms that would do execution. We thought we should not go any nearer the enemy with such guns but were ordered to mount a train of cars. We had sworn to obey our superior officers what should we do? Finally our Colonel made us a speech saying we would have to obey orders and promised us that we should have good guns as soon as the Government could furnish them. It would have been suicide to have ordered us into battle with such guns.

We went aboard the cars and were taken to Jackson, Tennessee.

At this place our Reg. one thousand strong was marched some distance to our training camp. A thousand men in “ranks” make somewhat of a show. How the 11th boys (another I11s Reg.) did welcome us, as a portion of Gen. Grant's army was camped at this place at that time. Some of the Jersey County soldiers who enlisted in 1861 belonging to the 7th Illinois Infantry I found here. We visited them and they came to our camp to see our green soldiers.
At this place we drew our first tents. They were of the wedge pattern, intended a tent for four men. My tent sheltered seven. We had drawn a certain number of tents for each Company. Our Company being large we were very crowded. Our camp here was in a chestnut grove, and was not long before we were utilizing some of the trees building a pen the size of tent and about three or four feet high, placing the tents on top of pens gave us more room. We arrived at this camp October 6, 1862. 'Twas not long until we were assigned to the 1st Brigade 3d Division of the 17th Army Corps. Our Colonel's name was Thomas J. Sloan of Chicago. Our Brigade Comander, Colonel Marsh, Col. of the 20th Ills. Reg. Our Division Comander was John A. Logan of Ills. Our Corps Comander was Gen. James B. McPherson of Ohio. We were a part of the Army of the Tennessee commanded by Gen. U. S. Grant.

Our duties here were light, such as guard duty. Company roll was called five times a day. If a man failed to answer to his name he was marked for extra duty—fatigue duty—which was all sorts and kinds; not very laborious on those who were accustomed to labor at home. On Sunday morning we had to fall in for inspection. That meant everything a soldier had, his gun accoutrements, knapsack what he had in it and his tent. If any portion failed to pass inspection he had to make it so it would pass, if it was his brass plates on his accouterments, his gun, or even the brass buttons on his coat, for these were expected to shine as much as possible. At first many of the boys were rather negligent about how they looked on inspection. But the lessons received we were sufficient to make us all put on a good appearance.

The hardtack we received here were full of worms. These facts were reported to the Colonel, he investigated the matter and went to Division Quartermaster who issued good ones to his men. As I remember this only happened the one time. One day George Rutherford and I had strolled some distance from camp when we found a lost shot. We concluded we would take it home with us. So we "after it" and caught it (being swift on foot) skinned it and wrapped it up in a blanket and slipped it into camp safely, without being detected. Undoubtedly it was the first of its kind that ever came into the 124th Reg. There had been strict orders issued to all soldiers against such conduct, and although there was a stir made about it through the different camps, we were never found out.

The duties such as guard and picket became heavier and heavier. We were learning to be soldiers. Three of the companies drew new guns to replace the almost worthless ones. How we did envy them, those guns, but that did not help us any.

During the last days of October we began to hear rumors of marching orders, and within a few days they came. We were marched to the R. R. depot boarded a train of flat cars was run in a Southerly direction to the town of Bolivar, Tenn. Here I saw some more Jersey county boys belonging to the 61st Ills. who I never saw again during the war. We stopped at Bolivar one night. The next day we fell into ranks and started on our first march, having large knapsacks to carry with our overcoats rolled on top. The old soldiers would say to us as we passed them "we'll get your overcoats before night." In many instances they did, but I can truthfully say they did not get mine. How tired I was. Nevertheless I was bound to keep all if possible. It seemed the straps would cut my shoulders off.

In the course of two or three days we reached Lagrange, Tenn., where we remained over two weeks. During this time Gen. Grant was concentrating a large army at this place. Our camp here was very good, all but the water. This we had to haul three miles from Wolf river. I drove a six mule team for the first time in my life—and the last also.
I graduated in one day. The team ran away with me before I got to the river, so they had a good time to run with empty wagon and empty barrels. I would never try it again after that experience. I enlisted to carry a gun so my mule "whacking" ended right there and then.

There is a great army at this place. It means there is something going to be "doing." That is what we came down here for. If we can find "Mr. Johnnie" and Gen. Grant says the word to go. We will go anywhere the Johnnies will let us. We are kept drilling or on duty, fatigue or picket, every day. At this camp was the first chance I had to see Brother Joseph; he having enlisted in 1861, was in another Division and Corps. We were always so glad to see anyone we had known at home, amidst the thousands of men from many different states. We had been in the field about one month. Lagrange is East of Memphis, Tenn., perhaps fifty or seventy-five miles, a long way from home. We wrote many letters to the friends we left at home. The mail reached us quite often which made us even more determined to do our very best to put these Johnnies out, glad to "holler enough."

After being at Lagrange a week, Gen. Grant moved his army South following the Mississippi Central R. R. We suppose the Johnnies are South of us somewhere. The second day out we camp on a creek called Cold Water, properly named for it was as cold as spring water. We found that the rebels were camped here while we were at Lagrange. They tried to pollute the water of this creek so we could not use it, by throwing all the offals of the cattle they slaughtered into the creek. We used it as freely with all their great pains.

The rebel army had retreated South, and as they would not come to us we would show them we were down there to "do business" with them, if they would give us an opportunity. The next day we marched into Hollysprings, Miss. All were gone but women and children and negroes, and how it did rain. Our tents were in the wagons somewhere in the rear and we were without shelter, wet as water could make us. We moved on the next day in the mud to somewhere: some were jolly and happy and some were not.

We thought we were gaining on the Rebels for could hear cannoning in the distance when we would holler "give it to them" and we took longer steps anxious to get to them, even with our old condemned guns. The next day brought us to the Tallahatchie river where rebel Gen. Price had made a stand for a short time, and had burned all the bridges then retreated. We soon replaced the bridges and were on after them and continued to follow them for about a week. Every day we saw rebel soldiers come to our lines and surrendered, had had enough of war. The thought came to us if they all do that we won't get to fight any. The trains in our rear were keeping pretty close up with supplies (rations). Rebel Gen. VanDorn with a few thousand Cavalry swung around to our rear and captured Gen. Grant's supplies for his army. What VanDorn could not use he burned. Gen. Grant faced his army north. I had not yet got a shot at a rebel. We were disappointed.

On Christmas eve we camped in the mud on the Tallahatchie river bottom (1862). On the next day we moved about a mile into the timber and halted for several days. We had neither tents nor rations. Gen. Logan said we could have some corn, that of the two the mules could starve, so corn in the ear was issued to us. We could roast that as best we could and eat that or nothing. In a few days our Regiment with five or six wagons marched out to a plantation filled these wagons with bacon, sweet potatoes, corn meal, peas, hogs and some fresh beef and back to camp same day. We were mad all over because we were hungry. Soon rations were plenty. We went back to Lagrange. The next move was west on the Memphis and Charleston R. R. distributed along to guard this R. R. We were stationed near Collierville at a long and high trestle bridge. While here our tents found us, also a snow
There were some orders. The weather was fine. It was intended to use this beautiful place for a base of supplies. There was no danger that the rebels would be prowling around hunting Yankees amidst such varmints, for they were no respectors of persons. The torrents of rain had produced a wonderful crop of them.

Gen. Grant asked for volunteers to run the blockade past Vicksburg on transports loaded with army rations. He had failed thus far to get on the Mississippi side of river where the Rebel army was. His plan was to get army supplies below Vicksburg accompanied with what gunboats he had, then could march his army down on opposite side of river. There were many more who volunteered to go than were wanted, so none...
were taken from the 124th Ills. Those who went had a thrilling experience. They had seven miles of batteries to pass, the Johnnies firing at them as long as their boats were in range. The outcome was a brilliant success. Of the entire fleet only one transport was disabled. It floated to safety and another boat went to its assistance and towed it on to its friends. The enemy was prepared to build huge bonfires on the levee or bank of river which made it as light as day, and why they did not destroyed many of these boats it seems that "Providence" was on Gen. Grant's side. Only a few were killed some more were wounded.

The next order was that the 13th Corps commanded by John A. McClernand, and the 17th Corps commanded by James B. McPherson were to "forward march" on the Louisiana side of river. This was the beginning of what is known as "The Vicksburg Campaign." Gen. Grant called his Corps commanders together to learn their views as to the best way to get in the rear of Vicksburg and the Confederate army. None of them agreed to his plan, and if his plan succeeded he should have all credit of planning it.

On April 25, 1863, our portion of this army started from Milleken's Bend, leaving our tents not to see them again for nearly three months—until we had captured the Rebel army in Vicksburg and that city, which the Johnnies had boasted so long that we never could do. At this season of the year it does rain, tremendous storms in this part of the country. But the "Campaign" was soon, rains and floods could not stop it. Gen. Grant acted as if he thought a wet soldier was as good as a dry one. When it rained his army was wet as no tents were taken on board. But the "Campaign" was on, rains and floods could not stop place we reached the river was at Grand Gulf, fifty miles below Vicksburg. We had traveled one hundred miles. The river looked good to us. It was as yet between us and the enemy.

The Gunboats ran the Rebel batteries at Grand Gulf and were used to place Grant's army across the river. Our Reg't. crossed the river the afternoon of April 30, 1863. Gen. Sherman's Corps (the 15th) was left in front of Vicksburg so as to hold the Rebel army there until the other part of Grant's army succeeded in getting across of the river.

We camped (that is our Brigade) on the bank of the river. The place where we crossed was called Bruinsburg. I saw nothing there worthy of any name. Most of the army that had preceded us across the river had started on out into the interior of the state. Early on May 1st we started out on the march following McClernand's Corps. We soon heard the sound of artillery firing ahead, and the farther we went the faster we traveled, eager to help our men if needed. On and on, until about one o'clock in the P. M. we came to a house where our surgeons were caring for the wounded men. On a table just to our left lay a soldier with his right leg taken off close to his body. For the first time we realized that we were in the vicinity of war, the roar of musketry being continuous also the artillery—we were hearing the guns of both armies.

We were halted, ordered to unsling knapsack (each Company had a separate pile) which we did not see again for four or five days. We then marched on to the front, took our position on left of our army. Soon were ordered to "charge" which we did, and for the first time I shot at a Confederate soldier doing his best to get away from the Yanks. I do not think I hit him, perhaps he was running too fast. We were halted. Soon Gen. Grant came riding by and said he never saw soldiers do better. Of course he was telling the truth. This made us feel very courageous and proud as we had cleared the battlefield of those Southern "gim'men" who had boasted that one Southerner could whip five Northerners. The 124th had only a few wounded. We were soon ordered forward and marched until after dark. A squad of Rebels to our right
in some woods fired at us but fortunately for us they aimed by the sound we were making and shot over us, not hitting a man. The Col. ordered us to return the fire which we did. We saw the blaze of their guns and had a much better aim at them. We were halted soon for the night. Hearing the groans of a man, my Captain and others went to the sound and found a Rebel officer mortally wounded—shot through the stomach. They picked him up, brought him into camp and did what they could for the poor man. He died early next morning. Our return fire did its deadly work for him.

We slept very little that night as we had no blankets for covering; had marched away from them not knowing that we would ever see them again. Were up early and after the Johnnies next morning. Soon entered the town of Port Gibson. To delay Grant's army the Rebs had burned the bridge spanning Bayou Pierre. We were marched up this Bayou for some distance, were halted, ordered to strip off our clothing and evade the stream, which we did and did not need a bridge. In finding our way back to the main road that we had left and the Rebs were on, we found a large pile of hams and shoulders, the size of which pile every man was expected to do his share in reducing. This meat was sent out there by the citizens of Port Gibson to be safe from the Yankies. However their particular pains worked for our good in this instance. This meat was so good: had been smoked and as good as could be made.

We followed Mr. Johnnies until they crossed Black River. So far the campaigning had been all in our favor. We had killed two Rebel Generals several hundred men and captured many prisoners. We stopped at this place three or four days. The night we reached this resting place I was taken very sick, the first sickness I had since I was a boy. Our knapsacks came to us here. I want you to know we were so very glad for each man to get his own knapsack. This was important for each contained valuable personal, private property, (valuable to us) and our blankets, change of under clothing, etc.

We afterward learned that we were waiting for Gen. Sherman's Corps that we had left at, or opposite Vicksburg, to come to us. As Grand Gulf was evacuated, Sherman crossed the river there with his men. When he came to us we refilled our harversacks and cartridge boxes and bid good bye to communications with the North and supplies of every kind. Gen. Grant's army was sweeping on into the interior of Mississippi. Grant had so completely baffled the Rebel authorities they did not know where he was or where to find him. When we got marching orders I had partially recovered from my sickness. My Captain told me he had tried to get me in an ambulance, but they were so full I would have to march, so I did sick as I was. About the third day out on our march Grant's army, or the portion we belonged to, came across a Rebel force that put up quite a fight, lasting a couple hours. The casualties of our Brigade was several hundred. In our Reg't was light. A Rebel General was killed. This battle is known as "the Battle of Raymond." This battle was fought on May 12, 1863. The battle of Port Gibson or Thompson Hills on May 1, 1863. The battle at Raymond was fought mostly by Logan's Division—the one the 124th Ills, Reg't belonged to.

We had been marching in an northeasterly direction on the east side of Black river and parallel to it; the three Corps each on separate roads, within reinforcing distance of each other. The day after the battle at Raymond Grant's army pushed on toward Jackson, the capital of the state. No fighting. The next day we found the enemy in strong fortifications at Jackson. Oh, how it did rain, marching in the rain and mud, shoe-mouth deep was fearful. But there was a battle on which excited the men's nerves. We pushed on that we might help all possible. Soon gained the battlefield and came to dead men. A black smoke was rising over the city and the word came to us that the Rebels had evacuated
set their commissaries on fire, leaving the city for Grant to take possession of. How we shouted, for it was another victory. Sherman’s troops fought this battle at Jackson on May 14, 1863. Gen. McPherson’s men would have been in the fight had it lasted long enough. Gen. Sherman’s men were ordered into the city and destroyed all property of value to the Johnnies or public property.

Gen. Joseph Johnston commanded the Rebel forces at Jackson. He retreated to the north of city while Gen. Pemberton’s army that was at Vicksburg was somewhere west of us at this time and we were between the two Rebel forces. As soon as Jackson was captured we were ordered to “about face” and march out over the same road we had come into Jackson on. We were then headed toward Vicksburg, or marching west hunting Pemberton’s army. All day of the 15th of May we marched very hard. If he was as eager to find us as we are to find him we surely will meet soon. After a good nights rest we fell into line. Forward toward Vicksburg was the word. Had been on the road a short time when artillery began to roar. Then our boys would shout “give it to them” or “we are coming to help you” in fact all sorts of imaginable phrases. Soon we heard the musketry roar; and such a roar, sounded as if no one could live amidst such continuous firing. All artillery on both sides was busy. It was terrible, beyond human power to describe.

We were told that Grant’s army and Pemberton’s army met at about 10 a.m. Our part of the army arrived about 1 p.m. We filed to the right about one mile, halted, fronted and ordered to lay down. The rest was ned’d for we had been marching very fast for several hours. The battle was yet going on furiously. Our rest was short. Were soon called to “attention” which means to stand in ranks, ordered to load our guns, we knew that business would soon be on. Gen. Logan came along saying “Now boys the hotter the quicker” meaning the harder we fought the sooner it would be over with giving the command “Forward, double quick, march.” At this time there was a Rebel Brigade of four Regiments within two hundred paces of us while we were resting but we did not know it. They were on the Rebel left and facing very much to the left of ours, so that when we came into range of them, or rather in sight of them, we had an enfilading fire on them. As the Rebels would say we shot into them en-ways. The Rebel Brigade lay on or near a small creek from where we were; we were on the top of a hill perhaps fifty feet high. Where we rested was just behind the crest of this hill, and they did not know there were any Yanks so near them. We were on to them without a stop, captured, killed or wounded the whole Brigade, there being a very few who escaped. There were over seven hundred prisoners taken. The killed and wounded lay the thickest I ever saw anywhere, several hundred on a small piece of ground. The enemy’s artillery being on a high hill over shot us. The casualties of the 124th Regt. was over fifty, of Company two, one mortally wounded, one who recovered from his wounds but never returned to the Company. We in this sketch left Gen. Sherman with his Corps at Jackson, Miss., destroying public property such as would be beneficial to the Confederate Government. When the battle opened at Champion Hills we were twenty-five miles west of Jackson or over a day’s march from Sherman’s troops. Gen Grant, as soon as the two armies were engaged in battle at Champion Hills, sent orders post haste to Gen. Sherman to hasten to Champion Hills with his Corps of men, which order he obeyed traveling over the same road that McPherson’s men had traveled.

I will again take up the doings of Gen. Logan’s Division which I left off at the little “Run” or creek, where they destroyed the Rebel Brigade for further use to Gen. Pemberton. After a short rest the order came to “forward march.” Away we went climbing a steep wooded hills. As we neared the top of these hills we discovered the Rebels in strong force. Their artillery shotted with grape and canister was fired too soon
to be effective. The officer in command of these guns was sitting on his horse and gave the order to "fire" as soon as we came in range of his eye, but before we had come in range of the guns. The whole holocaust of iron hail passed just over our heads. So fortunate for us that he made that mistake. Now was our opportunity, and we improved it. A volley of musketry from us killed the officer, all the men but two and all the horses but one. We captured this battery, which was supported by Infantry, but the onslaught was such that the Rebel Infantry could not stand such great force and took to the rear as fast as they could go to save themselves from capture. This movement completely turned the left flank of the Rebel Army until we were in the rear, or between Pemberton's army and Vicksburg. Also gave us the main wagon road that runs from Vicksburg to Jackson, on which Pemberton came out and the one he would want to use to get back to Vicksburg to get out of the trap he was in. Pemberton ordered his entire army to retreat after the battle had been on six or seven hours or they would have been captured. They slipped by some by roads, out and on some four miles before they came into the road we held. It was near sun down when the victory was complete. This was the fourth time we had fought the Southern soldiers and had whipped them every time on their own ground. How elated we were! What a days work we had done, marched about ten miles and had fought a half day. Did not know how tired we were until the day's work was done.

Gen. Grant hastily sent a courier to Gen. Sherman with news of the victory of this day, and orders to march to the right and cross Black river to the north a few miles (Sherman having a pontoon train with him) when across the river to march direct to Haynes Bluff on the Yazoo river north of Vicksburg. This Sherman did, thereby preventing Johnston's Army that we had whipped at Jackson and Pemberton's Army uniting. It also opened up communications with our supplies and our homes, as the Yazoo river was navigable from its mouth to this point for our transports. At this time Grant's Army had been near four weeks in the interior that the Government Officials knew nothing of where we were nor what we were doing.

On the next morning after this battle we were up early and off after Pemberton and what soldiers he had left. Soon we heard canonading ahead, telling us that some of our boys had overtaken them and were saluting them with our destructive shells. On we went. The nearer we came to them the swifter was our pace, were wanting another victory. We felt that we could whip Pemberton's Army in an open field fight anywhere. When we got within three miles of the battle the firing ceased and soon the word came that the battle was at Black River Bridge, and that the enemy had burned the bridge and was doing their best to get into their fortifications at Vicksburg which was twelve miles away.

In the five battles Pemberton had lost them all. Had lost several thousand prisoners, all of his artillery—some eighty pieces. So far, it had been fight and retreat. A few more like results and Pemberton would have no army left.

Black river was some two hundred feet in width. Each Corps had to provide (or did provide) their own crossing. The 13th Corps crossed near where the bridge had been; the 17th Corps about three miles farther up stream; the 15th Corps fifteen yet farther up. Our Corps (17th) tore down buildings for lumber, using cotton bales for floaters. We got across by the close of the second days hard work, as all artillery and wagons had to be drawn up the high river bank by hand with a long stout rope with a hundred men pulling. It is astonishing what a load a hundred men can move.

Now we hear the booming of artillery in the direction of Vicksburg. Later on we learned that Sherman's Corps had made a hurried march.
from Jackson to the Yazo river, a distance of fifty miles without meeting any of the enemy to retard his progress. Gen. Sherman had the enemy "wring" to Vicksburg. He opened up communications with Porter's Fleet and supplies for the entire army.

Gen. Grant's plans from the beginning of this campaign had worked like clockwork. Had shut Gen. Pemberton's army up within his fortifications at Vicksburg. Our exultations at the achievement Gen Grant's army had attained knew no bounds. While on the other hand the Confederate army must have been correspondingly discouraged.

By May 20th Grant's entire army was in the vicinity of the Vicksburg fortifications. Our artillery kept busily engaging the Confederates while the infantry was maneuvering getting into position for to do the best work possible to make a continuous line of defense, which was twelve miles in length. By the 22d of May, Grant had thought best to assault their works, which proved unsuccessful. We got up to their works and planted our flag on their works, but could not go over only as prisoners. We had to lay beneath the crest of their works until after dark. Grant had lost heavily in men while the Confederates loss must have been light. After this he settled down to a siege. The position of the 124th during the siege was within six hundred feet of the Rebel works. Samuel Alexander was the first man of my Company to be wounded. He was struck on his left arm by a minie ball, losing about six inches of bone between the shoulder and elbow. Of course he was never with the Company afterwards. The Confederates kept up a continuous sharp shooting so there was no time but what we were in danger.

Our position was on a hillside from them. We had to dig out places to sleep, to keep from sliding down the hill. We now were on full rations. Our transports run up to Havnes Bluff from where our teams supplied us with rations, clothing, ammunition, etc. Our duties were good and plenty such as digging for and planting batteries, making rifle pits and sharpshooting. The Johnnies surely enjoyed their fortifications judging by the amount of firing they kept up. We soon had near three hundred guns playing on their works and thousands of sharpshooters shooting at anything that had life in it, near or far off. Near our right was a large ravine that passed from our rear through their fortifications (the Rebels) on west and emptied into the Mississippi river just north of the city. We being on high ground had many opportunities of seeing something to shoot at as we had plain view for over two miles. We had only been here a few days when, by our day and night industry, we had as good a place to sharpshoot from as our neighbors had; thereby making it interesting for them as ammunition on our side was plentiful.

The "Sap" or trench we dug was twelve feet wide, six feet deep and some seven hundred feet long commencing at our left rear and extending up to a Rebel Fort in our front. It was made very crooked so that the Rebels could not fire it from any direction. The loose dirt from the ditch was thrown on the side of the Rebel fire. Square timbers were placed on top of this dirt with gains cut on bottom side for us to look through and to shoot through without exposing ourselves to their fire. These breast works served us the entire siege, were occupied day and night where he became very efficient marksman. If a Reb exposed himself in the slightest degree he was our "meat" sure. The same could be said of the Rebels. The boys would often test Johnnies marksmanship by placing a hat or cap on ramrod and push it up above the top of our log which were about twelve by twelve inches square. It was astonishing to see how soon the Rebel bullets would find said cap or hat. It demonstrated to us that the Rebel soldier could shoot to the mark, and for our safety not to expose ourselves. Constant firing of artillery and sharpshooting day after day and night after night and digging rifle pits in
every available place constituted our duties. We were up so close to the enemy picket duty was abandoned, firing from the rifle pits took its place.

On May 25th, white flags were seen on the Rebel works. We wondered what that meant. Soon learned that it meant an armistice or cessation of hostilities for four hours in which to bury the dead. The stench was so offensive to the Rebels they asked it, the dead being so much closer to them than to us. It included many mules as mule feed was scarce on the Rebel side of works and they thought to drive them over their breast works. We had positive orders to shoot them which we did. The dead mules would fall on either side of their works which added greatly to the stench.

On May 29th a Captain Rogers in command of a section of McAllister Battery on our left front while in action playing on Fort Hill (in our front) was killed by a Rebel sharpshooter. I located the spot where he fell for the Chairman of the Military Park Commission in the year 1902. I visited this old battle ground again in the year 1908, and found a suitable monument had been erected on this spot to the memory of Captain Rogers.

Captain Foster our Division picket officer thought to erect an observatory where he could get high enough to look down on the Rebs within their works and camps. This tower was located half way between us, on our left front, and the Rebel works. He supposed our sharpshooters had silenced all the Rebel batteries and his tower was bullet proof, that the Rebels would respect it as a Yankee trick. The sequel will show. Away on our right the Rebels had a twenty pound parrot gun planted in a position that our boys in its front could not reach with any kind of arms. The first day they saw this observatory they turned this gun on it and had a picnic knocking Foster's lookout to “smithereens.” Don't think anyone was hurt for after the first shot there was no one in it. Foster did not rebuild his tower so it was a failure. This observatory stood out in the open where the Rebels could see it from top to bottom, was about six feet square with ladder for climbing to top on the inside. The timbers were prepared in the rear and conveyed to place where it was erected in shades of night. It was also built in the night. As I remember it was from twenty to thirty feet high. This Captain Foster, all our boys knew so well.

This Rebel parrot gun annoyed our Reg't. very much. It almost had the range of the entire length of 124th. On one particular occasion it turned loose at us sending its shots one after another just as fast as they could shoot them until they fired eight or ten shots. The only one hurt was a colored cook who had one hand taken off by a shell. I felt the effects of those shots (the wind of them) as they passed me; passing very close perhaps three or four feet of me. About this time our officers were planning how best they could stop this disturbance. They succeeded in getting two thirty pound parrot guns from Porter's Fleet from the Mississippi river. These guns were about fifteen feet in length, perhaps eighteen inches in diameter at the breech, rifled the same as our Enfield muskets and shot very accurately. These guns were taken by way of the sap or ditch that we had made to Fort Hill, perhaps near midway from us to Fort Hill where they were planted, and trained on this Rebel gun. After our guns had fired a few times at it our men thought it strange that it was still doing duty. Our officers watched with their field glasses and when the muzzle of the Rebel gun came into the porthole our guns were fired. One of our guns struck it in its muzzle, tore the end off and landed it to the rear about thirty paces down in a ravine. Considering the distance that was a wonderful shot, the distance being nearly a mile. You want to know how I know this. In a few weeks after this occurred the Rebel army surrendered and a
chain guard or a continuous line of men were placed on guard on the Rebel line of works. I was one of these guards. We were on duty two hours, off four hours. Our reserve post was near this Rebel gun. While at the reserve post I went to look at this gun that had worried us so much. Found it as described, with this additional. While I was looking at it a Rebel soldier came to me and interested me with this information. He said the instant the gun was struck the gunner was sighting the same and his head was shot off. While we were talking I picked up a piece of the frontal skull bone of a man’s head and this Rebel soldier said that no doubt it was a piece of that gunner’s head.

I must tell you why our guns had failed to silence this gun sooner. It set on a plank platform, the left wheel was chained fast to the platform. When it fired the recoil turned the gun in a circle carrying it far enough in circle that the gun was clear of the port hole. The shot that hit it ruined the gun, broke its anchorage and sent it to the rear where we found it. Our guns up to the last shot had been firing at the puff of smoke of the Rebel gun while the recoil was on and it was out of danger.

The spring that furnished us water during the entire siege was about forty rods from our camp. To get to it in daylight was very dangerous as some fifty paces of that distance was in plain view of the Rebel sharpshooters. Some of our boys were killed at this place. We soon learned to run fast while in the open as the enemy could not hit us only when moving slowly, they having to shoot near forty rods. Being a weak spring we were compelled to go to it in daytime, that is, a part of us who could not be supplied during the night. When I visited this battlefield in the year 1908 I went to this same old spring and took a hearty drink. It was yet furnishing about the same amount of water as it did in 1863.

The continuous roar of artillery cannot be described. There were three hundred field pieces on Gen. Grant’s line of works besides some heavy siege guns. There were two eighty-four pounders planted near Gen. Logan’s headquarters that were very active, playing on the Rebel forts. The sharpshooters of Grant’s army had made it so dangerous for the Rebels to use their artillery that it was practically silenced during a greater part of the siege.

Gen. Grant would visit us in the trenches every few days and would talk encouraging words to the boys such as “we have got them right where we want them,” or “it is only a question of time, they must surrender soon or starve.” “It is impossible for them to obtain commissary supplies. The time must come when the last meal would be eaten.” Of course such was encouraging to us.

Gen. Jos. Johnston whom we drove out of Jackson, Miss., threatened to raise the siege by attacking Gen. Grant’s rear thereby letting Gen. Pemberton’s army out of Vicksburg. Gen. Grant expected he would try that game and made ample provisions for just such a move. had a force of troops extending from the Yazo river to Black river to attend to Gen. Johnston. Gen. Grant had his force of troops perhaps forty or fifty thousand sent him from other departments to guard his rear, to watch Gen. Johnston. These troops took no active part in the siege but those who did felt perfectly safe that Johnston’s troops would not harm us, while our men were on the lookout for them. Gen. Johnston’s army never got closer than forty or fifty miles of Vicksburg. Our Cavalry was also scouting and watching Gen. Johnston all the while so Gen. Grant knew every day what was doing in the rear as well as in the front. Gen. Pemberton knew it would be suicide to attempt to cut his way out of Vicksburg to join Johnston so he resolved to defend the city to the last.

We received our mail quite regularly, letters from friends and papers to get the “war news” from other departments.
The pesky minnie ball was getting in its deadly work. One could hear it passing along making its whistling music. With our utmost caution many of the boys were crippled for life or killed by them. There was a Rebel sharpshooter off to our right who did much deadly work. The bullet from his gun had a peculiar sound of its own. This fellow was doing such terrible work among our boys that it attracted the attention of our superiors and they scanned the Rebel territory to locate Mr. Sharpshooter with their field glasses. They found him perched up in a tall tree concealed by a heavy foliage. They soon brought to bear on this sharpshooter a six pound brass rifle piece. After taking deadly aim, distance one-half mile, they fired. One shot was all that was needed for Mr. Johnnie came tumbling to the ground. That put an end to his mischief. This I saw as true as that there were any Rebels to shoot at.

On June 14th my bunkmate and I as usual were sharpshooting side by side all day until near night when Mr. Phillips (that was my bunkie's name) was shot in the face. That blinded him and he fell over backwards. He was placed on a stretcher and carried to the hospital where his wound was dressed. Mr. Phillips and I had been bed fellows from the time we had left home until this time. He and I, and all though his wound was not dangerous, that in a short time would recover and be active again. In fact he was up and came to our camp on a little visit to see us boys. But it was ordered otherwise. Erysipelas developed in his wound which soon proved fatal. This grand soldier's death was a terrible loss to me. He told my parents he would take care of me—he and my parents were near neighbors prior to our enlistment. Mr. Phillips left a wife and three children to mourn his loss as well as so many comrades friends. This comrade was very conspicuous when in battle, was a great marksman with a gun. His death occurred on the 28th of June just two weeks to the hour from the time he was wounded. I must say just here, when I visited the beautiful National Cemetery at Vicksburg in 1902, to my joy and pleasure I found that this true comrade with others of my Company and Regiment had been placed within its walls and their graves were being cared for by the Government that they had died to save.

The Vicksburg National Cemetery was established in 1866. Is located two miles due north of the Court House at Vicksburg. It consists of forty acres of land. Is inclosed with a brick wall three and a half feet high. The great Mississippi river flows close by. All the U. S. soldiers (Federals) who were killed or died of disease or otherwise during the war within a radius of many miles of Vicksburg were sought out and placed in this Cemetery. In 1902 the number of burials were sixteen thousand seven hundred and eighty-four. The number known was four thousand twenty-one. Unknown twelve thousand seven hundred and sixty-two. Each grave has a granite marker. Where known the soldier's name is on stone at head of grave. Where unknown the marker is numbered.

The siege wore along with all kinds of rumors, sometimes that Gen. Joe Johnston was going to attack us in the rear. This did not worry us for we had enough confidence in Gen. Grant to know he was looking out for our rear as well as our front. Our duties were heavy. We were completing the ditch up to the Rebel Fort and sharpshooting day and night. Since my bunkmate died from his wound I put in double time in the rifle pits sharpshooting. Must even up matters if possible. We often hollered over to the Johnnies asking them to oil or grease; they would say "yes," then we would say "well grease yourself and slide back into the Union." Bang would go their guns for our kind advice. Then we would retort, "Oh, Johnnie, we've got you, you are our prisoners, but you are boarding yourself." Then we would ask them how mule meat was for a daily ration. Then the bullets would fly for awhile. They
would ask us when we were coming into the city. Perhaps we would want to know of them why they did not come out to relieve Gen. Joe. Johnston, that he was needing them. They made various replies. Our super or officers soon put a stop to this bantering.

In digging the trench from our lines up to the Rebel fort our men had a flat car covered with cotton bales which they rolled in front of the sappers to prevent the Rebels from disturbing the miners. As soon as it got near enough the Rebels threw turpentine balls lighted on to this car and burned it up. That spoiled our protection. After this we used bales of cotton, as we advanced the cotton bales were rolled ahead of us. Some genius made a wooden mortar out of a log. He hollowed out the log placed some bands or iron around it and by using a small charge of powder it would toss a six pound shell over the works on to the enemy. The Rebels had a heavy gun to our left front we called "Whistling Dick," that made us hunt our holes. Being out of range of our guns we could not silence it. Very many of its shells would not burst until after they had struck the ground, then it would pile up the ground so that a mule or two could be buried in the holes it made.

Our duties we thought were very heavy. We did our own cooking, washed our clothes once a week, that was very necessary on account of the vermin being so plenty, sharpshooting and digging trenches. At last we got the trenches done, the big trench being completed up to the Rebel fort about the middle of June. All the while we kept up active sharp-shooting from every available spot at every thing we saw move—man or beast.

It was thought best by some to blow up Fort Hill. That would break the Rebel line sufficient to allow the Federals to march through the lines and take possession of Vicksburg. So miners were put to work drilling under this fort. They made a main shaft near the center of the fort then drifted three in different directions. When they completed this they planted three mines of powder twelve hundred pounds each, and filled up the drifts with timbers and cordwood. Being all ready the explosion took place at four P. M., on the 25th of June. The artillery all along the line was active at that hour. The purpose was to hold the Rebels from reinforcing where the explosion took place, thereby the assaulting column would not meet with so heavy resistance. Our Brigade was to be the assaulting column which was as follows: The 20th Ills., 51 Ills., 45th Ills., 124th Ills., 23rd Indiana. Having been notified we were all ready. Every man had his gun loaded and primed waiting for orders to move. At last the explosion was heard. As soon as the debris cleared away the 45th Ills. made the assault. In a few minutes the 41st Ills. took the place of the 45th boys. A few minutes more the 20th Ills relieved the 31st. All fought desperately losing some valuable officers and a great many men. It was given up as a failure, the lay of the ground on Rebel side of works was impregnable. The 124th Ills. was standing in line nearby expecting to be ordered any moment into the fray. But night coming on we were ordered back into the rifle pits to do sharp-shooting which was kept up all night. On the morning of the 26th the 124th was ordered into the "Crater" or place of the mine explosion. This place as near as I can describe it was shaped like a large wash basin and was about fifty feet in diameter. There was next to the Rebels a bank of the fort perhaps eight feet higher than any other part of what was left of the fort after the explosion. There were eight Companies of our Regt. two of which were ordered into the Crater at a time, stayed in twenty minutes then were relieved by two other Companies. This was the order for the entire day. One third of the men were placed as near the top of this bank or crest of front as they could get and not be seen by the Rebels for the purpose of firing the guns the other two-thirds of the men, who were lower down in the Crater, loaded and passed up to
us. My position was up near the crest of the fort on the firing line. Those gun barrels became very hot, so much so that my left hand became seared or blistered in handling those hot guns. My duty was to poke the loaded gun over this bank and fire it off having no knowledge whether I was doing any execution or not. After firing passed the gun down to be reloaded. Perhaps we had been two or three times in this Crater when the Rebels began tossing six pound shells with lighted fuse over at us. They came directly over my head, could have reached those shells if so disposed. I knew too well their contents and what they meant for us if we happened to be in their way. I think it was the first one they threw over that rolled into Robert Vance's lap and exploded, he was sitting down about sixteen feet from where I was. He fell forward on his face mangled badly. In a few minutes another came over rolled to his side then exploded tearing the poor man into shreds. Soon another came over and exploded, mortally wounding George Grabendike and George Lanham. All three belonged to my Company and were married men. It was too much for mortal man to stand such destruction. Those men of that vicinity who could get away did so, leaving the Crater and went out into the trench. As the gunloaders had fled for safety, I made it my business to follow as I had no ammunition to work with. It was a very hot place to be in if we had had nothing to have done, no breeze could touch us. Then add those bursting shells that filled the air with dirt throwing it all over us. It simply can not be described. It was terrific. It was afterwards named "The Slaughter Pen." The Rebels could tell they were doing execution for they could hear our men holler and groan when struck, as there was only a few feet space between us and them. This work they kept up for some hours. Other Companies suffered badly. Many of our men had their hands wounded while firing over the crest of the fort by bullets from the enemy. Toward evening we were relieved by a Reg't of another Brigade. When my Company fell in to be relieved there were only ten, that morning there were twenty-two. These eight Companies had lost over fifty men. The Reg't, that relieved us was not ordered into the Crater but was placed in the trench to keep up sharpshooting all night.

After being relieved we marched to our camp—what was left of us—tired and dirty, to get us some supper. By some miraculous power I had not been hurt.

The days work proved useless. Our side had not gained any advantage by all this strenuous work. We settled down to regular siege work—sharpshooting. We had become experts with out rifles. If a Reb, or any living thing showed himself he was in great danger of a Yankee bullet. You will wonder at our firing after dark and throughout the night. The orders were to keep up a constant fire. Every man was expected to fire forty rounds during his two hours of duty. All that was expected of us was to point our guns toward the enemy and fire. It was a common saying with the boys that we were shelling the woods with our bullets. After the surrender a Confederate soldier told me that a Johnnie, was killed while walking his beat in front of Gen. Pemberton's headquarters which was two and a half mile from the firing line.

So much firing caused us to pad our right shoulders, as the constant back action was such that this padding became very necessary. I have not to this day forgotten how sore my shoulder was at that time.

The engineers with a detail of men were busy drifting again beneath Fort Hill, it successful to blow it up the second time. On July 1st, all being ready the mine was sprung. Oh my, what a sight it was. Timbers, dirt, men all in the air at once. The Confederates presuming that we would try to break the line at this point reinforced it heavily, notwithstanding our artillery was playing on them all along the line. On they came. Our punishment at first blowing up was sufficient to satisfy all
concerned. The last explosion was terrific in its destruction. Of the men we saw in the air there were six, three soldiers and three negroes, that fell on our side of line all dead but one, that one a negro lad about fifteen years old. Our boys said to him "How high up did you go Sambo? Don't know massa, spec about tree miles. Oh no Sambo? Well I went until I seen de stars. When I was coming down I met massa going up. This negro was taken to our Brigade headquarters (Gen. Legget's), where he remained as a lackey servant for some time. The punishment at this second explosion was all on the Rebel's side. The immense amount of dirt was mostly shifted towards the Confederates which buried about fifty of their men alive. They expected the Yanks to charge at this time in an attempt to break their line, but were happily disappointed.

The sharpshooting and shelling was kept up constantly day and night by the Federals until the third day of July we noticed their white flag on the Rebel works to our left and soon all along their line. This meant an armistice—or to cease hostilities—to cease firing.

In a short time soldiers of both armies were up on their respective works talking to each other and wondering what this all meant. The Confederates were as ignorant as we were. Some Gen. Grant and four or five other Generals of lower rank came riding along our large trench as far as the fort where they turned to the left, rode about one hundred paces and stopped. Then we saw three men ride out of the Rebel lines to where Gen. Grant was awaiting them. This party proved to be Gen. Pemberton and some minor officers. This meeting was for the purpose of arranging terms of capitulation. Grant's terms did not please Gen. Pemberton. The meeting was soon over each party going to their respective headquarters, with the understanding that the white flags should remain where they were until daylight the next morning. Then if Gen. Pemberton accepted Gen. Grant's terms the white flag should remain up, if not they would take them down and the fighting would be on in full force. It appeared that Pemberton wanted to consult his prominent Generals regarding terms that had been offered them, to decide what he best do surrender or not. Sometime in the night of July 3d Gen. Grant received a communication from Gen. Pemberton that his terms were accepted.

The first thing we did on the morning of July 4th was to look for the white flag. To our surprise they were yet waving, saying "no fighting." What else it meant we did not know. The stillness was oppressive no bullets whistling, no roar of artillery. All was absolutely still. How can we endure such a change was in every man's mind. For forty-seven days and nights there had been a constant roar of musketry and artillery, every moment had been full of excitement, our nerves had been strained to the top notch. This extreme was almost unendurable. About nine o'clock we received the word that Gen. Pemberton was going to surrender his army the city and military property. About ten o'clock the headquarter Cornet Band came near to our camp. The first we knew of them they commenced playing "Hail Columbia." It was the first note of music we had heard for more than six weeks. While the band was playing the Confederate soldiers marched to the outer side of their works where they stacked their guns, accouterments and flags then returned to the inside of their works. They were our prisoners. What a sacrifice had been made to accomplish this result.

Gen. Grant had on the battlefield at Vicksburg about forty thousand men, and under his command at the close of the siege between eighty and ninety thousand men. The very moment Gen. Grant knew that Gen. Pemberton's army had surrendered, he ordered Gen. Sherman to take an army and chase Joe Johnston and his men out of the state or a long ways to the rear which he did.

Gen. Grant designated Gen. Logan's Division to march into the
city and take possession of the prisoners and also the government property that would soon be stored or unloaded in Vicksburg. The 45th Ills. Regt. was in advance and soon their flag was flying from the top of Vicksburg's Court House. The 124th Ills. Regt. went into the city that day. I with others was detailed for guard duty. There was a continuous line of guards on the Rebel line of works from one end to the other, so as to keep all the Confederate soldiers on the inside until properly disposed of.

The capitulation of Pemberton on July 4th meant much to the Federal army, a double celebration. To our Regt. it meant among other things that our tents would find us again once more. We had left them at Millikens Bend on April 25th.

The Confederates were as anxious to get out of Vicksburg as we were to get into Vicksburg. They were anxious to hear from their homes and to learn the news from other departments. The lack of food was the main reason for surrendering when they did. There were ten thousand citizens who were hungry, and who had fled from their homes to caves in the hills as Porter's Fleet shelled the city all the while during the siege.

Our Division Commander Gen. Logan was placed in command of the Post. These confederate soldiers had to be fed, in round numbers about thirty thousand, and a large per cent of the citizens of Vicksburg. For the lack of transportation facilities, Gen. Grant decided to parole the entire army that we had captured, which took five or six days. When the paroles were all made out each soldier had his individual parole in his pocket. They were allowed to march out through the line of guards. As before stated I was placed on as one of these guards. Sometime during the fourth of July a Confederate soldier came to me and asked me if I would give him something to eat. I replied "yes." As I had a full haversack I gave the poor fellow all I had except my coffee, for I knew where close by could get plenty more. Of course while he was filling up on Uncle Samuel's rations we were visiting. I asked him if he was ever up north. "Oh yes," "Ever as far north as Illinois?" He answered, "Illinois, Illinois," (with some hesitance) "I don't know sah. I have an uncle somewhere in Illinois on the sea-coast." I said to him that I didn't think he had ever been that far north. "Well" he said with much boldness "I have been as far as Holly Springs, Mississippi," which place was about one hundred miles from where we were then standing.

During my twenty-four hours detail I was taken seriously sick, was compelled to remain where I was at the reserve post, but was excused from further duty by the Sergeant of the guard. The relief guard did not come to relieve us until the evening of July 5th, quite late. I was too sick to attempt to find my Regt. that night so stayed at this reserve post until the following morning. On the morning of July 6th I started out to find by Regt. had not seen for two days. Did not have the least idea where it was located. After much inquiring I found it about noon about a mile out from the city. Our tents had arrived. The ground they occupied was absolutely bare of a single shade tree. Oh, but it was hot. The Doctor came to see me, but it was several days before was able to do duty. About this time we received orders to strike tents, fall in and march. We moved about two miles northeast and made camp amidst some heavy timber, where we had beautiful shade for both man and beast. As was our custom the first thing we did was to clear up the ground so it looked as if ladies had swept and garnished it. But to see a lady in camp was something very unusual. Once in a great while an officer's wife would come to visit him from the north. How pleased we all would be to see them.

At this camp the paymaster paid us two months pay. For a private soldier two months wages was $26. After a few days here I was taken
very sick and was carried to the Regimental Hospital. They had built
an arbor for the sick men. I was placed under this arbor where I lost
consciousness and remained unconscious for several days. When I re-
gained consciousness I was in a hospital tent, and had one of my own
Company for a nurse. Sometime during the fore part of August a general
order from the War Department was issued to send all sick soldiers,
who were able to be sent north. My nurse came to me and said "Steve,
you must change your hospital clothes and put on your own clothes,
you are going to be sent north." By the time I was ready an ambulance
came for me where I was loaded in and taken to the wharf at the boat-
landing at Vicksburg. This boat, I was taken aboard of, was fitted up
expressly for sick soldiers. It was soon filled and steaming up the
river.

There were thousands of soldiers who needed to be sent north so
this boat was unloaded at Memphis, Tenn., and returned for others.
We had come about four hundred miles north. I was placed in a large
building known as Webster Hospital. After being there thirteen days,
having gained a little strength, I was given a thirty day furlough to my
home, which I took. Went within six miles of home on the steamboat.
At the expiration of thirty days I was not sufficiently improved to return
to service. The attending physician gave me an affidavit to that effect.
I remained at home another thirty days. After which time I reported
to the Webster hospital at Memphis, Tenn. The head physician said to
me "It seems to do you boys much good to be sent home." I replied
that it had done me a very great good. He asked me "Do you want
to go to your regiment or stay here a few days. I told him I wanted to go
to my Regt. He turned to an officer and told him to get necessary
transportation for me to my Regt. I was soon on my way ploughing
down the river to Vicksburg. During my absence my Brigade had been
sent twelve miles east to Black River Bridge, the which I soon learned
upon my arrival at Vicksburg. I boarded a train that took me out to
where I found the 124th Regt. The Company boys were glad to see me
march into camp again. They said they never expected to see me again.
The last they saw me was in the Regimental hospital three months be-
fore and very sick. I had entirely recovered and was immediately re-
ported for duty, on the Company books. Which duty consisted chiefly
of picket duty.

The Black river was the line between us and the Rebel territory.
At this camp we were ordered to go into winter quarters. We raised
our tents on a board wall from three to four feet high. Had a lower
and upper bunk with a brick fireplace for each tent and chimneys of
all sorts, perhaps ten feet high. In these tents we kept very comfortable.
Thus fixed we had kitchen, dining room bed room, all in one room about
seven by nine feet. There were about sixteen tents to a Company, eight
on either side of the street running through the center. Each tent had
from two to four soldiers in it. Each Company had to provide its own
fuel to burn, taking about a wagon load a week.

Our Division was known as the 3rd Division 17th Army Corps. The
Division was made up of the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Brigades. The 1st Brigade
was camped at the railroad at Black river bridge. The other two Bri-
gages were in at Vicksburg. Our Division Commander Gen. Legget
thought it good to offer a $2000 banner to the best drilled Regt. in his
Division. There were many conditions in the offer. It included cleanli-
ness of camp, soldierly appearance and conduct, Battallion movements,
manual of arms, etc. This flag should always be known as a Division
banner or in other words, the Regt, carried it should belong to the 3rd
Division 17th Army Corps.

The officers of the 124th Regt. entered into the competition for
Banner for all that was in them, to win. So for two months we had much
practice. Battalion drill every day, sometimes twice a day, excepting Sundays. A committee of five officers in the Division were appointed judges to decide at each contest. Each Brigade was to drill separate to decide which Regt. was the excelsior one in each Brigade. Each Brigade was to drill on separate days, so that the judges could act for all. They commenced with the 1st Brigade, all doing their best. The 124th Regt. won in the 1st Brigade. The 2nd Brigade drilled next. The 78th Ohio Regt. won in that Brigade. Next was the 3rd Brigade. The 17th Ills. Regt. won in that Brigade. In a few days we were notified that we would have to drill against the 78th Ohio and the 17th Ills. On a certain day at Vicksburg. When the day arrived a train of cars was sent out to take the 124th boys to Vicksburg. Leaving the cars we marched to the grounds where we ate our dinner. The time set for the drill was 1 P. M. At the proper time the other two Regiments came on to the grounds. There was a tremendous crowd of sightseers present, so many that the drill ground had to be guarded by other soldiers. First the Regimental Command recast lots to see who would drill first. It fell to the 124th to drill last. We felt while watching those two Regts. drill, they did so well it was not possible that we could excell. Each Regt. was to drill forty minutes. The signal was given for us to show what we could do and every man determined to do his best. When the contest was over the judges unanimously declared the 124th Ills. had won the Excelsior Banner. Our competitors cheered us heartily. Then Gen. McPherson our Corps Commander rode forward and presented the Banner to our Colonel, John H. Howe, with a very complimentary speech. We felt we were amply repaid for the strenuous work it had cost us.

We were taken back to our camp on a train of cars. Were met at stopping place by our Brigade to do us honors for the success we had achieved, saying, if they could not win the Excelsior Banner they were proud to have it come to the 1st Brigade. Surely we felt proud of our achievements.

The next few weeks duties were not so arduous for us being mostly picket duty. Occasionally the Rebel Cavalry would make a dash on the outpost or videt picket. But they knew so well where to stop, not to go too far. I was on picket once when they made a dash but they did not come close enough for me to get a shot at them, yet they were in sight. They were on horseback. They had a cowardly plan of slipping up in the night and firing on our picket.

Our Brigade Commander issued an order that a small per cent of the soldiers could go out in the timber squirrel hunting, a diversion from the monotony of lying about camp. I went one day but found no game. The squirrels had fled across Black river to safety, we supposed. On our way back to camp following along the river we came to a place where some Rebs had felled some trees from each side of river into the river interlacing the tops so as to make a foot-bridge whereby they could cross over, fire on our pickets then recross under the cover of night.

We had some fine athletes with us such as wrestlers, jumpers and foot racers. These fellows furnished much amusement during that winter. We soon learned who the different champions were. John Vlearbone of Company C. was the champion foot racer. Captain Fields of Company C. was the champion half hammond jumper. Walla Baker of Company H. was the champion three-jumps jumper. These three men were champions of our Regt. in their several spheres.

We were allowed to visit friends in adjoining camps, but always had to have a pass when we wished to be absent from our Company, no matter were we wished to go or for how short a time. This was necessary that our officers might know where their men were at all times.

One of the daily duties was dress parade. Every man was expected to go on dress parade unless excused by the surgeon. To be ex-
cused from duty of any kind the soldier had to attend the sick-call, which was sounded at a certain hour every morning, and be excused by the Doctor. Otherwise he was subject to any duty that he was liable to be wanted to perform.

It was almost a daily occurrence for citizens from across the lines to come to our headquarters to purchase supplies. These were mostly women. They would buy such as tobacco, cigars, gloves, drugs, but nothing to eat of any kind. Usually they were a sorry looking outfit. To see a woman returning home with a great large cigar in her mouth was a disgusting sight to us Northern men. The women of the South use tobacco in some form, smoking, chewing or snuff as a generality or did at the war period.

On the 2nd of February, 1864, we received orders to prepare to march. Had been in this camp more than three months. On February 3rd the drum beat the “fall-in” call. Soon we were moving across Black river to the east. As we had a winter’s rest, were in fine trim to march with the best of them. We soon learned that there was a large army to keep company with us, the 16th Corps, commanded by Stephen A. Hurlbert, and the 17th Corps, commanded by James B. McPherson. Both these men were Major Generals. The 16th Corps, twelve thousand strong, and the 17th Corps, about fifteen thousand strong, with some Cavalry and Artillery sufficient to make a force of thirty thousand men, was under the immediate command of Major General W. T. Sherman. The 17th Corps was in advance. This size army, on a single road in marching order, including the necessary wagons that had to be taken along, would cover a fifteen-mile stretch of road. A government wagon is hauled by a six-mule team, with one man as driver, sitting on the near-wheel mule, driving with a single line. The Artillery had from six to eight horses to each gun, the same number to a Caission or Ammunition chest. Invariably the Government supplied the Artillery and Cavalry service with horses, and the wagons to haul Government stores, camp equipage, etc., with mules (that is, in the army that I was with).

Our tents were left standing at the place of starting. None of us had the remotest idea where we were going but General Sherman. He knew, of course, where we had started for, and it was up to the other fellow whether we succeeded or not.

We had gone but a short distance when we heard firing at the front. The scouts had found Mr. Rebel, who had exchanged shots with our boys. But this great force of men moved on the first day. The second day there was enough force to dispute the right of way. Our advance deployed two Regiments in line of battle, with skirmishers in front to clear the road. As we advanced there seemed to be more of the enemy in our front. Will say just here, an army as this was, had to eat cold dinner. Every soldier was supposed to carry his own rations, and could eat at any time he chose during the day; at night and morning, could build a fire and boil his coffee and warm his “sow belly,” if he had any, to go with his hard tack. Sometimes he might have some sweet potato or chicken for a variety to go with his Government rations. These, however, were not issued to us by Uncle Sam.

I think it was on the third day out that we came to the saddest sight that I saw while in the army. It was one of our men lying by the roadside with his head shot off by a cannon ball. We were told he was on the skirmish line, was concealed behind a large gate post, but exposed his head to a rebel gun near by with the result as above stated. The entire head was gone, nowhere to be seen. Of the many men who I had seen wounded in all conceivable forms and mangled to shreds, this incident made the strongest appeal to my humane feelings of them all. The gun, at the time it shot this man, was standing in the back yard of a residence. While it was being fired at our men, a woman stood near it,
and was killed by a bullet from some of our skirmishers, so we were told. I did not see her, as they had carried her into the house ere our part came along.

The enemy was not yet strong enough to give battle, so we made the usual day's march. On the fourth day, early in the morning, our Brigade being in front, we passed through Clinton, Miss. My Regiment being on the skirmish line, we soon met the enemy in force. We were halted. While we were halted there was a piece of shell just missed my head. I could not hear anything out of my left ear for the remainder of the day. The 16th Corps was sent to the left, trying to get behind the enemy, but they found it out in time to retreat and save themselves from capture. We were ordered forward. This was the early part of the day. The Rebels made no attempt to engage in battle that day. About camping time our Division Commander halted us, and said he had just received word that our Cavalry had possession of Jackson, Miss., and they wanted some Infantry to help hold it, also that he expected to go into camp here. He said, "Will you go?" Some one asked him how far it was, and he replied, three miles. The men said, "Yes, yes, we are good for three miles more." We found those three miles long ones after three hours of hard marching. They proved to be nine miles. He may have meant three times three, but did not say so. At any rate it was a real object lesson to us ever afterwards; at least we were never fooled so easily again. We made twenty-five miles that day, several of them in line of battle.

The next morning I could hear very well, and the Rebels did not try to retake Jackson. It was simply a ruse played on us completely. We got to rest the next day, while the remainder of the army overtook us.

This city, Jackson, suffered much from the war. This was the third time the Federal army had entered it. The pontoon bridge soon was laid across Pearl river, which flowed just east of the city. After crossing the river, we pushed on to the east at regular rate, no organized Rebel army being immediately in front of us. Thus we continued for a few days, when the indications were plain that the enemy was increasing in force in our front. About this time our Brigade of four Regiments was ordered off to the right of the main column, to a station on the Vicksburg and Charleston railroad, to burn the railroad bridge, tear up the track, and burn what cotton we found, etc. Each man was to carry sixty rounds of ammunition. Before we reached the station, we came to the Rebel pickets, quartered in an unfinished building. In the same yard was a family residence. By an order from the commanding officer, a file of men from my Company was detailed to burn those houses. The poor woman pleaded for her home, but that could not save it. Such was war. No doubt the commander had justifiable reasons for issuing the order, but to a private soldier it seemed contrary to the Golden Rule.

We soon discovered a strong force. Two Regiments of our men were deployed as skirmishers, the other two as supporters. Orders were given to advance on the double-quick. This proved to be the right move, as the enemy hastily evacuated the place. In their great hurry they left a number of loaded wagons in the small river near by, cutting the mules loose, thereby making their escape from the Yankee Army. The Rebels could easily have stood us off, for they outnumbered us, but they had no way of knowing but what Sherman's whole army was coming onto them.

In making this advance, the Rebel bullets were singing pretty plentifully. I heard a man of my Company say, "Oh, Lieutenant, I am nearly dead." I looked to see what the trouble was, and to my surprise I saw the Lieutenant had his sword against the man's back, keeping him in place with this explosive. "Oh, damn you, you have never smelled gunpowder yet, but you have got to smell it today." This poor fellow, somehow, some way, in all the battles we had been in, was always miss-
ing. Perhaps we would not see him for five days afterwards. His story of his absence was that he had been fighting with some other Regiment. The boys had another version of the matter, however. For this man's satisfaction, the enemy had flown, and he would not have to hunt another Regiment to do his part with. I shall name this man John, as will allude to him again, as he became notorious before we camped for the night.

After we came into possession of Chunkeysville, the work of destruction commenced, which included the burning of a vast amount of cotton, railroad depot, railroad track and bridge over the river, and two strong stockades. This was railroad and Confederate property. When through, turned and marched until we found the road the main column had traveled, where we camped for the night. During the afternoon's march, in passing a pretentious plantation house, an officer of my Company said, "I will carry any man's gun and accoutrements who will go into that house and bring me a coverlet." John said, "I'll do that." So it was arranged and carried out. Soon after, we went into camp. Shortly after, a woman, with some small children came into camp, all crying, and went to my Colonel, saying that his men had taken all her bed clothes. The Colonel told her to go through his Regiment, and anything that she found that belonged to her, she should have. Suffice it to say the poor woman did not find what had been taken from her. What I have related about John shows that all who wore the "Blue" were not built alike; also that if all were heroes, it must include on different lines of action. This taking of personal private property was all wrong at that time, as any time before or since.

We moved early next day, and marched into Meridian, Miss., where we found Sherman's army. This town is located at the crossing of the Vicksburg and Charleston railroad and the Mobile and Ohio railroad. Our business was to destroy these railroad tracks, rendering them as useless for the future as possible. We tore up thirty miles of track within the time we were there. We burned the ties, and twisted the rails by heating them. Some of these we wound around trees—of course "with our blessings."

Meridian at that time was a small village. Only one Confederate industry was located here, which was destroyed. One of Sherman's men took this opportunity for revenge. It seemed that this fellow passed through Meridian on a former occasion, being a prisoner of war. While here a certain woman asked his guard the privilege of spitting in the Yankee's face, which was given her. So at this time he called on the woman, mentioned the fact what she had done, and told her that now it was his time for sweet revenge. He set her house on fire, which burned. She rescued some of her chattels, carrying them to another house. He followed her until he had burned three houses. It would seem that the soldier came off first best that time.

Meridian was near the east state line, about one hundred and fifty miles from Vicksburg and our communications or base of supplies. When the work of destruction at Meridian was done, we received orders to march—to where, never concerned the private soldier. The thing for him to do was to obey orders, let it take him where it would. When he had done that, he was a good, faithful soldier, and had done all that was expected of him.

When the army left Meridian, it moved in a north of west direction through a pine forest. We surmised we were going back to where we started from. The usual amount of skirmishing began, but not serious enough to check the progress of the main army.

There were many unexpected things transpired with such an army—some ludicrous, others ugly and serious. In passing a large residence, some of our men went to one of the outbuildings, where they found a
middle-aged man tied up. When asked what his being tied up meant, he replied that the owner of the place was a "conscript agent" of the Confederate Government, whose business it was to run down every man who was able to bear arms in that country, with bloodhounds, and force them into the Confederate Army. He was asked where the agent was. The man pointed to a thicket of brush near by. Our soldiers went as directed to the thicket, and found Mr. Agent. He was brought to face his prisoner at headquarters. The evidence was such that the agent was ordered to be tied to the rear end of one of the government wagons, and his prisoner, who had been found tied up, was to guard him with a revolver for the day. After we had gone into camp, the agent was ordered to headquarters for a hearing. When the trial was over, he was placed in the charge of an officer and a detail of twelve men, with the order to take him to "Dry Tortugas," which meant to his own execution. (Dry Tortugas is a barren island in the gulf of Mexico.) The evidence showed that this agent had brutishly caused many deaths, and that he was to receive a stated amount for every man he furnished to the Confederate Government.

Perhaps, the second day out, as we were passing a residence, the air was swarming plentifully with honey bees. They were surely on the warpath. Some sweet-toothed fellow had evidently tipped over a gum to obtain some honey. The more noise we made, the more attractive they became to the soldiers. While the men were reducing this apiary, a young woman came out to warn the men to desist from further inter- perturbing the bees, that they would get stung badly, whereon they paid no attention to her warning—only laughed at her, saying, "No, they would not bite." Then she retorted, "I hope to God they will sting you to death." That prayer did not save the honey, however.

Perhaps it was the second night out I was detailed to guard prisoners that our Cavalry had captured, amounting to thirty or forty, made up of bushwhackers. Some were old men. When I was placed on guard, some were crying, fearing they could not keep up next day, then the guards would kill them by running bayonets through them. I tried to console them by telling them that they should not be hurt while I was their guard, also adding, "Tis true, your lives are in the guards' hands as helpless prisoners, but no true guard, one worthy of the name, will suffer you to be harmed while in custody."

About a day after we crossed Pearl river, we came to the town of Canton, Miss., located on the Mississippi Central railroad, in the richest agricultural district I have seen in the state. I suppose the town had one thousand inhabitants, possibly more. We captured twenty-two locomotives and a large amount of rolling stock, which was destroyed in such manner that it could never be of any more service to the Confederacy. Having eaten all our rations that we had taken with us, it was a case of necessity to forage off the enemy, as we were sixty miles from our supplies with nothing else to subsist on. After burning the railroad bridges, we remained there several days. Most of the time it was old, rainy weather. We thought of the snug quarters we had left, but now it was out in the open, and had to take what came to us.

While here at Canton, quite a number of our Regiment, while out on a scouting expedition, were captured by a force of Rebels dressed in our uniforms. The scouting party were returning to the camp. The Rebel force cut them off from the camp by forming across the road they were on, and waited there until our men came up real close, when they opened fire on them. Our men dismounted and fought them until they saw they were overpowered. Our commanding officer told our men, for every man to look out for himself. Some were killed, some were captured, the rest came to us after hiding by day and traveling by night.

General Sherman sent a courier to Vicksburg for a train of supplies
or rations to come to our relief, which in an incredible time reached us. An empty haversack is a great misfortune to a soldier. The train of commissary rations that came to us was guarded by a Brigade of soldiers, which usually was made up of from fifteen hundred to three thousand men. This was the only time in my life that getting short of rations happened. The chief quartermaster at Vicksburg, when making up the supplies for this campaign, fell short one million rations by mistake.

Rain, rain, Oh, how it did rain! Yet the soldier had no choice. His duties were continuous, wet or dry, warm or cold. The work of destroying all property that would be of any advantage to our enemy at Canton, being completed, we moved on, the Rebel Cavalry ever lurking on our flanks. The roads were almost impassable. We marched all day, making six miles. It rained about a half of the time that day. We got into camp some time after dark. I was detailed to picket duty. Order was to report to Division headquarters. This guard was from the Division, and was about two hundred strong. We left headquarters about 11 o’clock that night. I, with two German soldiers, was left out in an open field. These men I had never seen before nor since. I, being the younger of the three, left it to them how we should divide the time, and who should stand the first tour. They took the first and second tours, leaving me the third tour, which ended at daylight. Our orders were to have no light during the night. It was a cold night, a crust was frozen on top of the ground. In my efforts to sleep, I lay there with my teeth rattling “to beat the band.” All the covering I had with me was an oilcloth blanket, which was alright to keep our ammunition dry, but not to keep out freezing temperature, especially when there was nothing between it and the bare, wet and freezing ground. The German comrades did not offer to splice coverings, whereby we would all have been benefited, nor did I ask them to. I suffered more that night from the weather than any other time during my service. Why do the old soldiers think so much of the Flag of our Country? Because of so much suffering and so much blood shed by the truest men that lived at that period. We had that reverence for the Flag burned into us during the summer months, froze into us during the winter months, and shot into us during the entire year.

When morning came, those German fellows hiked out to help me make a fire. There being an old rail fence near by, we soon had about twenty-five top rails together and burning and our coffee cans heating. Meanwhile I was doing my best to get warm, being so near chilled through it was almost impossible to get thawed out. My teeth kept rattling until I had drunk nearly a quart of boiling hot coffee. While eating our breakfast we could see our army moving on the march. With no instructions to relieve ourselves, we expected an officer to come and relieve us from this post, but none came. I knew it was the day for my Regiment to be rear guard of everything; so after finishing my breakfast, having got thoroughly warmed up, I formed a column of my own, and pulled for the advance of the army. When I came to the 14th Illinois Regiment, I marched with them until about three o’clock, when I stopped for my own Regiment, knowing that the advance would soon go into camp to let the rear catch up. About an hour after dark, my Regiment came along. It was so dark I could not tell one man from another by sight, but I knew their voices. Our Company, being the color bearers, I watched for the flag staff, which I could see between me and the blue sky. When I stepped into my place, a number of men commenced helloing Beck, hello Beck, where have you been for so long. For once I did wish they would keep still, for their interrogating questions were going to get me into trouble. The Regiment marched only a short distance, and camped for the night. While fixing a place to sleep that night, my Captain came to me and asked where I had been that day. I told him, and he said, “Didn’t you know it was against orders to be away from your command without per-
mission?" I said that I did. Then he asked me if I had permission from any of my commanding officers. I replied I had none. He said, "Get your supper, then you will go with me to the Colonel; I have to report you." In due time he came for me, and took me about half way to the Colonel's tent, when he stopped and told me how surprised the Colonel was when he had reported me to him, as the Colonel had said to him that he thought I was one of the best soldiers he had in the Regiment. Then I told the Captain I was on picket the night before, how I had suffered from the cold, and had not slept a wink all night, and was not properly relieved from the picket post in the morning, and that I knew that a man in my condition could march easier in the advance than in the rear. "Well," he said, "you go to your quarters; we will say nothing more about it." I have always regretted that I did not insist on having an interview with the Colonel there and then. I am thoroughly convinced the Colonel would have given the Captain a genuine reprimand and dismissed me with his blessing when he knew the facts of the case. This was the first and only time that I was ever reported to my superior officers while in the U. S. service.

The Rebels kept hovering near us, watching for an opportunity to pounce onto an inferior force. Our men were veterans of warfare, never fearing when the enemy did their best.

If the road conditions were favorable, this sized army would move about fifteen miles a day. If conditions were very good, they did correspondingly more. Eighteen or twenty miles would be above the average.

We finally reached our camp at Big Black river, where we had left our tents standing thirty-one days before, they having been occupied by the 47th Illinois Regiment while we were gone. They readily vacated, and we took possession. We had traveled over three hundred miles. The main army went on in to Vicksburg, which was twelve miles away.

Our duties for the next month were light, with the exception of picket duty, which was heavy. The 1861 volunteers as Regiments had re-enlisted, and were given thirty days' furlough. Most of our Division having veteranized and gone home, General Sherman and his Corps and Division Commanders left us for other departments to arrange for the spring campaign, which would be on as soon as these veterans returned from their furloughs. The 124th had not been in long enough to be allowed to re-enlist, the time being two years. These Regiments leaving us, it proved we were never to meet again during the war. Oh, how we did regret that we could not go with these officers and men who we had been with us since arriving at our first camp in Tennessee eighteen months before. We had passed through many battles together and all kinds of campaigning, and we felt lost without the "old boys," as we called each other.

When they returned from their furloughs and reported for duty, it was to report in another field of operation, where they retained the same name, known as the 3rd Division of the 17th Army Corps, as they had always been known from the beginning. Consequently, under this order of things, the 124th Regiment had to send the Excelsior Banner we had won in the drill at Vicksburg, to them, as one of the stipulations when presented to us was that it always should remain in the 3rd Division.

This Excelsior Banner was never carried by any other Regiment. The Atlanta campaign coming on soon after, before the old Division had time to compete for it. It, with all unnecessary camp property, was stored at Nashville, Tenn. So far as is known to this day, this has never been heard from since. General Leggett, the old Division commander, says in regard to it that he stored it at Nashville on the eve of the Atlanta campaign, and that later on, when General Hood (Rebel) threatened Nashville, much of the military property was restored and lost. At any
rate it has been lost ever since. General Leggett bought and paid for the Banner, and 'twas a natural thing for him to want his own Regiment to carry this Banner. Many think it was a shrewd act of his to have the 124th Regiment detached from the 3rd Division, so that by another contest his Regiment, the 78th Ohio, would be more fortunate than at the first contest, and win it.

Our march to Meridian, Miss., was the forerunner of what is known as the "ATLANTA CAMPAIGN," by destroying so much railroad property that would be used in supplying the Rebel armies further east, as the southwest was the granary of the Confederacy, and Texas was their main source of supplies of beef and transporting their troops and war material. This destruction was incalculable.

In the first week of April, 1864, we were ordered to go to Vicksburg to do patrol and picket duty in the city. This provost duty was far from being a matter of choice or pleasant military duty. We came in daily contact with the riff-raff of the city—the toughs, the off-sourings of the human race of both sexes. Gambling resorts were open, and crimes of every conceivable nature known were being committed. The heavy details for this duty soon counted fast on our small Regiment, which in the eighteen months of service had been reduced from ten hundred to less than three hundred.

The necessary arrangements were made to send home a representative from each Company for recruits. This resulted very well for all the different Companies. There were added to the Regiment more than one hundred. Quite a number of ex-Confederate soldiers enlisted, and proved to be faithful soldiers to the end of the war.

As the season advanced into summer, there was more sickness. The army life demonstrated very forcibly that for size to withstand hard service, the men being sound to begin with, whose weight was from one hundred and twenty-five to one hundred and sixty pounds, would endure for a long term of fatigue and hard service much more than the larger men. I noticed this so plainly in my own Company when or before our time expired. The large men had been weeded out. With most of our big fellows, when they got sick, it proved fatal or disabled them permanently.

Our Regimental mail carrier went daily to the city post office for our mail. Before going, he would pass by the head of each Company and collected any mail matter that was ready to be posted, and posted it at the office, so our postal system was quite systematized. We had no concern or worry if we were short on postage stamps, for the law was such that a soldier could take his letter to a commissioned officer, who had the right to "frank" it. This would insure its safe delivery, and was a great convenience to the soldiers, as we we e not supposed to be where we could procure postage stamps.

As all transportation and communication with the north was done on steamboats, we soon learned by the sound of a boat whistle coming down the river, when it would whistle for a landing, whether it had mail on it or not. How the soldiers would scream, "Fall in for your mail!" The letters from friends at home had a wonderful effect on the faithfulness of the private soldier, and all members of the army for that matter. These letters were always so encouraging.

The great Sanitary Commission was active in relieving the sick and wounded soldiers, and providing reading rooms in cities of the south to be fed, for Uncle Sam had declared them free. The negro men who where our forces were in possession, and sending delicacies to the hospitals for the sick and wounded, which the Government did not provide. We all said, "God bless the loyal women and the United States Christian Commission." I often visited the reading rooms at Vicksburg.

Thousands and thousands of negroes came to Vicksburg, who had to
could pass the examination to enlist, became Federal soldiers. Many thousand enlisted. These had to be officered by white soldiers—privates taken from Regiments. All commissioned officers, such as Lieutenants, Captains, Majors, Lieutenant Colonels and Colonels, were white men, and all non-commissioned officers were colored. It was a great opportunity for those who wanted to avail themselves of those associations. There were twelve to fifteen of my Company who were thus promoted to commissions. I did not aspire to that kind of notoriety. I sanctioned the measure with all my power. Let Mr. Negro help to obtain his freedom. If he was good enough or man enough to stand up between me and a Rebel bullet, he had my consent.

If the negro filled these conditions satisfactorily, he was entitled to all the rights of an American citizen. These colored troops were used mostly for garrison duty, and were mostly assigned to Heavy Artillery Regiments, yet they were armed with muskets the same as Infantry, and could do the duty of either branch of service if necessary.

For every command of colored troops, it let a command of white soldiers free to be used in the field or on campaign service.

The Southern Confederacy used these negroes as long as they could in building their fortifications. When the Federal Government turned the table on them by utilizing the colored race, it was a long and vital stroke toward the termination of the great Civil War.

On May 2nd we moved our camp. We had just succeeded in making ourselves comfortable when we received marching orders, and on the 4th of May we were off on what proved to be an eighteen-day scout. We found ourselves with the 11th Illinois and the 72nd Illinois, Colonel Coates Brigade Commander and General McArthur in command of the expedition. The weather was hot and the roads dusty. We made twenty-two miles the first day, which was very hard on the men. The next day we started at daylight, making twenty-five miles that day. We were played and sung to sleep by a Rebel's daughter performing on a piano. Her principal tune was The Bonnie Blue Flag. On May 6th we marched seventeen miles. The principal feature of the day was the capture of a squad of Rebels. As there had never been any Yankees in this part of the country before, chickens were plenty in camp that night. We were off at four o'clock on the morning of May 7th. Soon we heard cannonading in front. We were ordered to load our guns, and were soon thrown into line of battle. Skirmishers were sent out, and the enemy fell back. We had two men killed. The Rebels left two men killed on the field, whom we buried. We captured a courier with dispatches from General Lee.

We remained here a few days while our Cavalry was busy scouting. On the second day I took a tramp into the woods adjoining our camp. Went out beyond our picket and came out into a road. I concluded had gone far enough for my safety. In going back to the camp, at a turn of the road I came upon the complete outfit of a Rebel Cavalryman—saddle, haversack and canteen. I picked it up, as thought it quite a prize for the boys to see, there being such a contrast in it and what our Government furnished us. I soon came to a picket guard, who said, "What is that you have got, and where did you get it?" and I told him. He said, "Well, I shot at a Rebel Cavalryman just a few minutes ago." The truth of it was, at the crack of the man's gun, the horse wheeled and broke the girth and dropped his mount where I found it. I took it to camp, and kept the wooden canteen until the close of the war as a souvenir of the Rebellion. It was made out of cedar wood, and when filled, the water kept cool longer than in the metal ones.

This incident brought about a little later on a funny experience to us, but not to the other fellow. After I had told the story about these Rebel goods, a Captain of our Regiment obtained permission to take a
body of men and skirmish through the timber where I had been. He asked for volunteers to go, and about fifteen or twenty of us volunteered. We deployed as skirmishers. I was on the extreme left of line. Off we went, expecting to find Rebels a plenty, but after going about a half mile through the timber, we came to a fence, on the opposite of which was a very large open field. Obliquely across this field sat three Rebels on their horses. To the left of them sat a lone videt picket on a mule. I told the Captain I would take the lone man. The rest fired at the three to the right. I elevated my gun above his head at a dead rest on the top of the fence. At the crack of the gun the fun commenced—for us. The fellow wheeled his mule to the rear; I shouted, “See him go!” The poor fellow, the way he did play “jubba” with his heels to that mule was a caution. The four men lived to tell the story so far as our marksmanship went. The man that I shot at, by the exertions he put forth, demonstrated the fact that he realized that he was close to danger. They went to the rear to an outbuilding. After we got through with our sport, we returned to camp and reported where our affrighted men were. A twelve-pound gun, loaded with a percussion shell, was trained on the gable end of the house and fired. It was a center shot. When the shell struck the building, it exploded. It was fun to watch those fellows “hike” away as fast as their horses would take them. My, my, how they did go! The fun was all one-sided that day.

The Rebel force that was about us belonged to Wirt Adams’ command. Being mounted, we could not get close enough to give battle.

We marched to Yazoo City, quite a town, located on the Yazoo river, one hundred miles from Vicksburg. I saw here a sawmill plant that had been burned two years before, and the sawdust was still burning. From here we went back to Vicksburg, arrived at our camp May 21st, having accomplished very little on this campaign. The next few weeks nothing transpired worthy of mention. We were on picket daily, and did some fatigue duty. On June 24th I went to see a military execution. A negro soldier had shot his wife, and was shot in the presence of a vast concourse of people. He seemed to think it an immense joke to the last, and was shot sitting in his coffin. He was pierced with five bullets, and expired almost instantly. This was the first execution I had witnessed and the last. It was too dreadful to describe. A few days later there was another execution near us. Three negro soldiers had mutinied and were shot. My brother witnessed this execution. The parties were a Sergeant and two privates. At the crack of the guns they all fell, but the Sergeant would have gotten up, but the officer commanding the firing party went forward and killed him with his revolver. As far as I knew, this ended mutinying among the negroes.

On the anniversary of our being in the slaughter-pen in Fort Hill, in front of Vicksburg, on the 26th of June, 1863, our Colonel issued and address on June 26, 1864 which was as follows:

‘Headquarters of 124th Ills. Infantry,

Vicksburg, Miss., June 26, 1864.

Officers and Soldiers:

I deem it fit and proper to make note and mention that this is the anniversary of a day never to be forgotten by you—a day which will live in history and of which you may well be proud, the day of the assault by you upon Fort Hill, the bulwark of the defence of Vicksburg. Consecrated by the blood of your heroic comrades who nobly fell in that deadly contest of fire and blood, as well as by the steady, dauntless valor of all engaged, it has shed untarnished and enduring lustre upon your fame and powers as American soldiers.

Cherishing the memory of our fallen brothers, emulating their patriotic devotions to the cause of freedom and good government, let us strive to maintain the reputation you this day won, and by the blessing of Him
who rules the destinies of Nations, may its next return witness the final overthrow of a wicked and causeless rebellion, the complete restoration of the government over all the land, and a glorious and honorable peace, nobly and honorably won.

J. H. HOWE,
Lieut. Col. Commanding."

On July 1, 1864 we were under marching orders, this time commanded by Major General Slocum, a fine, cool, and competent officer. Our number was about two thousand muskets and one or two field batteries and a train of wagons about one hundred in number—enough wagons for ten times as many men for it took nearly half of the men to guard the train. This expedition went to Jackson, Miss. As soon as we crossed Black river we found the enemy and the farther we went the more trouble they gave us. The heat of those July days was almost unendurable. Many of our men were overcome from the heat. The enemy made a stand saying to us that we had gone as far as we were going to. We met the cavalry boys going to the rear saying to us, "They are over there sho." To this our men would reply with all kinds of gibes.

The Infantry formed in line of battle. "Forward" was the order. We moved through a dense thicket which was almost impossible to get through. When we got through and formed again at the edge of a field we could see the glimmer of the Rebel artillery about thirty rods in our front. There was a swell of the ground midway between them and us, so when their artillery was playing on us, to clear this swell the shells would go above our heads, tearing the limbs of the trees, sending consternation to some, and bursting shells seeking whom they might devour. The Rebels sent their shells as fast as their guns would permit; they would soon become so hot they would have to let them cool off. Among the comical events of the hour was a big "nigger" who was dressed with a long linen duster on. He surmised that the Rebels were shooting at him, paying their respects to him direct and he would hide behind a big tree, then between shots would run to another tree for safety. The shells kept trimming the branches of the trees so close to him that he got out from beneath the trees and into an open place and laid flat on the ground on his stomach. Soon a shell was sent near him and bursted. That was to much for Sambo. He took it for granted that meant for him to get to the rear. He "beat it" leaving only a white streak behind him. Don't think he wore the white duster after that day's experience.

These comical events were calculated for the time to take our minds off our own serious surroundings, for we were in just as much or more danger of being hurt than Sambo was.

This fusilade was kept up for some time. Our Colonel seeing to left face his Regt. and a short space movement would take us out of this exposure, ordered us to make this move. While executing this order a solid shot passed through our ranks immediately in front of me missing me only a few inches. It struck beneath Sargeant Griffith's foot (he was in Company I) and crippled him for life. I heard this shot coming and I felt it would hit me, and was relieved to know it did not. If it had struck me no doubt it would have cut me in two.

You may want to know where Sambo got his linen duster. The government never issued it to him we know. No doubt he found it some where and appropriated it. I saw this man Griffith some twenty-five years after this. He was a seriously crippled man. He told me the Government was giving him twenty-four dollars a month pension.

Gen. Slocum intended for us to charge this force across the field, but changed his plan as the Rebels had as much Infantre back of the artillery as there were of us. We were ordered out of this place to the rear a short distance, then by the left flank as we were moving we
could see the Rebels moving in the same direction that we were, perhaps three-fourths of a mile from us. We went on into the city of Jackson without any more fighting and destroyed much public property.

That day we went into Jackson the heat was almost unendurable by man or beast. Once I remembered we went into the shade of a grove to rest and there were only five guns to stack in my Company. The others had given out, sunstruck, had failed to keep up. They came on later. We remained here one day, leaving the city in the P. M. We had got out on the Vicksburg road about three miles, when to our right front we could see this same Rebel force marching to get possession of the road we were on which they would have done had we stayed in the city an hour longer. In a few minutes the battle was on. It seems the Rebels had received a Brigade of reinforcements by rail and was now prepared to clean us up according to their strength. We fought them until the darkness put a stop to it. The next morning the battle opened up with a brisk firing.

The immense train hampered us very much. Our Colonel was ordered to move out and on the Vicksburg road and open it so as to get the train in front of the army which he did. We found no Rebel forces on the road so the train was put in front. Col. Howe had ordered to take that train to Vicksburg or to the hot place.

While the train was passing and getting in front, we were resting on a high knoll where we could see both armies in battle only about a mile away. While this train was going over this high knoll in plain view of the Rebels a Rebel battery trained their guns on us and the struggling wagon train. It was a laughable sight to watch those teamsters and African refugees crossing this exposed place of about one hundred and fifty yards with their black snake whips popping and the teamsters saying "good mules, please come on, do hurry, now come on." When out of danger of those solid shots their persuasive language suddenly changed to one they understood. In passing this entire train that Rebel gun killed only one span of mules which stopped one wagon. The Colonel placed seven Companies in front and five in the rear, two Companies of which number were loaned from another Regiment.

As soon as the train got a suitable distance on toward Vicksburg, Gen. Slocum had his army to fall back leaving the wounded to become prisoners—the dead for the Rebels to bury. This was the first battle and the last where our Regt. was engaged that this happened, that we could not bury our own dead. Near the town of Clinton, Gen. Slocum massed his artillery, supported it with his infantry. On came the Rebels stimulated with whisky and gunpowder charging our batteries like demons, our boys mowing them down as they continued to advance. Our forces did not succeed in stopping them until they were within a few paces of our guns, then only with double shotted sannister putting an end to that battle. Gen. Slocum sent in a flag of truce arranging that the Rebels would properly care for the wounded and bury the dead, etc. Meantime had sent couriers through to Vicksburg for reinforcements; a force of cavalry to be sent immediately to him which he soon got. Slocum then turned and went to Jackson, Miss., and whipped the Rebels to a frazzel. They did not want to fight Gen. Slocum any more.

With this cavalry force after arriving at Jackson Gen. Slocum turned south and came out at Baton Rouge. There took boats and came back to Vicksburg making a raid of several hundred miles. We took the train through safely to Vicksburg. It was always a mystery to us of low degree why they ever took such a train with only two thousand men, unless some one imagined they could load the wagons with cotton. Cotton would bring near a dollar a pound at that time. The soldier knew too well how to burn cotton for any one to enter into that kind of business. Had those wagons been loaded with cotton, they would have gone up in
smoke long before they reached Vicksburg.' Those lives that expedition cost were offered for a principle, and not to be sacrificed for a monetary gain or proposition.

We were out nine days from camp, and marched a distance of one hundred miles. The heat punished our men more than the Rebels did. We resumed our picket duty, which was nearly every day, as so many men were ailing from excessive heat during the days, and cool nights. We lost some of our best men from sickness. Our Company, too, was visited by the "grim monster—death."

The next ripple of excitement that came to us was the Presidential election. The enthusiasm ran high. We as Illinois soldiers could not vote for President unless we were within the boundary line of the State of Illinois, while the sister states allowed their soldiers to vote as free as if they were at their own homes. You may wonder why this was so. The Illinois Legislature refused to pass an act allowing her soldiers this right for the reason that a majority of that Legislature was in sympathy with the south, known in politics as members of the Democratic party. All Democrats were not disloyal to the Government, but all Rebels voted the Democratic ticket, or were Democrats. This act was a burning stigma on the State of Illinois and a disloyal act to her soldiers.

At a vote taken in the 124th Regiment, Illinois Infantry, the Excelsior Regiment of the old 3rd Division, 17th Army Corps, and a Regiment which presented one of the finest organizations of Illinois troops, the following was the results:

| Whole number of votes cast | 516
| For Abraham Lincoln | 502
| For George B. McClellan | 14

George B. McClellan declared in his letter of acceptance of the nomination as candidate for President, that after four years of internecine war it had proved a failure. As near as we could judge, he as leader of the Eastern Army was decidedly a failure. The other candidate stood for prosecuting the war until every armed traitor was willing to submit to the authority of the United States Government, treason forever stamped out, "one country, one language, one flag." We were proud of the results of the straw vote of our Regiment.

The last of July, 1864, General N. T. J. Dana relieved General Slocum, who left us for Sherman's army. We jogged along doing our share of picket duty. The Marine Cavalry was disbanded. The men were made Infantrymen. They made some trouble about it, but it did not last long. The Marine Brigade was placed within the fortification of the 5th U. S. Cavalry Regiment. Ever and anon there were rumors that Vicksburg would be attacked for the benefit of those soldiers within the fortifications. The city at this time was so strongly fortified that a few thousand soldiers could have held the place against the whole Confederate army. The Rebels knew this, and had no inclination to attack this point.

After a few days of rumors that we were going to receive marching orders, they came for a fact. We left camp late in the evening, were marched to the wharf, and on to a stern-wheeler steamboat, the "SHE-NANIOK" bound up the river. In due time we arrived at the mouth of the White river, Arkansas. We seemed to be alone from Vicksburg. We disembarked, and were soon ordered aboard a White river boat, supposed to be bound up the White river somewhere to the interior of Arkansas. Before we got started, a boat came down the Mississippi river as fast as a tremendous head of steam could push her. A scare was on at Memphis, Tenn. Forest's command was expected to capture the city unless more troops were immediately sent to the rescue. Our Regiment and one other Regiment were ordered aboard this steamer, and away we went up to rescue Memphis. By the time we got there, the scare was over for the time. We went ashore and on into Fort Pickering. Were quartered
in some box cars, and were sent out beyond the city a few miles to protect some wood-choppers, then returned to the Fort in the evening. Another scare developed, and we were routed out, but it proved to be a false alarm. Our next orders were to report at the mouth of the White river, Arkansas, which we did, going down on the steamer "MAGENTA." When we reached this point and reported at headquarters, were ordered to proceed to Vicksburg. Arrived there in the middle of the night. We disembarked and marched to our old quarters in mud shoe-mouth deep. Distance traveled was eight hundred miles.

The mail that accumulated for us was eagerly read. After fixing up and resting one day, we were sent into the city, and relieved the 72nd Illinois Regiment, who had been doing provost duty for some time. The 58th Ohio Regiment of Infantry were our associates in this provost duty, which we passed together very pleasantly for four months, relieving each other every alternate morning. In that way we had a day on and a day off duty continuously for the whole of both Regiments. Most of our Regiment disliked this kind of duty. We were stationed in the jails, refugees' quarters, steamboat landings, wood yards, stables, theatres, and to hover around drinking holes, gambling dens and brothels. We had to become posted in all the iniquity of the city, patrol all the streets, and come in contact with all its villains, and such a life can be but demoralizing to the average soldier. Had we been permitted to choose, there were but few of our number but who would have gladly gone to the front, despite its perils.

While we doing picket duty, there was a call for a detail from our Regiment to guard a squad of deserters and conscripts to New Orleans. It fell to me to be one of the detail to go. We were gone about ten days. Nothing of importance transpired on that trip. We delivered the men into safe hands. Had to wait for the boat to unload and then take a cargo of freight. We were there some three days. This was a very enjoyable trip to those who had never seen the lower Mississippi river. It is surely named "The Father of Waters." One who has never seen it can not realize its magnitude, for it is immense and then some. Only for the great levees on each side to keep it within bounds, it would be miles and miles wide. The surface of the river is much higher than the surface of the land back of these levees, so the river looks as if it flowed along on a ridge. We could see for miles beyond the levees. The farmers were busy at work by the hundreds, on their plantations. Through the sugar-cane district, the people claimed foreign protection, which was granted or respected. At these residences one could see the foreign flag noised.

An incident occurred to me one day as we were nearing New Orleans. I spied an alligator lying in the river undisturbed, perhaps thirty rods from the boat. I could not let the opportunity go by. I grabbed up my rifle and gave him one round. I made a good line shot. The animal was farther from me than he looked to be and I hit the river, that was all. I was up on the hurricane deck when I fired. The officer came up from below very much excited, supposing we had been attacked by the guerrillas. He was pointed out the cause of the alarm, and told me not to repeat it, saying "I would have been tempted to have done the same thing myself." This officer was not a Regular Army man, or I would have received punishment for this breach of liberty.

On our return to Vicksburg, while in this foreign-protected district, the boat landed on the east shore at a wood-landing. I watched the boat clerk measuring several cords of wood to be taken on. Thinks I, they will be quite a while putting on all that wood he has measured, and now is my time to go ashore and get some vegetables or milk, and take a short scout. I had wandered about fifty rods away from the boat when the bell began to ring. Knowing what that meant, I put forth all my energies to get to the boat. The bell kept ringing while I was making all
possible speed to reach the boat. When I did arrive at the boat-landing there was just a foot plank left for me to get into the boat. The stages had been pulled in. The pilot told me afterwards that he saw me when he first began ringing the bell; if he had not, I would have been left safe. I was frightened in thinking it over—whatever would have become of me no mortal man could ever have told. I would have been reported as a deserter or drowned. Soon the boat landed on the west side of river for wood. They took on there the supply they failed to take on where they scared me so bad. At this landing there were plenty of large watermelons for sale. I bought a twenty-pounder, and had the pleasure of sharing it with the pilot who rang the bell so long. While we were eating the melon, he told me that the Captain of the boat ordered him several times to back out. While he took the chances of straining his relations as an employee, it was to satisfy my earnest desires and immense speed not to be left in a foreign nation. I never knew why they did not take on the wood I saw the clerk measuring off.

In due time we arrived at Vicksburg ready for some experience. Within a short period an order came to the 124th Regiment for a detail of men to be sent to district headquarters for guard duty, consisting of nine privates, three non-commissioned officers, two Corporals and one Sergeant. These men were selected from their soldierly appearance, General Dana being a West Point man. "How-some-ever as lightning never strikes twice in the same place," I was hit. I and one other private and one Corporal were detailed to go from my Company. When this Sergeant reported this detail men at headquarters, he was shown what we were wanted for. One guard was placed in front of the General's headquarters to walk a beat. He had to salute every commissioned officer who went in or out of those headquarters. The second guard was placed in front of his Asst. Adj. General's office, across the street from the General's where the duties were similar to those of guard No. 1. The third guard was stationed at the headquarters horses' stables to guard all Government property—horses and feed of all kinds—but did not have to walk a beat. These duties lasted through the night as well as the day. We were on duty every third day, then would be off two days.

Our orders were to salute all officers according to rank, also ordered that if the officer did not return the salute, he should be halted and made to salute, or turn him back. You may depend upon it that those orders were strictly enforced. Some of the staff officers put on a vast amount of dress and pomp, as if they owned that part of the earth. I tell you we got a whole lot of satisfaction when the opportunity came to us to make those swell head "mark time" until some officer would pass them into headquarters. A true and faithful soldier will obey his orders whether they seemeth to him right or wrong; his paramount duty was to obey his superior officers.

This detail at headquarters lasted several months. During this time my company was entitled to two more non-commissioned officers. My orderly sergeant came home and told me what they were going to do, and urged me to go to the Company; that if I would I should be so honored No. I reasoned this way: If I should return to the Company' some of them would say I came back for no other purpose, only for the office. He said to me, "You have earned it by your faithfulness as a soldier, your honesty and integrity as a man; that no man in the Company had an equal record." After due deliberation, I said to him, "If I were ordered back to our command tomorrow, for we are liable to be any hour of the day, I don't want promotion. I have only done my duty as an ordinary soldier should do. I won't go; appoint whom you please. I will finish as a private soldier.'"

Near as I can remember, about the first of December, 1864, while on detail at headquarters, my health began to fail—the longer, the faster.
I reported to the post surgeon, who prescribed for me. His medicine did not seem to do me any good. After some time he (the surgeon) asked me, "Why don't you apply for a furlough and go home?" I did not suppose it was worth while. He said, "I can't do you any good, nor any one else here. You have your Captain fill out an application for one and sign it and bring it to me; I will sign it. Then you will have to take it to your Regimental surgeon for his signature." I did as he suggested, and went to my Regimental surgeon for his signature. He looked it over, then examined me and said, "I wont sign it." His wife, sitting by him, began to intercede for me, saying, "Let the poor boy go home." He said his instructions in signing an application for furlough were to save life or permanent disability, and that he could not do that in my case." My health became such that I could not do duty excepting at the stable, where I was allowed to sit down. I grew worse and worse. The post surgeon did abuse the doctor for not signing my application. It would be showing against his reputation as a skillful surgeon was his reason for not signing it, was the post surgeon's version of the matter. By an order from the post surgeon, I was sent to Hospital No. 1, a tented hospital, about the first of February, 1865. Here I became much worse, lingering along several weeks more dead than alive.

On February 25th my Regiment was ordered to go to New Orleans. The Regimental surgeon came to see me, and, after examining me, said, "Do you think a furlough would help you?" I replied that I did not know; that I had grown no better at the hospital. He said, "I will see what can be done. Will talk to the hospital surgeon, and will recommend a furlough in your case." This was the last time I saw Dr. Kay (that was the Regimental doctor's name).

In the meantime District headquarters had been moved from Vicksburg to Memphis, Tenn., and all men on detached duty who were able for duty were ordered back to the Regiment. Many of my Company came to see me in the hospital before leaving Vicksburg. They told me afterward they never expected to see me again.

It seemed while there in the hospital my turn would come soon, as the sick were being dressed daily with a wooden overcoat, passing on to the great and silent world from whence no traveler ever returns. Several times while here very sick the death angel came within the walls of my tent and took a comrade from my side. These occasional visitations were not calculated to be of hopeful signs of good cheer to one who was entirely amongst strangers. Among the many hundreds of the sick of this hospital, there was not a single soldier that I had ever seen before.

My life for many weeks seemed to be hanging by a mere thread. Why it was not broken, God only knows. Not a living soul I had known was left me; duty had called them elsewhere. Then it came to me one day: I will live if possible to see and know the final results of this mighty strife.

Our armies were being more successful; were fast pushing the enemy into the last ditch they had boasted so much about in former days, only we were the fellows who were to go into the ditch according to their boasts. The end was not far away. General Grant was drawing his grip more firmly about General Lee's discouraged troops. General Sherman had severed the Confederacy in twain by his irresistible "March to the Sea," beginning at Chattanooga and ending at Savannah, Georgia. General Thomas had completely annihilated General Hood's army at Nashville, Tenn. These encouraging news came to us as an inspiration to want to live on to the close. The marching and counter-marching and all the details of military life would soon be over with.

At this date, February, 1865, the only fortified place in the west that had not been taken by the Union army was Mobile, Alabama. General Canby was organizing an army to attack it at as early a date as possible,
while the other Union armies were making it a busy time for the Confederate armies elsewhere. For this purpose my Regiment was ordered into the Department of the Gulf, to go to Mobile.

The surgeon of the hospital had sent a batch of thirty furloughs to headquarters at Memphis for the Commander's approval, but were returned without his signature. A few days after this, a steamboat came to Vicksburg as a hospital boat to take, as was supposed, the sick to northern hospitals. At least these same thirty whose furloughs had been returned not signed were ordered to be placed on this hospital boat, and were put aboard and quartered there for three days. During these three days there came from the interior of the country over two thousand prisoners, of our men, from Cahaba and Andersonville prisons. These men had crawled much of the distance. Such sights I never expect nor do I desire to witness again. They were simply indescribable—poor, emaciated, black from the pitch-pine smoke, ragged, not sufficient clothing to cover their nakedness. I do not think that any loving mother would have known her own son. Many died while near the "OLD FLAG" that they had endured so much for. The condition of these men that I there beheld will never be effaced from my memory.

There not being room enough for these prisoners and the squad of thirty sick soldiers, that I belonged to, on that boat, the sick were sent back to the hospital. I was so glad to go back so as to make room for those poor men. The first move made when these prisoners were marched onto the boat was to strip them and scrub them, then cut their hair short to get rid of the vermin. Clean clothes were furnished them, then they were taken to a cot, where they were to remain until they got as far north as this boat would take them, which, perhaps, was St. Louis, Mo.

These men could now communicate with wives, parents and loving friends for the first time in months and months. What a happy lot of men, and to know that they were under the protecting folds of the Flag of our Country! They would sing, they would cheer, they would shout for joy. Their joy was unbounded. A percent of this band of men became demened. They would be calling or repeating over and over the names of loved friends they had left at home—a mother, a wife, loving friends, an Ann or Lucy or Elizabeth or Julia or some pet name. I could not but weep as the sound came ringing in mine ears then, nor can I restrain the tears as I chronicle these lines. I was indeed glad to vacate my cot for one of these poor fellows, and we thirty were taken from whence we came. The name of the boat was "SULTANA."

In the course of a few days this boat load of men was declared ready to start with its precious load of freight—something over two thousand ex-prisoners of war. All went well until after they had passed Memphis, Tenn., when, with an awful explosion in the night, the Sultana was blown up, and those men, who at that time were dreaming of home and loved ones, were hurled into the bosom of the "Father of Waters." Some of them were scalded to death, hundreds were drowned. Out of the 22 hundred, only a fraction over seven hundred survived that catastrophe. It was the most terrible calamity that happened during the war that I know of. Those men had experienced almost everything but death, and to be sent to a watery grave amidst such brilliant hopes was heart-rending. It would seem that it was an over-ruling Providence that we were sent back to the hospital.

This catastrophe happened in March, 1865. Soon after this, the thirty furloughs were sent to District headquarters at Memphis, commanded by C. C. Washburn. They were approved, and in due time came to us with his signature attached. We thirty were soon prepared to go to the wharf to start on our homeward journey. Nothing unusual happened to our boat until we were within ten miles of St. Louis, when a steam pipe in the engine bursted and almost instantly filled the room
where the sick were lying, with steam. The pilot turned the boat straight for the shore. We were immediately put ashore. Near by was a railroad depot, where I went and got a train for St. Louis. The name of the boat we left was "MOLLIE ABEL." Soon after we arrived in St. Louis, this boat came steaming into port.

I was transferred from the depot to an upper Mississippi river boat which took me within six miles of my home. I went to a hotel for the night. Next morning I took the daily stage that carried the mail to the county seat from Grafton.

I arrived at home about ten a. m., where both of my parents were, and greatly rejoiced to see me and I thankful to be at home. My mother was distressed to see me looking so frail, but when I related to her how much worse I had been than I was then, she took fresh courage. My father sent to Jerseyville for the family physician to come to see me and prescribe for my ailments. He gave them encouragement, told them it would take some time with careful nursing, what I would be allowed to eat and what not to eat, and that I would soon be convalescing. This was about the 20th of April.

A few days after leaving Vicksburg, we met the news of the assassination of President Lincoln. Words could not express our sorrow. What a gloom was cast over the entire nation! The loss was irreparable. What would be the outcome of this all manner of fears and doubts were expressed everywhere. The nation was in great sorrow—the deepest sorrow. The great President had been shot, his life put out by a fanatic, and he was the best friend those rebellious people had on earth. How the nation was stirred! It looked for a time that law and popular government was at an end.

It is beyond comprehension for an intelligent person to realize the shameless ignorance of a large percent of those southern white people. To illustrate in a small way, I quote a conversation our Chaplain had with a southern woman. "So, Chaplain, you really think this war is near its end and no more bloodshed?" "Yes, madam, there may be a little skirmishing beyond the Mississippi river." "Do you think the north and south will come together in peace and love each other?" "Yes, I think so." "Bless de Lord, husband, do you hear that? Bless de Lord. Oh, my heart is glad! I never expected to hear such words. Gals, do you hear dat? Bless de Lord. Do you think we can go up norf and take papers and all such things like we used to?" "Yes, madam, I do believe that not only is the war over, but very soon its bitter ness and enmities and ruptures in social and business relations will be past, and we shall come closer together from Maine to Texas." And then she arose from her chair, and striking an attitude of over-mastering joy, raised her clasped hands towards heaven and cried out, "Oh, my soul, bless de Lord! I will praise Him. Do you hear what the Chaplain says? Do you hear it? And then — (and the climax was evidently coming, for she was almost wild with joy)—and then I can get some more Jaynesses pills. I haven't had any for two years. I laid n for two years at the beginning of the war, Chaplain, but we have been out for two years. Now I can get some more. Oh, bless de Lord." And she sank back in her chair, exhausted, with her hands upon her face, sobbing bless de Lord. The Chaplain bade the family good bye, and took his departure, musing on the depth and quality of southern Union sentiment.

Another ridiculous case is given, and is truthfully authenticated: The fact was being urged by one of the Rebel soldiers that we were not Yankees, but western men. They could whip five Yankees. Robert Lee had uniformly done so and they could. This was often presented by the defeated Rebels in the southwest as an apology for their failures, and our boys had as often wished to take some of this lingering conceit out of them some way if possible. So oh this occasion one of the boys said, "I'm a
Yankee.” “Be ye?” said Johnnie; “one of the regular kind?” “Yis,” said our Yankee, adopting the twang, “Yis, I s’pose I be.” “Well, thar, one of them wooden nutmeg kind?” Yis I s’pose I be.” “Well, thar, how do you think you can fool me on one them things? Mebbe you never made any yourself.” “Yis, I s’pose I have.” “Well, how do you do it? Just whittle them right out?” “Yis, that’s all. It’s nothing when you get the hang of it.” “Well, I say, you haint got one about ye, have ye, Mister? You couldn’t fool me with one of ‘em no how, but I’d jest like to see one of them things, to see how it looks.” Our Yankee designedly had a nutmeg in his pocket, which he readily handed to Johnnie as the last specimen of his jack-knife manufacture. Johnnie took it, smelled it, whittled it, tasted of it with the utmost painstaking, and at last returned it, saying, “I be durned if I can tell whether it is wooden or genuine, and if you can, can whittle out such nutmegs as that, I can’t see for my part why you can’t fight as well as anybody.” Poor, non-plussed fellow, he had honestly thought, with thousands of others in the south, that the Yankee actually whittled out bogus nutmegs with their jack-knives.

I will summarize our three years’ service as a Regiment during the above period. The Regiment marched by land and traveled by water over seven thousand miles; was engaged in fourteen skirmishes, ten battles and two sieges of forty-seven days and thirteen days respectively, thus being under constant fire of the enemy eighty-two days and sixty nights. The 124th Regiment’s losses from all causes during its service was over four hundred. This Regiment was at Montgomery, Alabama, when ordered home to be discharged from U. S. service, the war being over. It went direct to Vicksburg, where the Regiment was mustered out, then sent to Chicago, Illinois, to be discharged and paid off. When examining their papers upon arriving at Chicago, it was found that the mustering-out officer at Vicksburg neglected to sign these papers. There was nothing to show any one that the Regiment had been mustered out of U. S. service. This negligence caused a delay of two weeks before the men could be discharged, paid off, and once more be free American citizens to go to their homes, their families and friends.

After the expiration of about twenty-five days of my thirty days’ furlough, I received an order from Dr. Horton, of the Vicksburg Hospital, from which I was furloughed, to report to the nearest mustering-out officer for the purpose of being mustered out of the United States service, and to send him the mustering officer’s address that he (Dr. Horton) might forward the mustering officer my descriptive list. When a soldier leaves his command, his descriptive list goes with him, that he can be accounted for always or at any time. I had been away from my command several months on detached duty and the hospital together, so it will be seen how necessary or how much this descriptive list was worth to me. I complied with the doctor’s order, and reported to Springfield, Illinois, learned the mustering officer’s address, and sent it to Dr. Horton at Vicksburg. I asked the officer where I should stay until the descriptive list would arrive from Vicksburg. He mentioned different places I could go. I said to him, “I am yet under the physicians charge; why can’t I go home?” He replied that I could, but that I would have to pay my own transportation both ways. “When shall I report to you again?” He replied, “Give plenty of time for your descriptive list to get here, say two or three weeks.” I returned home. Was slowly regaining my health at this time. No doubt my mother’s cooking had much, yea more, to do with my convalescing than all else that was brought to bear.

I remained home this time three weeks, when I again reported to the same mustering-out officer at Springfield. I introduced myself to him. After looking over his papers he said to me, “You are a free man, how do you feel? You have been mustered out of the service about a week.” He gave me my descriptive list and mustering-out papers, and told me where
I would find a paymaster who would pay me what the Government owed me, and would give me my discharge papers, which I received on June 25th, 1865. My discharge paper was dated May 25th, 1865, and received pay to that date only, that being the day that my mustering-out papers were signed. I did not tarry long in that city.

It was many months before my normal health was regained. My enlistment covered a period of thirty-three months. I was discharged by reason of a telegram from the War Department of May 12th, 1865. The service I rendered I have always been proud of. Although it was for the most part very strenuous, I can truthfully say I was never punished for disobedience of orders from my superior officers, was never placed under arrest for any offense whatever, which only a few can say. In time of battle went where and when ordered to go where hundreds of good men fell yet I received not a wound nor my clothing touched to my knowledge.

This sketch would be incomplete if I did not allude to the soldier comrades with whom I joined the military service, who failed to return to home and friends as I did. Where were they? They were filling a soldiers’ grave far away in the southland, having been cut down by the cruel ties of war that this free government of the whole United States should be perpetuated for all time; that its enemies should learn to submit to its power, its authority and greatness, forever to be “ONE COUNTRY, ONE LANGUAGE, ONE FLAG.” Of the squad of thirty-three who went from Jersey county when I went, twelve returned. Of this squad, fifteen enlisted from and around Otterville, my home town. Of the Otterville squad, there were five who returned at the close of the war. I today know only three of the entire number who enlisted from Jersey county at the time I did, who are still living.

That so few returned was inexpressable grief to me. The ties that had been formed and so firmly knitted in our lives through the bitter experiences of war and existed between us can not exist between any other class of people.

At the close of the war, when this vast army of soldiers were to be disbanded (discharged), a serious question arose amongst the civilian class of citizens as to what would become of their property, their homes, when all these idle men were turned loose amongst them. It was a query. They did not know what the future would reveal to them. This uneasiness was soon allayed to their surprise and satisfaction. The soldiers, when they turned over their arms and got home, took up in most instances the same avocations of labor that they had left when they joined the service of the government. I took up my work on the farm, which I had left, as soon as my health would admit. Shortly afterwards I overheard some of my wealthy neighbor farmers say, how surprised I am to see and know that the soldier boys were so quiet and peacable, and had gone to work as if they had never been away from home.” They were afraid we would do everything that was mean, and that we would not stop short of plundering and robbing and making life unsafe. But what a happy contrast to their groundless fears. I suppose these groundless fears existed all over the entire northerm states to a more or less degree. They could not realize the discipline we were under as soldiers; that the three years of fearful and terrible experience we had passed through that when the last shot was fired, the last picket stood, the great war was over and the Rebellion was put down, there were no citizens in all the land who welcomed peace and happiness over this broad land more than did the ex-soldiers of the “sixties.” These remarks apply to the true soldiers. There were bums in the army just as there are in all walks of life, who are a disgrace to civilization wherever they exist.

In 1902 culminated a long-cherished desire of mine to visit those battle-fields that I had taken part in making historical. My good wife said to me, “Aren’t you afraid to go down there?” What is there to be afraid
of, I wanted to know? She answered, "Those men you shot at during the war." I answered her with these words, "Do you suppose I would harm a Confederate soldier or suffer any one to harm him who came to my home to visit me?" "No," she replied, "I know you would not." "Neither will they harm me if I act a gentleman with them."

I left home in the month of January in 1902, to be gone four months if I desired. I traveled over the Burlington Route via St. Louis, Mo., where I visited Ninian C. Beatty, my orderly sergeant. We had been throughout the war together. When I told him my purpose, he said, "I wish I could go with you." I took supper with him. We had a great reunion together. He went to the depot with me to see me off on my journey. Poor fellow, this was to be the last time we should meet in this world, as he died shortly afterwards. It had been twenty-five years since I had seen him previous to this meeting. The wonderful joy that came to us at this meeting comes to no other class of mortals but Comrades who have passed through perils of every description, escaping only death, together touching elbows where it took all the moral courage that mortal men could possess to obey orders.

I left St. Louis, Mo., over the Ohio and Mobile R. R. at eight-thirty p. m. My train stopped twenty minutes for breakfast next morning at Corinth, Miss. I was shown from the car window where in one of the battles fought at this place a Col. Rodgers, Confederate, was killed in leading a charge on our men. The result of the battle was the Confederates were repulsed and the Union army victorious. We soon passed on south, passing over where both armies had marched, which yet showed much signs of devastation. I arrived at Meridian, Miss., at 2 p. m., where I left the train. I was now where we destroyed so much railroad property in February, 1864, thirty-eight years before, under the command of General Sherman. A Mr. Johnson met me at the train, and took me to his home, where I spent the evening and night and most of the next day, enjoying their great hospitality.

Meridian, Miss., had, during the thirty-eight years of my absence, grown to be the largest city in the state, being the junction of the Ohio and Mobile and the Vicksburg and Charleston railroads. They claimed a population of twenty-two thousand. It was the most extensive cotton market in the state. I visited their large cotton mills, which were very extensive. Saw them at work. The cotton was brought from the cotton gin in bales after being put through the compress power, where its bulk was reduced almost half, then it was ready for the market of the world. While here I said to Mr. Johnson, "Down that railroad some of those trees have iron collars on them." I told him that General Sherman's army left them dressed in that kind of trimmings when here in 1864. He said, "Oh, no; Oh, no." I asked him how they ever got them off the trees, and he said they chopped the trees down and shipped the twisted rails to rolling mills, where they were straightened and made good. This man Johnson was a small child when Sherman's army made that place a visit, did not remember seeing the army, so what he said to me was what he had been told.

I took a Vicksburg train for Jackson, the capital of the state. I think the second station from Meridian west is Chunkeyville. When the name was called by the conductor I was eager to see how it looked in time of peace. I hastened to a window of the car. This is the place where our Brigade destroyed, by burning, an immense lot of cotton and the depot, tore up the railroad track, and burned the railroad bridge over the Chunkey river, which was about one hundred and fifty feet wide, and scared the Rebel command so they vacated in somewhat of a hurry, leaving three loaded wagons in the middle of the river. They cut the teams loose from the wagons and made their escape. I do not think our men bothered the wagons. I looked out the car window for this wagon ford of the river. It
looked perfectly natural to me. The ford was yet being used, with this exception: the three wagons were gone. It came to me while here that this was the place where John thought he was nearly dead when the Lieutenant had his sword to his (John’s) back, keeping him to his place in the ranks.

I left the train at Jackson. One could see the scars of war here on every hand. The city is located on the west side of Pearl river. From this place this river is navigable for small boats to its mouth, or the Mississippi river. The population at this time was nine thousand. I visited the old state house, where I found the legislature in session. What a gruesome story it would be if the full history of the happenings that had taken place since its completion were told. This session of the legislature was to be the last to convene in the old building, as they were at this time erecting a new capitol building.

One story of the new building was completed at this time. Jackson was many times punished. All the Confederate industries were destroyed and the railroads badly put out of commission, being the junction of the Mississippi Central and the Vicksburg and Charleston railroads. These roads were sadly out of repair during a greater part of the war period.

I left Jackson for Edwards, about twenty-five miles to the west, near the Champion Hills battlefield, where I arrived late in the p.m. After procuring entertainment for the night, I stepped into a business house and asked the proprietor if he could direct me to some Confederate soldier who would likely go with me over the Champion Hills battle-ground the next day. He studied a few moments, then pointing to a man, said he would be just the man if I could get him to go. I went out into the street and hailed him as captain. “Sah,” he said, “you can call me captain, Kunnel or general. I was captain in a Mississippi regiment in the Civil War, Kunnel in the Spanish-American War, and had the honor to command the Brigade that Kunnel Bryan’s Regiment was in.” I told him what I wanted and that I was a Union soldier in that battle. He grabbed me by the hand and said, “I am glad to meet a man who will say where he belonged; that a great many Yankees did not like to own that they were Yankees.” This man’s name was Captain Montgomery. He said to me, “Nothing would give me more pleasure than to go with you, but I cannot, as I am a member of the legislature, and am on a committee to go to the Gulf tomorrow and inspect the harbor there. I would surely be delighted to go with you and show you over this battle ground, for there is no one about here who knows as much about it as I do.” He asked me how I was fixed for the night, and I told him I had made all arrangements for the night. He said, “Well, sah, you meet me at the depot in the morning at eight o’clock. There will be a freight train along, and we can go on that. I will go on it to Jackson, and will find some one to go with you over the battle ground.” This battlefield was four miles east from Edwards, hence we took the train. Captain Montgomery gave me a letter of introduction to a man on the Champions plantation. After finding my man, he asked me if I would like to go into the house and meet Mrs. Champions. I replied that I would, so he took me in and introduced me to her, telling her where I was from and my business there. She warmly greeted me by clasping my hand and saying how delighted she was to do honor to a man who fought for his country. Mrs. Champions at this time was seventy-five years of age. Her former home had been burned. The present home was some distance from where the home of 1863 stood. She told me that in the morning of the day of the battle, a Confederate officer came to her home and told her that General Grant’s army was coming within a few miles, and would pass along the road that ran close to her front door, and that she had better go to some of her neighbors. This she did, going to her father’s, a few miles away, leaving the place in charge of her colored people just as if she were
going to visit a neighbor for the day. About ten o'clock that day a portion of General Grant's army met General Pemberton's forces, and fought them about six hours, when Pemberton's army was defeated. Mrs. Champion said to me, "I and my father opposed the Rebellion with all our power, but my husband was a rabid secessionist."

My guide to go with me announced his readiness. We were off after a cordial and pressing invitation from Mrs. Champion to take dinner with her at 2 p.m., which I gratefully accepted. Our first stop was at her former home, which was used by our surgeons for a hospital, but now a school house for colored had been built on the site. I asked my guide what made so many holes in the ground. He replied, "There is where bodies of Union soldiers had been taken up and taken to Vicksburg and buried in the national cemetery at that place." Our next stop was on the ground that was fought over many times, being a forest of black oak trees. To my surprise these trees showed the scars of battle as plainly as plain could be. I asked my guide what was the cause of those scars. He said, "There is where the bullets struck them. If we had an axe we would chop into one and you would find the bullet." I stepped up to a tree where some curious fellow had satisfied himself by chopping into the tree and finding the minnie ball. I noticed a tree about two feet in diameter near the ground with a hole through it large enough for a house cat to go through. I says, "Do you suppose that tree was struck by a cannon ball?" He answered, "Yes, sir, that is the cause of that hole." I could hardly believe what I saw with my own eyes after thirty-eight years from the time of the battle.

Our next stop was at a residence which, too, showed yet many marks of the battle. I talked with the proprietor. He told me he was a child and was living there at the time of the battle. "Did you remain here while the battle was raging?" "Oh, no." "Where did you?" "Over there (pointing off to the south) about three miles; that was close enough to be safe." This man had, I reckon, a cart load of relics of the battle under his porch, of all sizes, that he had picked up. He gave me a ten-pound solid cannon ball, which I brought home and have it at this time. He offered me many others, but I did not accept them.

We next drove to a Mr. Austin's home. Now I was on the ground where General Logan's Division had fought over, where the enemy could not stop us. I found this Mr. Austin was an ex-Union soldier. A year or two after the close of the war he went south and married his wife in this vicinity. Mr. Austin went with me over the ground where my Regiment had fought, from the place where we first formed, and where General Logan rode along the line of his men and said, "Men, the hotter the quicker," meaning the harder we fought the sooner it would be over with. This proved to be true in this instance. I recognized the lay of the ground quite readily. What a contrast in the going over this ground the first and the second time—the first time amidst the roar of battle when hundreds of men were being killed; the second time no armed enemy in front of us, no batteries to charge loaded with cannister to fear.

Mr. Austin gave me a number of war relics which I brought home with me. One was a Barlow pocket knife that he had found when digging a post hole in a Confederate soldier's grave, buried for twenty years. In digging this post hole he came to a man's thigh bone, and by its side he found this and an old pocketbook. I relate this incident to disprove the statement that the pockets of the dead were robbed by our men. Mr. Austin took me to his home and introduced me to the ladies of the house. Dinner was awaiting him, and they urged me to dine with them. I told them that I had promised to take dinner with Mrs. Champion, and they would have to excuse me. Thanking Mr. Austin for his kindness and bidding them farewell, I went to my guide and then drove to Mrs. Champion's house.

When I entered Mrs. Champion's home she said, "You are ten min-
utes late, and you know a meal is not so good when not eaten as soon as ready. My cook had begun to be uneasy, fearing that the meal would not be enjoyed." I begged her pardon for causing any misgivings about the meal, and that I esteemed it as a rare opportunity to dine with her. Such a meal as we sat down to, Mrs. Champion and I alone, she sitting on the opposite side of the table from me. This dinner was an extraordinary meal, of every kind of vegetable and every kind of meat and sweets of every description. I think we were at the table fully an hour, eating and visiting. This dinner will never be forgotten by me during this life. It seemed almost too good for any mortal being. She was busy telling me much of their experiences during the war times. She said that our surgeons used her dining table the day of the battle for an amputation table, and that she could never clean the human blood stains from it.

As my train was soon due, I said to her that I must be going on soon. She wanted that I should remain over until the next day. The best excuse that I could offer was that I had not heard from home for many days, and that I thought there was mail for me at Vicksburg that I was anxious to read. Expressing gratitude to her for the kindly hospitality she had shown me, I bade the battle-ground farewell at three thirty p. m. for Vicksburg, never to forget the impressions that came to me while visiting this historical place. In all Confederate accounts of this battle, they gave it as "Baker's Creek Battle-ground."

My train soon reached Black river bridge, our old camp of the winter of 1863-64. It looked very natural to me. I could see where our tents stood, and the old drill grounds where we drilled so many times to earn the Excelsior Banner, which we afterwards got.

I arrived at Vicksburg safely late in the evening. Found a hotel to put up at while in the city, being run by an ex-Confederate soldier. I soon found myself going to the postoffice for any mail there awaiting me. I then went down to where was once the great river front when was here in the sixties, and to my wonderful surprise there was no river, but instead of the old wharf was built railroad tracks, railroad warehouses, depot, cottonseed oil mills, compress cotton mills, door and sash factories and lumber yards. I could hardly believe what my eyes beheld. What had become of the river? There was some dead water there. Just in front of the city, out in the old river bed, was an island grown up to brush of different kinds, cottonwood trees thirty feet high. This water was called Lake Centennial. In 1876 the Mississippi river was very high, overflowing much river bottom land on the opposite side from the city, known as Young's Point. During this great flood of water, it cut a new channel across this point of land, commencing six or eight miles above the city, and re-entering the old channel about four and a half miles below the city. When the great flood of water had subsided, Vicksburg was not on the Mississippi river any more. The nearest point to the river was four and a half miles, which point was as near as the steamboat could get to the city. All river traffic destined for and from Vicksburg had to be hauled by trains that distance. What a calamity! From a commercial standpoint it killed this hasty and wicked city.

The chief point of interest to me was to visit the old battle-ground, where my Regiment was placed on the line of investment during the long siege. I started early in the morning, and found it to be about three miles out. I readily recognized the place. The White or Shirley house was still standing. I found the spot of ground I occupied so long during the siege. Also found a stone marker that had been placed by my Regimental Association at some period prior to my visit, marking the spot where the Regiment had spent so many days and nights of strenuous and intense hard labor with both shovel and musket.

The sad memories of many thrilling incidents came to me while viewing this old camping-ground after thirty-nine years. I went out and found
the dear old spring of water that supplied us with life-sustaining fluid for nearly eight weeks. It was furnishing about the same amount of water, I judged, as in 1863.

Having been given a letter of introduction by my Comrade and good friend James Phelps before leaving home, to a Mr. William Blything of Vicksburg, who was a member of his Company of an Iowa Regiment for three years, I inquired after him, and learned that Mr. Blything had charge of a working party in the military park. This park consisted of the Vicksburg battle-ground. The U. S. Government had purchased a strip of land covering the entire length of the battlefield, which was eight miles in length.

The working party was clearing out the undergrowth, such as cane thickets, briar patches and small bushes, and burning it, leaving only the large trees standing. After some searching and inquiring, I found Mr. Blything. I handed him Mr. Phelps' letter, and when he had finished reading it he clasped me by the hand and said, "You are a neighbor to James Phelps, are you? How I would love to see Jim." We had a friendly visit, and he kindly invited me to his home while in the city. I then took a street car, which runs from the city every thirty minutes, out almost to the park for my hotel.

I looked over the city and noted many changes have taken place. There are many scars visible showing the punishment the city received from Admiral Porter's fleet which lay in the river near by. There is now an electric car line throughout the city. They claim a population of ten thousand.

I went out to the National Cemetery which is located two miles north of the city—outside of the line of Confederate works, near the bend of this great river, on the western slope of one of the great hills overlooking what is now known as Lake Centennial (formerly the Mississippi river.) This cemetery consists of forty acres of land and is enclosed by a brick wall three and a half feet high. This cemetery when ready to receive the soldier dead was a succession of terraces. All kinds of shade trees are planted in artistic style with the beautiful Magnolia and other evergreen trees interspersed. One would suppose at a short distance it was a forest. On the tops of these several terraces is where the dead were placed. I learned from the superintendent that he employs twelve men eight months of the year doing nothing else but using the lawn mowers keeping the grass as smooth as the mowers will make it. The surface of the cemetery has a perfect coat of Bermuda grass which requires clipping every few days as it grows very fast during the growing season. The government furnished two stones for each soldier's grave buried here, one at the head and one at the foot. Where the soldiers were known their names are cut in these granite markers, where they are unknown the marker is numbered.

There are buried in this cemetery sixteen thousand seven hundred and eighty-four soldiers, four thousand twenty-two of whom are known and twelve thousand seven hundred and sixty-two unknown. These bodies were collected from a large territory adjacent to Vicksburg up and down the river and on the battlefields where they had fallen. Truly an army of heroes who gave their all that this government should not be destroyed. A great many of the dead soldiers were taken by their relatives north and buried at home in the family burying grounds. I visited the graves of three of my Company. I supposed there are more buried there of my Company if; so they are among the unknown.

It appeared to me that this cemetery is the most beautiful place that I had ever seen. The Government maintains a very large green house where it grows the almost numberless variety of flowers which are distributed on the graves throughout the cemetery during the warm months of the year. Then stored away in the green house for the winter.
of the three of my Company who lie in this cemetery was my bunk-mate from the time of our entering the service until he fell at Vicksburg. All three of them left families at home. Several others of the Company who were killed I know their relatives came and took them to their northern homes.

The marble shaft that was placed on the spot where Gen. Pemberton capitulated with Gen. Grant on July 3, 1863 is now in this cemetery to keep relic hunters from chipping it all away as souvenirs to carry home. A heavy piece of Ordinance, a cannon was placed on that historic spot and bears the same inscription as the marble shaft. That monument will mark the spot for all time. The following is the inscription on it. "Site of interview between Major General Grant U. S. A. and Lieutenant General Pemberton July 3, 1863." These words are cut into iron about a sixteenth of an inch deep so they cannot possibly be erased. This monument is about twenty inches in diameter at the breech and is nine feet high, located about one hundred paces south of what is known as Fort Hill by the Federal troops and the Third Louisiana Redan by the Confederate troops.

Mr. Blything took me to the Park Commissioners office, was introduced to Capt. W. T. Rigby who is chairman of the Commission. Had a pleasant talk with him. The Captain gave me an outline of what they had done and what they expected to do in the Park.

This Military Park at Vicksburg, Miss., contains twelve hundred and thirty-two acres of land for which the Government paid on an average of forty dollars and seventy cents per acre. Only the land that could be called fighting ground was purchased for this park.

The Commissioners plan was to build two roads or avenues, one just in the rear of Confederate works to be known as Confederate Ave., the other one to be known as Federal Ave. and built just in the rear of the first parallel line, or trench, of the Federal forces. The most of the camps of the Federal Regiments are not in this park land. But they propose that markers or tablets will be placed on these avenues stating the exact location of each separate organization or command of both armies.

This commission is appointed by the Secretary of War, and consists of three ex-soldiers—two of the Union army and one of the Confederate army. At this time the members were Captan W. T. Rigby, Captain James G. Everet and Lieut. Gen. Stephen D. Lee, all of whom were participants in this battle.

While talking to Captain Rigby I told him where I served during the siege of Vicksburg. He said to me, "I want you to go with me out on the line where you was during the siege and show me some points that we may erect suitable monuments." I told him I would go and if I could give him any information I would gladly do so. We went out as pre-arranged. The first place we went to was the Crater, or "Slaughter Pen," the boys called it. This Rebel fort had been leveled down. He said to me, "Show me where you think that fort was." I stepped to where I thought it was. He remarked, "Don't you think it may have been here?" he was standing ten feet east of where I stood. I told him that it might possibly have been. I think he was pleased that I could so nearly locate the exact spot. No doubt in my mind I was as nearly correct as he was as this fort was sixty feet in diameter.

We next went to the place where my Regiment was located during the siege. I pointed it out to him. He then asked me to show him where Captain Rogers' Battery stood during the siege and where Captain Rogers was killed. I soon showed him where the guns stood for the parapet was plain to be seen, they stood behind a bank. He said to me, "You must be correct." Then he asked me to locate the spot where Rogers was killed. The exact spot I did not know. I related to him the circumstances under which Rogers was placed and led to his death.
“Well you take this hatchet and drop it where you may think that Rogers was killed and down goes the stake.” I dropped the hatchet and saw him drive the stake and make a note of it in his note book. A suitable granite stone has been erected to the memory of this gallant man on this spot.

On our way back to the city Rigby took me to a well preserved cave that was used by the people to live in during the siege thirty nine years ago as most all of the citizens of the city lived in caves in those hills at that time for safety.

The next tour I made I went out with Mr. Blything on to the battle line where his Regiment was located during the battle. They were more north of the city and under Gen. Sherman. I picked up some grape shot near an old fort in front of this Iowa Regiment’s position. The hill they charged up in front of the Rebel works was very steep. Blything pointed out to me the advance point that any of his Regiment obtained and where some of his field officers were killed. We then went on through their camp to the spring of water that supplied thousands of soldiers and horses during the battle. A large volume of water flowed this spring. We went on to the east until we came to Gen. Grant’s headquarters. Gen. Sherman’s headquarters was forty or fifty rods west of that of Gen. Grant.

The Confederate line started from the Mississippi river north of city ran a nearly easterly course for two and a half miles thence south west for six miles to the river below the city.

We started back to city and crossed the Confederate line at what is called Stockade Fort, where much furious fighting was done. We passed over the ground where I laid very sick in an Arbor Hospital, when I regained consciousness was in a tent and from this was sent to a boat to be sent north and was unloaded at Memphis, Tenn.

We passed much ground that had been at one time very familiar to me. We soon reached Mr. Blything’s home where supper was waiting for us, having tramped probably fifteen miles. Mrs. Blything was a young lady of Vicksburg at the time of the battle there. She with her mother lived in a cave for safety until the siege was over. She pointed to her piano and said, “We had that in the cave with us.”

The next day I put in visiting in the city. Went to the court house whose cupola contains the city clock. We could often hear it striking the hour during the siege three miles away. It was still doing its faithful duty and how readily I recognized its familiar sound.

I went to the Park Commissioners’ office to see Captain Rigby, but he was out. A gray haired gentleman inquired if he could wait upon me, and told me that he was one of the commissioners—Lient Stephen D. Lee. I spent a very pleasant hour with him. He told me that he was from another family of Lee’s than that of Gen. Robert Lee. Said his family was of South Carolina while Robert Lee’s family were Virginians. He said to me “When Vicksburg fell the war should have closed that they were whipped then and it was useless to prolong the struggle.” “Yes,” I said, “I thought that was true but a large per cent of the Southern people did not have enough of war, they could not realize that they must lose out in the struggle at last.”

I note that the ground where we earned the Excelsior Banner in a drill contest was covered with buildings of different industries. I also visited the present boat landing which is four miles below the city.

Word came to me that a Confederate soldier whose home was near Port Gibson was in the city and wished to see me, having learned of my presence there, and the number of my Regiment. Mr. Blything and I went to see him. When we found him he asked me if I knew a man by name of George W. Jackson of Co. G. 121th Regiment. I told him that I did. He then said, “I want to send him word that his name that he
cut on a beech tree near Port Gibson is as plain to be seen as it was the day he cut it, in May, 1863. Thirty-nine years afterward when this man told me this, I had visited Mr. Jackson a few years prior to this, spent a night at his home, but he had died before this message reached him.

I must relate a conversation I had with a man whose small shack stood near the park limits, in fact his possessions embraced some of the park lands, which the Government had bought. This fellow was ten or twelve years old at the close of the Civil War. Of course he was a bitter, but a smart aleck. He said "The northern soldier was paid to fight, got all the Government had promised them, when they hired out to the Government and that they ought to be satisfied. That he and all the Southern people were taxed to death to pay them the pensions they were getting." "Yes pay, my friend how would you feel do you think to stand up and let me shoot at you for thirteen dollars a month?" Talk about pay! As to you being taxed to help pay our pensions, how much do you suppose it costs you? He admitted that he did not know. "Well sir, it does not cost you a farthing unless you buy whiskey or tobacco. These pensions are paid from the internal revenues of the whole country." He admitted that he did not know that before. Then he asked "What is that German officer visiting the United States for, spy- ing our coast defences? What is the strength of their armies? I said "I do not know, and I do not care. I am sure we are not afraid of any foreign nation on the globe." He then said, "I hope to God that some foreign nation would jump on to the United States and whip her to a finish." I said, "You don't have to stay in this country if you choose to leave it. Suppose there was a foreign army landed at the mouth of the Mississippi river. How far do you think they would advance into the interior of this country?" He did not know. I told him "that he would shoulder his gun quick enough to help drive the invader out of the country, if you wouldn't your wife would." I left him as there was no satisfaction in listening to his useless remarks. Mr. Blything said, "You hit him hard when you spoke of whiskey and tobacco as he uses both. He has one or two drams on now more than common." Men of his age I observed are the fellows who harbor bitter enmity towards the Northern people. The soldiers of the Rebel army can and are willing to fraternize with the Southern soldier at all times. I received from them in every instance the very best of kindly greetings from each and every one I met.

Having spent one week viewing the many points of much interest to me in this vicinity, connected with my army life I prepared to go to my home to return at some future date if possible, when the park is more in a finished state.

In the month of January, 1908, I and my wife and daughter Anna went South with a double pu pose, to spend the winter amongst relatives and to visit the National Park at Vicksburg, Mississippi, which place we reached some time the second week in March. After getting located, I first called at the Park Commissioners' office where I met again Captain Rigby who seemed highly pleased to see me. I told him of my purpose and of the party that was with me. He said, "You go to a certain barn and tell them to let you have the team I drive. I will let my Adjutant, Mr. Longly go with you. Take your dinners along and put in the day. Go up the Lake Centennial road through the National Cemetery, and go the entire length of the battlefield for the first day. Mr. Longly has been my clerk since the first and he can show and tell you all the points of interest." His kindness we greatly appreciated.

As previously arranged we were off at an early hour for the day behind a spirited team of horses in a two seated carriage. We entered the National Cemetery near the southwest corner. Th driveways are very crooked to make the ascent easy. Our first stop was to see the
marble shaft, the Grant and Pemberton monument which had been moved from the battlefield to its present location for safety. Anna being equipped with a camera took some pretty views from this place. We drive on and up until we reach the northeast corner of the cemetery. The Superintendent's office was near by. After refreshing ourselves with a drink from a cistern we pass on through the enclosure of the cemetery, into Federal Ave. Soon we come to Regimental monuments telling us what command had been stationed at each of these monuments. Some were Brigade monuments, and also iron tablets showing the advanced position gained by, or taken by the different commands during the battle including the different batteries. We pass on to the "Tunnel" that was made in front of Gen. Thayer's command. (This Gen. Thayer was once Governor of Nebraska.) At this place was where the Regiment of Mr. James Phelps of Edgar, Nebraska, operated during the battle. We went over the ground that these comrades fought over and made an assault up the hill on the Rebel line and got almost to the Rebel works when we were repulsed. Here Anna took several snapshots with Kodak. At very close intervals we find these monuments along side of the Avenue and on the front side or side next to the Rebel works. We pass near Gen. Sherman's headquarters and on to Gen. Grant's headquarters which was in a tent all the while of the battle. It is marked by a monument. Near this place are several State Memorial Monuments, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, New York and Michigan. These are beautiful and costly monuments. From here we go in a southerly direction about a mile and come to the "Shirley House" and the Illinois State Memorial Monument which stands within a few feet of where the 124thIlls Regiment was located during the battle. We ate our lunch here near the Shirley House and near to our old camp.

The Shirley House has been restored to its former beauty and usefulness by the Government.

The Illinois Memorial Monument can be seen from nearly any part of the Park. It is over sixty feet high, circular in form and fifty-eight feet in diameter. It is lighted from its dome of which about one-third of the diameter of the entire structure is left open and uncovered. On the interior wall of this monument was placed the name of every Illinois soldier who was on the Vicksburg Campaign or in the siege of Vicksburg. His name is placed on a bronze tablet which forms a complete belt of bronze around the entire interior of the Monument. The names are placed by Regiments of Infantry, Regiments of Cavalry, batteries of Artillery, also by Companies so that the visitor can find readily the name of any of the soldiers in a very short time. This structure cost the State of Illinois two hundred thousand dollars. I was so overcome with its magnitude and grandeur when I saw and realized what my native state had done in honor of her soldiers, I could not but weep.

We leave here to go south. We first come to an observation tower which is over a hundred feet high. It stands near Gen. John A. Logan's headquarters. The general Government had this tower built or appropriated money for its being placed there. The sights which can be seen from the top of this tower can not be described. One can look right into the city near three miles away, and can see nearly the whole length of the park with its costly monuments and towering granite shafts. It is located near the center lengthwise, of the Park of nine miles in length. We go on south and soon pass a shaft of granite which is ninety feet high, nine feet square at the base and six feet square at the top erected by the State of Minnesota. Farther on and across the railroad we come to the Iowa State Memorial Monument erected at a cost of one hundred and fifty thousand dollars. We drive on to near the end of Federal Avenue where we cross to the west Confederate Avenue. This is just to the rear of the Rebel line of earthworks. We stop to let the ladies
see a Rebel fort, which is yet quite well preserved. It was known as the Square Fort. Very much of sanguinary fighting was done in about this Fort.

The day being far spent we push on over Confederate Avenue, back to the old river bed of the Mississippi. Just on the bluff is a fort the Confederates called Fort Hill. We went into this Fort and inspected it. It was from this fort that some of the Rebel guns sank some ships of Admiral Porter's fleet during the battle. Here the Avenue turns north and intersects Federal Avenue at the northeast corner of the National Cemetery, which we drive through again and on to the city having driven about twenty-five miles.

These Avenues are each two rods wide with a crown in concrete and cement sewerage on either side so they are practically dry all the time, and just as smooth as they could be made. Where the Avenues cross bayons there are artistic bridges built of galvanized iron. There are several of these in the Park.

In size the Regimental and Battery monuments are three by five feet with the proper inscription thereon—the name of the command they represent, etc. Wherever a piece of Artillery stood during the siege of both armies, there are mounted guns representing said gun or guns and proper marker or tablet with name and history of each battery or gun. The same can be said of the Infantry, suitable markers are placed showing the advanced position of each command and with a history of the desperate fighting done by each command throughout the length of the battle ground.

The purpose of the Government is to make this battle-ground as realistic as possible to all visitors for the coming generations—a permanent battlefield.

Our next visit to the battle-ground, we went out on a street car that took us within a short distance of the the Park. We took our lunch so as to put in the entire day sightseeing. We come to the spot where our forces blew up Fort Hill. I am so glad that I am permitted to view this place again having my wife and daughter with me. There was so much to tell them and to explain to them and to show them of what took place here forty-five years before when day and night the battle was on and men were being blown into eternity, mangled by the terrible shells and slain by the deadly minnie ball. The constant roar of the battle was terrific. Now we are here to note what our great Government is causing to be done to perpetuate the heroism of its defenders in its chosen way. This Park when all completed will be a wonderful sight to behold. The Southern or Rebellious States expect to do a large work in placing suitable monuments in memory of their soldiers. Some have already done this.

We move on to the Illinois Memorial Monument. Our hearts swell with pride as we comprehend to a degree what this great and magnificent structure stands for. During the eleven days we visited this part of the Park altogether, this being my home district during the battle. My daughter took scenes of important places to me with her kodak which will keep to the end of the race.

The "Shirley House" that stood so near to our camp is the only house within the Park limits. Mrs. Shirley was living in the house and lying sick when the battle commenced. By an order from Gen. McPherson, our Corps Commander, this lady was taken to the rear to a place of safety where she was properly taken care of during the battle, which lasted forty-seven days and nights. While on our visit at this time, we noticed that Mr. and Mrs. Shirleys' graves are nearby in the rear yard of this home. A family lives in this house to care for it. I was told that a portion of this house was to be used as a war museum.

I take wife and daughter to the spring of water that supplied us
during the time the battle was on. We all had a drink of it and Anna took a picture of it and Anna told them of how difficult it was for us to get to this spring in daylight as a part of the distance was in point blank range of the enemy's muskets. We soon learned that when we came to this exposed place we would run for our lives in its truest sense. "Get there Eli or get hit" was our slogan and our business. Some of the boys were killed at the best. I presume the Confederate soldiers received much sport in seeing the Yankees run for their lives. It created some unpleasantness on our side, but no extra amount of hatred for our neighbors for we knew full well that we were guilty of doing the same by them every opportunity we had. The distance at this place from them to us was about forty rods. The wonder is that they did not hit oftener than they did.

I notice that the points of interest I showed Captain Rigby when on my visit to this battlefield in 1902 had suitable monuments placed, these monuments being of granite.

One day while we were near the Illinois State Memorial Monument there were three men came near me and were reading the inscription on a monument. I said to them, "Is there any particular place that you are looking for?" They said "No, we are from the north and just came out from the city to see the battle-ground." They were I judge born since the war. One of them said to me, "I suppose that house (pointing to the Shirley House) was Gen. Grant's headquarters?" "No indeed it was not I replied." "Come with me a few paces, I will show you where Gen. Grant's headquarters were." They went with me and I pointed it out to them, it being about a mile to the north from where we were standing. One man said, "We were told that this white house was the place." "Well your informant did not know," I replied, "I do know for I was here from start to finish of the siege. I know what I am talking about." "What you here then? Yes sir, I will show you where my Regiment lay during that battle." I pointed out a stone marker to them and told them that my Regimental Association placed it there years before the Park was thought of. They were very much surprised at the general information I was able to give them, and remained with me the rest of that day as long as they remained in the Park. We went to Fort Hill that was blown up on June 25, 1863. I gave them as well as I could a description of the heroic fighting done that day and cited them to many tablets that they could read for further proof of that which I had told them. They asked where it was that Grant and Pemberton met to arrange the terms of capitulation. I took them to the place and told them to "read the inscription to be satisfied that it is the spot and so long as you live you can say that you have seen the present monument marking the place where the two Generals met to arrange terms of peace." I told them that that was the third monument that has marked that spot. Those Generals stood beneath an oak tree to hold their council but within a few months the Union soldiers had made souvenirs out of it even digging up its roots until there was not a vestage of it left. The second was a marbel shaft. This stood for a time then the relic hunters began chipping it off and carrying it away as souvenirs. The Government moved this monument to the National Cemetery where it now stands. The one you now see is the third monument." These men allowed that they will not be chipping that one, it being a large cannon standing on its breech, twenty inches in diameter and nine feet high. These men grasped me by the hand and tried to tell me how glad they were in meeting me and for what I had told them. While near the Illinois State Memorial Monument one of them said, "I wonder if anyone is allowed to go inside to look at it." I said to them "Certainly, that is what it is for." It was a great sight to them, one they will never forget, to know what that state had done to honor her soldiers. Their homes were in three separate
states: Oklahoma, Wisconsin and Indiana. They had fallen in together on their trip and were traveling together. I never heard from them after our meeting that day.

While visiting with these gentlemen, wife and daughter sight-seeing looking up many points of interest nearby. They each picked up a minnie ball one of which was flattened on one end. It had done its mission work no doubt during the time of battle. Just after a heavy rain the little negro children who live in the vicinity of the old battle-field search for these relics, as the rain uncovers their long secret biding place, to sell them to the Northern visitors to carry home as souvenirs of the old battle ground. It was surprising to us to know how successful these little fellows are in this traffic.

It is astonishing to anyone to know of the great number of visitors from the northern states who come here to view this historic place. I have no doubt but that the number runs way into the thousands each year.

After a two weeks stay here at Vicksburg and nearly three months visiting in the South we leave Vicksburg for our home in Nebraska, to carry with us always the memory of what we saw on the old Vicksburg Battlefield.

It may be a wonder to you what we did with the dead soldiers. I did not think to tell you before in this sketch. When on a campaign when a soldier was killed or died from any cause, he was rolled up in his woolen blanket, and a shallow grave was made, in which he was buried. Where there were many killed, as in a battle, a trench was dug, two feet deep, eight feet wide, and as long as was necessary to contain the dead, who were collected at a given point. The boys were laid side by side, as close as they could be laid in the trench. Their woolen blankets were spread over them, and the trench was filled up and properly marked with head boards, on which was written the soldier's name and the command in which he served. After some battles, there had to be made many of these trenches for the dead. When in camp, when a soldier died, a detail usually from his Company, escorted the body to the burial place. They carried their guns, and were headed by the Regimental band or drum corps, which played a funeral dirge with muffed drums. When the burial ceremony was over, the a med escort would fire three volleys over the body of the dead soldier. This was "being buried with the honors of war." At the general hospitals where I was, where so many died, the Government furnished rough pine box to each dead soldier to be buried in. They were buried without military escort or any other ceremony, only that his friends or relatives in the north were notified of his death.

The duties of a Chaplain of a Regiment of soldiers was to look after the spiritual interests of the Regiment, visit the sick, give comfort in all case of affliction and distress, perform religious ceremonies at the graves of the dead, as well as to preach and council with the living. These Chaplains were supposed to be licensed ministers before entering the service, with a good moral character. Their salary was about the same as the First Lieutenant—one hundred twenty dollars per month. He was expected to board himself, the same as all commissioned officers. A good and faithful Chaplain earned his salary. He was not supposed to expose his body in time of battle, but if he was a faithful Chaplain, he got to the wounded men as soon as possible, to administer to his necessities and seek after his comfort, giving words of cheer to the despondent one, both spiritual and temporal, often taking the last message in writing to loved ones at home. When in camp, at all times the Chaplain was expected, if able, to hold some kind of religious service each week, preaching or prayer service. The religious element in the 124th Illinois Regiment was quite strong, as there were many who were preachers before their enlistment.
into the army. There was an organized band, made up of the several Companies, for a centralization of religious workers to combine all religious efforts or work in the Regiment. All who wished were privileged to unite with it. Just before the day of mustering out came, each member was given a letter of recommendation to any evangelical church that their lot might be cast after they were discharged from the military service. I have only been speaking here of what took place in my own Regiment. Other Regiments, no doubt, had their own plans for looking after the morals of the many Comrades.

This sketch would be incomplete if I did not tell something about our Medical Staff of the Regiment. The 124th Illinois Volunteer Regiment had a surgeon and two assistant surgeons, first and second. These duties were to give medical treatment whenever called upon to do so, and to alleviate the suffering of the soldier, whatever the circumstances might be. These three surgeons were well read men in their profession. After a time, the surgeon was promoted to Division surgeon, which took him away from our Regiment. The assistants were promoted, first assistant as surgeon and second assistant as first assistant surgeon. When on campaign duty, one surgeon stayed in camp to look after the sick who could not go with us, the other to go with the command to look after any who became sick and the wounded men. This assistant surgeon was a German, not in full sympathy with the prosecution of the war in the way it was being done. Of a morning, at the sick call, he would get busy discussing the war policies with the sick men, and would keep them waiting an unusual length of time to be prescribed for. He finally became unbearable, and was asked to resign, which he did, or he would soon have faced some charges which would likely brought about his dismissal from the service by court-martial. The men deserved better treatment than they got from him, and would not put up with it any longer. Some of the sick men nicknamed him "Bill." When a sick man went to him for medicine, invariably he would say, "Let me see your tongue." Then he would say, "I give you three cadardicills. You take one dis morning, one dis noon, one dis night. If dat don't fix you, come back; I fix you myself." No matter what the complaint might be, it was always, "Let me see your tongue," and was followed up with the "cadardic bills," hence his nickname. Being German, the word tongue was not given the English pronunciation. I relate this to show you that even though a man is an officer, he must respect the rights that belong to the private soldier. This man was with us nearly or quite two years. He went home, where he could talk politics to his heart's content among well men

The men who were allowed to ride in campaign or on the march in the Infantry branch of the service, they furnishing their own horses, were as follows: Colonel, Lieutenant Colonel, Major, Adjutant, Quartermaster, Wagon Master, Surgeon, and Chaplain. All others were supposed to walk or march. Each man carried his gun and accoutrements, haversack of rations and canteen of water, excepting the commissioned officers of the several Companies, namely, Captains and Lieutenants.

In writing this brief sketch of my army life from 1862 to 1865, my sole purpose has been to make what I have touched upon plain, that the future generations of my posterity may have a souvenir of the Great Civil War in America. Most of the different phases could have elaborated on, and possibly should have been, but I adopted the plan of being as concise as possible and to be readable, and if this sketch will fill a place in the distant future, then I have not labored in vain.

May we forever adhere to the proposition, "ONE COUNTRY, ONE LANGUAGE, ONE FLAG."

(The end.)